

*Quarterly Newsletter  
of the*

**MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY  
ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
*Founded 2001*

October / December 2008  
Editor,  
Jarrelyn Lang

Volume Eight, Number One  
Assistant Editor,  
Dianne Middlebrooks

What to look for this issue . . . . .

- 3. President's Corner, Leonard Middlebrooks
- 4. MFA DNA Testing Discount, Bob Middlebrooks
- 5. Trip on the Rails, Dianne Middlebrooks
- 11. Santa Claus and Other Traditions, Jarrelyn Lang
- 12. Understanding Cousin Relationships, Joyce Arnold
- 12. This-And-That
- 13. The Butterfield Stage Line, Jarrelyn Lang
- 17. The Origins of Our Calendar, Jarrelyn Lang
- 18. Obituaries

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

MFA Quarterly Newsletter is published four times a year (December, March, June, and September) by the Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc., 274 Wilder Drive, Forsyth, GA 31029.

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](mailto:thelangs@hotmail.com). All submissions are subject to editing.

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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

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**Privacy Notice:** If you prefer that your name be withheld, please notify [thelangs@hotmail.com](mailto:thelangs@hotmail.com).

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As the holiday season rapidly approaches, the MFA officers and board members would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Above all, we hope it will be a safe and enjoyable time for each of you and your family.

MFA is closing its seventh calendar year and, as in each of the preceding years, we have seen progress in researching our family roots. Major happenings have been in the Virginia line, in DNA testing, and in expanding the list of our U.S. family who have served in defense of our colonies and nation.

Virginia Middlebrook/s research has been spearheaded by Lana Shelton and Neal Middlebrook, and they have linked parts of this family who were not included in the 1909 *Register*. In addition, they have expanded the available data on the Ann Sims family of Virginia.

DNA testing for 2008 has disclosed some interesting facts. The Virginia Middlebrooks/es are definitely part of the same line as Joseph 1610. Note the wording: they are not descendants of Joseph 1610, but they are from the same ancestry as Joseph. Another disclosure is that the Robert 1766 line is not directly connected to the North Carolina family, but it also has a common ancestor with Joseph 1610.

This means that each of these groups, and the North Carolina group, are all related, but the tie-in point is beyond 1610 and in England. This brings us to a long-awaited new project – Our English Connection. Neal has been working with some professional genealogists on outlining a basic research approach. This has been *pro bono* guidance to date, and future expenditures will be determined by what effort MFA makes in initial research. The time required for this project is beyond what Neal and I have available, and we are looking for an experienced researcher to head this significant work. By experienced, we mean someone who is at least an intermediate-level genealogist, one who is familiar with basic research techniques and has reasonable documentation skills. This person would be a self-starter and one who can take the ball and run with minimal guidance. We envision this as a team effort and one that would require more than one researcher.

If you would like to work on the next big leap in our family research, contact either Neal or me. Note that we are not asking for a board-certified genealogist, but someone who is comfortable with organizing and qualifying facts. Even if you do not have the total time, or feel totally unqualified but would like to participate, let us know. Don't be bashful; there is always room for another helper.

Our Veteran Project was started this year, with Kerry Middlebrooks in charge. Kerry began with the 1909 *Register* list of Middlebrook/s military personnel and has been expanding this list for inclusion in the 2009 update, to provide a record of those who have fought for our freedom. If you are a veteran, or if someone in your family is a veteran, contact Kerry for inclusion in this family list.

On the not-so-detailed happenings was our 2008 meeting. Joyce and her crew put together an outstanding meeting in Hillsboro, Texas. The format was equally divided between presentation and good old family reunion times. Thanks again to all who made the event a great success.

On the horizon is a follow-up of the happenings of researching your DAR ancestors. If you have an interest in your Revolutionary War ancestors, contact Kevin Lang, [paddybeer@aol.com](mailto:paddybeer@aol.com). If you are working from the DAR aspect of your family, contact Jean Shroyer, [TXJean@aol.com](mailto:TXJean@aol.com).

Reviewing other member participation, J.A. Middlebrooks is continuing his efforts with the Cemetery Project and helping with the Unknown Middlebrooks/es, those who do not link to currently-known parts of the family. Our "who do they belong to?" file is growing on an almost daily basis. Others who have accepted the worker-bee mantle are June Miller and Dave Clark. June is helping compile the record of Nancy Middlebrooks, the daughter of Thomas 1763. Dave, in addition to helping Bob with the DNA project and expanding our web site, has taken on the responsibility of co-leader for the Joseph 1773 group, along with Geneva Garrett.

**One reminder: the 2009 Register update will be finalized in 2009.** If you have not sent in your update info, please, **please** do not wait until the last minute. **The cutoff will be the end of June**; any material sent after that time will be in the next update, scheduled for 2019. Need I say more?

Another family member who has stepped up to the plate is Henry Middlebrook. He, along with helpers Neal and Charles [the Elder], have organized the 2009 meeting in Hope, Arkansas. Mark your calendar for the weekend of August 13, 14, and 15.

Motel reservations: **Holiday Inn Express, I-30 at N. Hervey St, Hope, Arkansas 71801, 870-722-6262.** The **group rates of \$89.10, plus tax, are available until July 13, 2009.** Meetings will be held at the BancorpSouth Farmhouse, 4 miles south of the motel. The to-do list includes Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives, Historic Washington State Park, Hempstead County Library in Hope, and Cemetery Exploration in Hope, Hempstead, and Nevada Counties.

(Note: See p. 2 for contact information concerning any of the persons mentioned above.)

Leonard

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### **MFA DNA TESTING DISCOUNT**

FtDNA has posted a new discount offering. The one of most interest is the Y-DNA 37, which is \$119, down from the regular price of \$189, when in association with the Middlebrook/e/s DNA project.

Y-DNA37	\$119
Y-DNA37+mtDNAPlus	\$199
Y-DNA67	\$218
Y-DNA67+mtDNAPlus	\$308
mtDNAPlus	\$139
Full Genomic mtDNA	\$395
SuperDNA	\$613

This offer is good until December 31, 2008, for kits ordered and paid for by that time. For more information or help in ordering a kit, contact Bob Middlebrooks, [mid293@earthlink.net](mailto:mid293@earthlink.net).

**Note:** Remember: TRIP ON THE RAILS happened in 1999. Things can and will change in 10 years.

## TRIP ON THE RAILS

By Dianne Middlebrooks

### **Our trip began in October of 1999**

After of a series of wrong turns in the city of Atlanta, we (my husband Billy, our daughter Barbara, and I) caught sight of the train station. Inside the station was a group of children, ages 10-12, in the lobby (**Oh boy!**). Excusing ourselves, we checked our luggage then we waited, and waited, and waited, for the train to arrive from New Orleans. It finally arrived. To make a long story short, departure should have been at 7:46 P.M.; instead it was at 9:00 P.M. (Barbara stayed with us until the train left.)

### **On the rails to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

#### **Rough roads, Rough rails**

There are only a few things you can do while riding the rails at night: You can look out the window and see yourself and hope to see lights, any kind. You can read, play cards in the Lounge, or take a nap in your Coach car seat that reclines a little. If you are lucky to get a window, you can prop your head on the window. Only one of us had a window. And last, but not least, you might even see some flashing red lights at the railroad crossings. What you cannot do on a moving train is print or write! The train must have stopped at every town or community between Atlanta and Washington, D. C.

#### **It's about 3:00 A. M.**

Dianne's in the Lounge, looking out the window and talking to herself. (If I watch the street lights and traffic lights, they seem to be blinking like Christmas trees.)

#### **Ah! Daylight!**

We were somewhere between High Point, North Carolina, and Charlottesville, Virginia. You could see the mountains with their autumn colors of leaves.

#### **Morning, UGH**

#### **The Bright Side (Mr. Sol in the eyes)**

Seeing the colors of the leaves was beautiful. North Georgia mountains are no match for the northern leaves. Every color you can imagine: Baby Pink, Coral, Sunflower Yellow, Fire Engine Red and Pine Green. Chocolate Brown, Burnt Orange and Dark Orange and . . . you name it.

After 16 hours on the train, we arrived at Philadelphia. Time for a little exercise. At this point, we did not realize Mr. Murphy had come along for a ride.

## **Penn Station (First one)**

Penn Station dates back to 1931. It is beautiful and enormous in size. The inside is built of marble with high ceilings. Near the top of the ceiling and on the floor are “pidgins” walking undisturbed and birds living in the trees. Elaborate in every sense of the word. There are tall Corinthian columns outside the building. There are nine gates for arrivals and departures, plus numerous vendors. Wish Atlanta had not razed their Union Station years ago. Amtrak is Federally funded, so we Georgians need to harass our Congressmen for a better train station.

## **Philadelphia**

At this station, there was a Metropolitan Lounge for Amtrak passengers to use between departures and arrivals. The hotel supposedly had a van shuttle for arriving and departing guests. So we went to the Lounge where the attendant called the hotel and was told the shuttle only runs in the morning and 4:00 to 10:00 P. M.

While waiting in the Lounge, we saw a mixture of people. After being in the train station for five hours, we were taken to our hotel by taxi, courtesy of the station. Mr. Murphy really came along. Who is Mr. Murphy? He is an invisible man who likes to cause trouble.

## **Hotel**

It was dark with misty rain, and we did not know the area, but we did manage to eat in a renovated church and see where the old U. S. Mint was located. The Old City, or Center City, was restoring some of the historic buildings. (I'm sure by now the renovations are finished.) The streets of Philadelphia are mostly one-way, very congested with only one lane in

the middle, for passing cars. Every corner has a traffic light. We left a wake-up call for 4:30 P. M. and sent Mr. Murphy home (I hope).

## **On the rails to Pittsburg**

(Note: My family has relatives living in Pennsylvania, so we have experienced many of the sites and sounds.)

We arrived at Penn Station (second one) around 6:30 A. M., just in time to join the commuters and travelers. A little way outside Philadelphia, things began to change. Amtrak uses the same tracks as Norfolk Southern. Two freight trains ahead of us delayed us for two hours, and then then finally pulled onto side tracks. Several times along this leg of travel we had three sets of rails: freight, Amtrak, freight. It's not nice to look out and see a moving freight train traveling at a high rate of speed on both sides of you. Wee bit too close!

After we lost the freight trains, I was able to take pictures of the very wide, rocky and shallow Juniata and Susquehanna Rivers. We saw Saltbox houses and three Saltbox apartment homes. Saltbox houses have cellars below the dirt line, walk-in attics, two floors of living space, and steep roofs (think snow). The lots are narrow, but deep. Houses are built close to the tracks – some are shanties and some are expensive homes.

## Horseshoe Curve

The opening of Horseshoe Curve was on February 15, 1854; it was an inexpensive method of joining the East and West through Pennsylvania. The rails' conquest of the mountains enabled the Pennsylvania Railroad to form alliances with other lines so that, by the 1880s, it had reached the mid-western cities of Indianapolis, St. Louis, and Chicago.

During the first half of the 1900s, Horseshoe Curve was considered one of the engineering Wonders of the World, along with the Panama Canal, the Empire State Building, and the Bay Bridge at San Francisco.

In time, Horseshoe Curve became not only a vital link in the nation's transportation system, but also a tourist attraction. Pennsylvania Railroad officials promoted interest by requiring conductors to notify passengers that they were approaching the curve and by featuring it on the covers of its calendars, annual reports, and other publicity. In 1865, a station was built on its eastern side, at least partly for passengers who wanted to pause at the Curve. The Curve is located between Altoona and Johnston, Pennsylvania. Because of the public's continuing interest, the National Park Service named Horseshoe Curve a National Historic Site in 1967, and it has become one of Pennsylvania's most popular historic landmarks, viewed by hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the United States and many foreign countries.

Looking out a window, we could see the river below, the side of a working coal mine, and tall trees beyond.

Before the Curve was made, railroad and canal cars were lifted and lowered from one level to another using wire or hemp ropes to pull them over the mountain. In 1854, the Curve was completed by the Pennsylvania Railroad, allowing service between the eastern seaboard and the Ohio Valley.

Today, special train engines are used to push the freight trains over the mountain. Sitting on the left side of the train, you can see the front as well as the rear; the only car you cannot see is the one you are in.

The 220-degree arc that forms Horseshoe Curve comprises two curves: the north side has a radius of 637 feet, while the south tightens to 603 feet.

Horseshoe Curve has celebrated 150 years of railroading.

(Before the Curve became popular and a fence was put up, you could put a coin on a rail for the train to flatten as a souvenir.)

## Pittsburgh

### Things we did and places we went

Our guide, Cousin Kay, met us for a day of sightseeing. The first stop was to tour Kaldwell's, a ritzy department store, and several other stores. Downtown Pittsburgh forms a triangle. Lawyers, bankers, stock-brokers and exclusive department stores are in this triangle. You will not see any skyscrapers anywhere except in the triangle. Parking in a no-parking zone is common – with a watchful eye. Outside the city, streets mostly have parallel parking.

The next stop was The Cathedral of Learning, which is a 42-story Gothic building containing 27 National Rooms and the Common Room.

Ground was broken in 1926, and building was completed in 1937. The National Rooms are used as classrooms, and the Common Room is a study area for students of the University of Pittsburgh. The Common Room covers half an acre and rises four stories.

Trivia tidbit: The Cathedral has 2,525 windows.

The Nationality Room began in 1926 to celebrate different cultures. If a room is not having class, you can go in and see the different methods of building, whether using pegs in the tables or elaborate carvings in the ceiling, walls, and/or doors.

Each country chooses its own style of architecture for its individual room. There were three that we could go in to see: 18<sup>th</sup> Century Norway, 18<sup>th</sup> Century Austria, and 6<sup>th</sup> Century English. The project is on-going, with rooms being added each year.

Currently, there are 27 rooms furnished and eight planned.

We stopped by the Allegheny Courthouse and Jail before taking on the Duquesne Incline.

The courthouse was closed, but a security guard showed us where a door was open to the Rotunda. The Rotunda has original wall-size oil paintings of four different eras of America: The Landing of the Mayflower, Colonial South, King Cotton, and Revolutionary Period. The first courthouse burned in 1852 and the second in 1882. The third one, located on the same spot as the first two, was built of pinkish-gray granite with stones eight feet long and arches over the door. It was completed in 1888. The tower is 325 feet high, and the jail was built behind the courthouse with a bridge between the two buildings. The bridge allowed prisoners to pass in security between the courthouse and the jail. A new jail has been built and the old jail became the juvenile court.

Duquesne Incline takes you 800 feet up to the top of 400-foot Mt. Washington. The original purpose of the Incline was for carrying cargo up and down the mountain. Residents were tired of walking the footpath to the top, so shortly after the Incline was built, passenger service was added. The Incline was built in 1877 and has been closed only once (1962) and repaired only once (1963).

The Incline is located where the Monongahela River and the Allegheny River meet to form the Ohio River. It is now a tourist attraction. It was time to eat, so we headed for Kay's Saltbox home. Kay had a swing in her fenced-in backyard. The purpose of the fence was to keep anyone from falling 50 feet down onto three sets of rails, or onto barges being pushed by tugboats up and down the Ohio River. (She now lives in another township.)

The next morning we saw either a Peregrine Falcon or a Sharp-Shinned Hawk; we could not tell which one was sitting on top of the swing. The bird sat a spell then spotted a squid and off it went. The Department of Natural Resources released a pair of Falcons who made a nest in the Gulf Tower.

All good things must come to an end, or at least a partial end. Our train was scheduled to leave at 11:30, but, as usual it was late, one hour.

## Sightseeing

We traveled through part of Ohio, went through part of the Amish country in Indiana, and saw fields and fields of corn. The streets were straight as an arrow, both dirt and paved.

## Chicago

Our first stop was to check in our luggage, then to find some FOOD. We then found our way to the Sears Tower.

Sears Tower is the tallest office building in the world. After we paid a fee and saw a short film, an express elevator took us up 106 floors to the Skydeck, also known as the observation enclosed platform. The total height, including the twin antenna towers, is 1,707 feet. Each window faces a different scene.

Next on the agenda was a bus tour of the city. The tour took us close to Lake Michigan, which is the second largest of the Great Lakes; Lake Superior is the largest.

Chicago has a lot of historic and interesting buildings to see: Methodist Church, tallest in the world at 558 feet; first World's Fair held; Merchandise Mart is known as the tallest building in the world; and many more.

If you are ever in Chicago, remember that all streets are two directions using the same number, i.e. 311 South Wacker Drive, 311 East Wacker Drive and 311 North and 311 West.

Chicago was established by a fur trader in 1779; years later it became known as the skyscraper city.

The Metropolitan Lounge in Chicago train station is for Sleeper Passengers only, so when the time came to board the Superliner, we were ushered out the back door before the regular passengers could board. The Superliner is a double-level train.

Next stop .....

## New Orleans

As we got nearer to New Orleans, we began to see cotton and tobacco fields as far as the eye could see. We crossed the seven-mile Lake Pontchartrain. When we were about halfway across the lake, it felt as though we were on the ocean; no land could be seen aboard the train.

Since we had been to New Orleans before, we only hit the high spots. Mike Anderson's Seafood, located on Bourbon Street, is where we wanted to eat. Billy had catfish and I had alligator tail. It is delicious. The meat looks like the white meat of a chicken. After walking around window shopping, we rode in a carriage as far as we could to our hotel.

(Note: A seafood restaurant has just recently opened selling alligator tails; however, they are not as good.)

## Going Home

Early to bed  
Early to rise  
To catch a train  
Before sunrise

The trip from New Orleans to Birmingham was boring. From Birmingham to Atlanta, we began seeing familiar sights. Our train was late arriving in Atlanta because a freight train had hit a car between Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Birmingham. No one was hurt, thank goodness.

Would we take another trip? Yes! If we could, but we can't.

+++++++ ++++++

## Some Santa Stats, from worldofchristmas.net

The **weight of Santa's sleigh** loaded with one Beanie Baby for every kid on earth, **333.333 tons**. **Number of reindeer** required to pull a 333.333-ton sleigh, **214,206**, plus Rudolph. To **deliver all his gifts in one night**, Santa would have to make **822.6 visits per second** (at 3,000 times the speed of sound).

## SANTA CLAUS AND OTHER TRADITIONS

By Jarrelyn Lang

The American *Santa Claus* was first introduced into the United States by the Pennsylvania Dutch, who called him Kris Kringle or "Chriskind." Wearing a red suit trimmed in white fur, he leaves his home at the North Pole to fly around the world each Christmas Eve, to deliver toys and gifts to good little boys and girls. Those toys are made by busy elves all year long.

*Grandfather Frost*, often seen wearing winter furs or bishop's robes, travels through Russia, bringing gifts on New Year's Day.

In the Ukrainian tradition, Christmas Eve is celebrated on January 6, with a family feast called *Sviata Vechera*, or Holy Supper. As part of the celebration, a special shaft of wheat tied with a *Rushny* (ritual towel), is carried into the home by the head of the household, the *Hospodar*, and put in a place of honor in the corner of the room as a decoration symbolic of the afterlife and the gathering of the family at this special time of year.

On Christmas Eve in Haiti, children clean their shoes, fill them with straw, and place them on the porch or under the Christmas tree. *Papa Noel* is expected to remove the straw and put his presents in and around the shoes. Christmas Day is filled with eating and singing and playing with the toys brought by Papa Noel. Children might also play with fireworks that they make themselves from chemicals bought in local stores.

On Epiphany Eve, January 5, the spirit of *Befana* visits families in Italy via their chimneys, bearing gifts and firewood. She typically carries a hand bell to announce her presence and waves a cane as a warning to bad children, who will only receive a lump of coal.

Wearing traditional bishop's robes, *Sinterklaas* rides into towns across Holland on a white horse and is typically greeted with a parade. On the evening of December 5, children of Holland put out hay and carrots for his horse. In return, they receive gifts, candies, cookies, fruit and nuts, and sometimes letters from Sinterklaas filled with clever poetry.

China's *Christmas Old Man* arrives during the Holy Birth Festival, *Sheng Dan Jieh*, a Christmas holiday celebrated by the small number of Chinese Christians. On Christmas Eve, Christian Chinese children hang up stockings specially made for *Dun Che Lao Ren* (the Christmas Old Man), to be filled with gifts from the wicker basket he carries. The Christmas Old Man is also sometimes referred to as *Kan Khoong-Khoong*, "Nice Old Father."

*Pere Noel* was the bearer of luxuries for French peasants in the Middle Ages. His gifts were left in wooden shoes set out by the children. Traditionally, he wore a long red, hooded robe edged with white fur and carried a basket, *hote*, on his back. His mean-spirited alter-ego, *Pere Fouchette*, left switches for bad boys and girls.

On Christmas Eve, children of Christian parents in Iraq read the Nativity story, from an Arabic Bible, in the courtyard while other family members hold lighted candles. Then a bonfire of dried thorns is lit; if the thorns burn to ashes, it is a sign of good luck and prosperity for the family in the coming year. Later everyone jumps over the fire's ashes three times and makes a wish. After a church service on Christmas Day, the bishop touches a member of the congregation, who then passes the touch to the person next to him/her, until everyone in the church has received the "Touch of Peace."

England's *Father Christmas* travels from home to home on a goat or a white donkey laden with treasures. One of the gifts traditionally left at each home is a Yule log for the fireplace.

– from about.com and worldofchristmas.net

# UNDERSTANDING COUSIN RELATIONSHIPS

Contributed by Joyce Arnold

Information from Kimberly Powell, genealogy guide for about.com

Most people don't think about cousin relationships in specific terms; just saying "cousin" seems good enough. When working with your family history, however, it's important to understand the various types of cousin relationships.

\***First cousins** are the people in your family who have two of the same grandparents as you.

\***Second cousins** have the same great-grandparents as you, but not the same grandparents.

\***Third cousins** have in common two great-great-grandparents and their ancestors.

When cousins descend from common ancestors by a different number of generations, they are called "removed."

\***Once removed** means there is a difference of one generation. Your mother's first cousin would be your first cousin, once removed. She is one generation younger than your grandparents, and you are two generations younger than your grandparents.

\***Twice removed** means that there is a two-generation difference. Your grandmother's first cousin would be your first cousin, twice removed, because you are separated by two generations.

Just to complicate matters, there are also many cases of **double cousins**. This situation occurs when siblings from one family marry siblings from another family (a brother and sister of one family marry a sister and brother of another family). These types of relationships can be difficult to chart. It is usually easiest to chart them one at a time, first through one family line and then through the other one.

About.com has a Genealogy Relationship Chart that maps out cousin relationships, as well as other familial relationships, at: <http://genealogy.about.com/library/relationshipchart.htm>.

AAAAAAAAAAAA    AAAAA    AAAAAAAAAAAAA

## 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](mailto:thelangs@hotmail.com) for inclusion in a future quarterly.)

**Georgia State Archives** – from Jean Shroyer

The Georgia State Archives is now allowing you to bring in your own flash drive and scan microfilm to a pdf file instead of trying to print things out on paper. If you don't have a flash stick, they will sell you one (charging more than it would cost in a store, of course).

**A Genealogical Quandary** – from Jarrelyn Lang

I recently ran across an article titled "Not Your Grandmother's Family Tree" on ancestry.com. It has to do with documenting children conceived with donor eggs and sperm or carried by surrogate mothers, as well as other alternatively-conceived children. See the article at <http://www.ancestry.com/library/view/gencomp/1662.asp>.

## **THE BUTTERFIELD STAGE LINE**

By Jarrelyn Lang

The 1849 California Gold Rush resulted in more than a quarter million men heading west to seek their fortunes. Most of them left families behind, and keeping in touch was a major effort. Mail was delivered by private companies, some under Federal contract. They used various methods and routes, including ocean steamers around South America and traveling overland across the Isthmus of Panama, but mail delivery was extremely sporadic. There was a definite need for regular mail service.

On March 3, 1857, Congress authorized a contract for the purpose of carrying letter mail twice weekly, in four-horse coaches or spring wagons suitable for carrying passengers. The contract was awarded to John Butterfield and his associates, and their Butterfield Overland Mail Company, on September 15, 1857. The contract designated that the route would run from St. Louis, Missouri, and Memphis, Tennessee, southward through Franklin (now El Paso), Texas, and Fort Yuma, Arizona, then northward to San Francisco. A further stipulation was that the 2,812-mile journey had to be covered in twenty-five days. Butterfield was paid the sum of \$600,000 per year, plus whatever he earned from passenger fares and freight, to accomplish this feat. It was the largest land-mail contract to be awarded in the United States up to that time.

John Warren Butterfield was born in Berne, New York, in 1801. By the age of nineteen, he was driving a stagecoach that delivered passengers and freight from Albany to Utica, New York. He later established stage routes throughout New York state, as well as various steamship and rail routes. In 1850 his firm of Butterfield, Wasson & Co. merged with Livingston, Fargo & Co. and Wells & Co. The new partnership became the American Express Co., with Butterfield as director.

Butterfield established 141 stations, two of which were frontier forts, along the route that the new Butterfield Overland Mail line would travel. These stations, built about every twenty miles, were used for housing Butterfield's employees, providing dining rooms for stage passengers, and maintaining corrals to hold the mules and horses necessary for pulling the coaches. The foremost prerequisite for choosing each station's site was an adequate water supply.

For drivers and station managers, Butterfield hired experienced frontiersmen, men who could be friendly with the various Indian tribes that would be encountered along the way. Next came the acquisition of more than a thousand horses, about seven hundred mules, and eight hundred sets of harness. In addition, he bought hay, grain, food, and other supplies to be stockpiled at the way stations and made arrangements for regular deliveries to each one when the coaches began rolling.

Butterfield's choice for his wagons was the Concord coach, built by the Abbot-Downing Company in Concord, New Hampshire. He ordered 250 of them, at a cost of \$1,050 each. Concords were the top of the line, the finest road vehicles of the time. The wheels were made of seasoned white oak, well dried to withstand the heat and cold. Handmade spokes were fitted to the rim and hub so carefully that it was nearly impossible to see where they joined. The body was solidly built, strengthened with iron bands, and rested on a suspension system made of three-inch-thick oxen-leather through-braces, giving the ride a swinging motion instead of

jolting the passengers up and down. The main purpose for through-braces was to prevent injury to the horses, which were more valuable than the passengers.

Adjustable leather curtains covered the windows, but they didn't prevent dust from entering the coach. When closed, they made the interior very dark and steamy hot. The inside was just over four feet wide and about four and one-half feet high. The seat backs were upholstered in damask cloth, and leather-covered pads provided some slight cushioning for the seats. Often a bench was wedged between the seats to make room for extra passengers, usually with no back support. In some coaches, a leather strap was fastened to one side of the stage and hooked across to the other side, providing some support to the bench-sitters. Because the coaches were so strong, sometimes as many as ten or twelve adventurous passengers would ride on top.

The coach came complete with a leather boot, a deck seat, brakes, and lamps. The strong box, carrying the more valuable mail, was kept under the driver's seat, which was unprotected and only about eight inches lower than the roof. There was room for one passenger to ride beside the driver. The coaches were equipped with an ingenious apparatus for braking. Sand boxes were placed over the brake pads in such a way that sand could be released when approaching the more rugged hills along the trail.

The crowning touch of each coach was its paint job. The body was red, trimmed in yellow. Two coats of paint were applied, hand-rubbed, then finished with two coats of spar varnish.

Mail sacks, often weighing as much as 250 pounds, were carried in the boot, along with passengers' baggage. Sometimes a passenger would crawl into the boot to take a nap.

John Butterfield decided to carry the mail himself for the first leg of the line's maiden voyage. Carrying two bags of mail, the first run of the Butterfield Overland Mail Company left St. Louis at 8:00 A.M. on September 16, 1858, passed through Tucson on October 2, and arrived in San Francisco on October 10, well within the 25-day requirement. Butterfield left the stage at Fort Smith, Arkansas, putting it into the capable hands of its driver.

The primary purpose for the stage line was to deliver mail, but passengers could take the trip for \$200, one way, payable in gold. Each passenger was allowed twenty-five pounds of baggage, two blankets, and a canteen. The coaches had adequate room for five or six people, but at times more were crowded in. Travelers kept firearms at the ready in case of Indian attacks. There was no time to rest at the way stations; if a passenger decided to lay over, he forfeited his seat, and it might be as much as a month before another stage would come through.

Certain rules of etiquette were laid out for those who made the journey:

- \* Don't ride with tight-fitting boots, shoes, or gloves, in case you have to walk. If the team runs away, sit still and take your chances. If you jump, nine out of ten times you will get hurt.
- \* Abstain entirely from liquor during cold weather when on the road because you will freeze twice as quickly.
- \* Don't smoke a strong pipe inside the coach.
- \* Spit on the leeward side.
- \* If you have anything to drink in a bottle, pass it around.
- \* Don't swear or lop over neighbors when sleeping.
- \* Never shoot on the road as the noise might frighten the horses.
- \* Don't discuss politics or religion.

\* Don't point out where murders have been committed, especially if there are women passengers. (Thanks to Gay Storms, "North Texas Tales," *Jacksboro (Texas) Gazette-News*, May 4, 2004.)

At its peak, the Butterfield Overland Mail Company had over 800 employees, used 250 Concord stagecoaches, and maintained 1,800 head of horses and mules. John Butterfield's motto was, "Remember, boys, nothing on God's green earth must stop the United States mail" ("Today in History," [thehistorychannel.com](http://thehistorychannel.com)), and the twenty-five day schedule was adhered to with remarkable accuracy. During the first eighteen months of operation, the stage was late reaching San Francisco only three times. Stops made at the way stations, for changing horses and feeding passengers, were kept as short as possible so that the coach could resume its journey quickly. The distance covered each day averaged 110 miles, accomplished at the breakneck speed of five and one-half miles per hour, twenty-four hours a day. The best time ever made from start to finish was twenty-one days, twenty-three hours; the incentive was some especially important Government mail.

The \$200 fare did not include meals. Passengers paid from fifty cents to a dollar for each meal they ate. The menu might include game if available, chicory coffee sweetened with molasses or brown sugar, hot biscuits or cornbread, fried pork, and, occasionally, beans.

In his book, *History of Arizona, Vol. II* (Phoenix, AZ, 1915), Thomas Edwin Farish describes his journey on a Butterfield stage: "The trip was a hard and laborious one and not to be undertaken rashly. It meant twenty-odd days confined in a hard-seated and practically springless stage coach, with the constant jar, night and day; at certain portions of the journey being exposed to rain, and at others to the dust and heat from the desert by day, and to the cold by night" (p. 12). Mail had first priority, and, if there was a larger shipment than usual, mail sacks were often put inside the coach, on the floorboards. This meant that passengers rode across the country with their chins up to their knees.

No matter how comfortable passengers might make themselves, they could not escape the dust. Conditions were particularly bad when there was a tailwind; not only dust stirred up by the horses came into the coach, but there was also dust from the coach's wheels making its way through the windows, covering everyone in grit.

Most of the roads were little better than trails made by horsemen and pack animals. There were, however, wagon roads from Tipton to Ft. Smith, Arkansas, and from El Paso to Yuma, Arizona, that had been built by the Government.

The first stage line missed Jacksboro, Texas (or *Jacksborough*, as it was spelled at that time), by about three or four miles. The town's citizens decided that the best way to entice the stage to make stops there was to build a new road, so one was built east of town to intersect the Butterfield Trail. But the Washington powers-that-be were not impressed, and the Butterfield stages continued to follow the old route toward Fort Belknap, in Young County, Texas, bypassing Jacksboro. Deciding to take matters into their own hands, one dark night several Jack County men went to a narrow passage on the stage trail south of Jacksboro, where they piled up huge boulders, much too large for a single man to move, filling the trail so that there was no way the stage could get through. Sure enough, a few days later the Butterfield stage showed up in Jacksboro, forced to turn back from the barricaded spot and find an alternate route. A way station was built later, near the end of what is now Jacksboro's South Main Street.

The story of this sabotage, which took place sometime in 1858, was told by Ida Lasater Huckabay in her book, *Ninety-Four Years in Jack County 1854-1948* (Steck Co., Austin, TX, 1949). Her father, Aaron M. Lasater (1849-1930), and his friend Jim Ham, both around nine or ten years old at the time, were posted as lookouts, one east and one west. If they spotted anyone, they were to act as if they were coon hunters, sound their horns, and ride away to the place where the men had tied their horses. Luckily, no one came, and the undertaking went without a hitch, according to Mrs. Huckabay.

All participants were sworn to secrecy. Mrs. Huckabay wrote: "To block the road carrying United States mail was a dangerous act. Mystery shrouded the whole affair on through the years that followed. The writer's father gave her this information concerning the affair some six months previous to his death. At that time he was the only survivor of the parties who blocked the road and turned the Butterfield Overland Mail route through Jacksborough" (p. 30).

The Butterfield Trail spurred settlement and laid groundwork for future development. Wise, Jack, and Young counties in Texas all gained population in the years Butterfield coaches served their towns, because of the availability of stage and mail services. News of western Texas, printed in newspapers along the Trail, also attracted travelers and settlers.

The postage rate of ten cents per half ounce resulted in receipts of \$119,766.77 in 1860 for the Butterfield line, according to *The Handbook of Texas Online*. However, in that same year, John Butterfield was forced out of the mail delivery business because of debts owed to his partners, Henry Wells and William Fargo, and the Wells Fargo Company took over the route. Butterfield retired to his home in Utica, New York, where he died in 1869.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, almost all Federal troops were withdrawn from the frontier, leaving the area unprotected. With the military taken away, Indian harassment increased. Stores of Butterfield hay near Camp Cooper and Fort Belknap were seized, leaving no feed for the horses and mules. Indians stole horses, burned buildings, and scalped and killed settlers.

In February 1861, when Texans voted to secede, the southern mail route was discontinued in favor of a more northerly route. Under the Confederate States of America, the Butterfield route operated with limited success from 1861 until early 1862, using former Butterfield employees. Wells Fargo continued its stagecoach runs to mining camps in more northern locations until the coming of the U.S. Transcontinental Railroad in 1869.

Following the Civil War, many U.S. mail contracts were drawn up for Texas routes, most of which were short runs between small towns, thereby providing stage service to nearly every Texas community. The coming of the railroads pretty much meant the end of stagecoach service, however. Stage lines continued to operate from railheads into frontier areas not reached by rail, but by the 1880s, the stagecoach era was essentially over, although there was some stage service in rural areas past 1900.

John Floyd Middlebrooks (<Anderson Joseph Middlebrooks <William Sims Middlebrooks <Thomas 1763) was one of those who secured a contract with the Federal government, to drive a stage carrying mail, passengers, and some freight between Weatherford, Texas, and Fort Sill, Oklahoma, via Fort Richardson (near Jacksboro).

In her book, Mrs. Huckabay wrote of a wager in the summer of 1859 between John Butterfield and a Captain Harrison, who commanded the *Great Eastern* steamship. The captain boasted that his vessel could go around South America and still beat Butterfield's mule teams to

San Francisco. Rising to the challenge, Butterfield bet \$100,000 that his Overland Mail would get there first. According to the story, the stagecoach arrived in San Francisco twenty days after the race began, thirty-six hours before the *Great Eastern* docked. The only source Mrs. Huckabay gave for this story was the *Dallas News* (now the *Dallas Morning News*), with no date or other details. I could find no other proof for the story, and an e-mail to the *Dallas Morning News* seeking verification was not answered.

**SOURCES:** *Ninety-Four Years in Jack County 1854-1948*, Ida Lasater Huckabay, The Steck Co, Austin, TX, 1949; "The Concord Coach," over-land.com; "Travel by Coach Along the Overland Trail," over-land.com; "Butterfield Stage Line," forttraveltours.com; "Butterfield Overland Stage Company," gvhc.org/Library; *History of Arizona, Vol. II*, Thomas Farish, Phoenix, AZ, 1915; "Butterfield Overland Mail," *The Handbook of Texas Online*; "North Texas Tales," Gay Storms, *Jacksboro Gazette-News*, Apr. 27, 2004; May 4, 2004; May 11, 2004; "Stagecoach Information," thenaturalamerican.com; "Butterfield Stage," *The Arizona Republic*, Sept. 15, 2006, online; "John Warren Butterfield," wikipedia.org; "Butterfield Overland Mail," wikipedia.org; "Today in History," thehistorynet.com.



## THE ORIGINS OF OUR CALENDAR

By Jarrelyn Lang

The Romans, under their first king, Romulus, considered the year as having 360 days; the number of months was problematical. The early Egyptians, on the other hand, are said to have thought that the 365-day year was of one month's duration. The Greek writer Plutarch suggested that the earliest Romans reckoned a year as a thirty-day month; therefore, ten Roman years equaled one Egyptian year.

Numa Pompilius, the second regent of the Romans, attempted the noteworthy task of establishing a calendar, a word derived from the Latin *kalendae*, a term the Romans used for the first day of each month. Debts were due on this day, and account books called *calendarium* were used to keep track of payments.

Previously the Roman calendar had been based on the lunar calendar, the interval between one new moon and the next. Numa, or more likely one of his scientists, figured the course of the lunar year at 354 days, and the solar year at 365¼ days. To make up this difference, the Romans added days after the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February in some years.

Originally, the Roman year was made up of ten months, March through December. The Romans considered March to be fitting for the first month because they claimed descent from Mars, their god of war, for whom the month was named. Each month averaged about the same number of days as our present months. Numa doubled the difference between the lunar and solar months, multiplying eleven by two, and added two new months, January and February, for a total of twelve months.

Numa also changed the order of the months, beginning the year with January instead of March. The month of January is named for Janus, the Roman god of the threshold. He is portrayed with two faces, one facing out of the gate and the other facing back. We usually think of January as looking forward into the future and also back into the past. The Roman months,

therefore, became Januarius, Februarius, Martius, Aprilis, Maius, Quintilis, Sextilis, September, October, November, and December. (The months Quintilis through December represent the Roman numerals V through X.)

The next change in the calendar occurred under Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. (or 45 B.C., depending on the source), with the aid of an Egyptian astronomer named Sosigenes. This Julian calendar was very much like our own. The year had 365 days, with an extra day every fourth year. The names of the months and the length of each were very similar to our present calendar. As a way of honoring Caesar for his calendar reform, the Roman Senate changed Quintilis, once the fifth month, to July, now our seventh month.

After Augustus, grandnephew of Julius Caesar, defeated Marc Antony and Cleopatra, he became Caesar Augustus, Rome's first emperor. The Roman Senate decided that he, too, should be honored with his own month. The former sixth month, Sextilis, became August, which is our eighth month. At the time, July had 31 days and August had only 30 days. Because the Senators wanted Augustus to be as highly honored as his predecessor (and because it was a Roman superstition that even numbers were unlucky), an extra day was added to August, giving it 31 days, also. The extra day was taken from the month of February, which at that time had 29 days except for leap year, when it had 30. That is why February now has 28 days, with 29 for each leap year.

In 1582 A.D., Pope Gregory XIII instituted the Gregorian calendar, which has now been universally adopted. Pope Gregory discovered that the Julian calendar was eleven minutes longer than the astronomical year. His scientists therefore ordered the absorption of 10 days, making October 5, 1582, October 15 instead. To provide for the future, Pope Gregory determined that the centesimal years, those ending in *-00* which were divisible by four, would become leap years. Thus, the difference today between the Julian and Gregorian calendars is 13 days.

**Sources:** "Roman Calendar," Wikipedia.org; "August – History of the Month's Origin," by Borgna Brunner, infoplease.com; "Numa Pompilius," by Bingley Austen, about.com: ancient/classical history; "Calendar Origins," calendar-origins.com.

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## OBITUARIES

**Samuel Ancial Middlebrook**, 69, of San Angelo, Texas, died May 23, 2008, in Methodist Hospital of San Antonio. Born May 31, 1938, in San Angelo, Samuel's parents were Elmer A. and Hazel L. Blair Middlebrook.

Samuel received his law degree, with honors, from the University of Texas School of Law. He was admitted to the Texas Bar in 1962 and was a practicing attorney in San Angelo and the surrounding area until his death. He was also a founding member of the Concho Valley Criminal Defense Lawyers Association. He was an active member of the Emmanuel Episcopal Church of San Angelo and many other civic organizations. He was also a 32<sup>nd</sup> degree Mason and a member of the Suez Shrine.

Survivors include his wife of 33 years, Shirley S. Middlebrook, son Steven A. Middlebrook, daughter Lisa Middlebrook Oetken, and grandson Bryce A. Middlebrook.

Funeral service was May 31 at Emmanuel Episcopal Church. Interment was in Eola Cemetery, Eola, Concho County, Texas, conducted by the Paint Rock Chapter of the Masonic Lodge.

Middlebrooks Family Association offers our sympathies to this Seaborn Sims descendant's family.

**Ruth Graham Campbell**, 75, of Chalmette, Louisiana, died September 12, 2008. She was preceded in death by her husband, Marcus Campbell; her parents, Elry and Vergie Ruthena Middlebrook Graham; and one brother.

Ruth, a Sims 1762 descendant, is survived by a son, Marcus Campbell; two daughters, Sandra Campbell and Lisa Campbell; a sister; and six grandchildren.

Services were held September 19 at St. Bernard Memorial Funeral Home of Chalmette, with burial in St. Bernard Memorial Gardens in Chalmette, St. Bernard Parish, LA.

Sympathies go out to all of Ruth's family from all of us at MFA.

**Bessie Amy Middlebrooks Barnett**, 93, of Bowie, Texas, left this world on September 15, 2008. A Thomas 1763 descendant, Bessie was born in Post Oak, Texas, to Atticus and Nettie Mae Umberson Middlebrooks on April 13, 1915.

Bessie was a devoted and faithful member of the First Freewill Baptist Church of Bowie. She was employed for twenty-five years by Martin Manufacturing, doing what she loved best – sewing. In addition to sewing, Bessie also loved to work in her rose garden.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Roy Barnett, her parents, four sisters, and three brothers. Survivors include one daughter, Anita Barnett Walsh, one sister, one grandson, one granddaughter, and two great-granddaughters. Bessie was also the aunt of MFA members Joyce Arnold and Lilly May West.

Services were held September 18 at First Freewill Baptist Church of Bowie. Interment was at Vashti Cemetery, located in Vashti, Clay County, Texas.

Deepest sympathies go out from MFA to all of Bessie's family.

**Maydelle Katherine Daffron Middlebrook**, 80, wife of MFA member Bob Bertram Middlebrook, passed away September 17, 2008. Maydelle, born October 20, 1927, was a lifelong resident of Fort Worth, Texas, and worked with the Fort Worth ISD prior to raising her family.

A tropical fish enthusiast, she owned and operated a tropical fish store in the late 1970s and early 1980s. She also loved poodles and usually had two of them, counting them as part of the family.

Survivors include her husband, daughters Katherine Middlebrook Falterman and Vicki Middlebrook Smith, two grandsons, and two beloved poodles.

Funeral services were held September 19 in Greenwood Chapel, with burial in Greenwood Memorial Park, Fort Worth, Tarrant Co., Texas.

MFA wishes to extend our sympathies to Bob, a Joseph 1770 descendant, and to all of Maydelle's family.

**Robin Berry Trimble**, 72, of El Dorado, Arkansas, died September 27, 2008, at the John R. Williamson Hospice House. Graveside services were held September 29 in Somerset Plantation Family Cemetery in Newellton, Tensas Parish, Louisiana. A memorial service was held at First Presbyterian Church in El Dorado on September 30.

Robin was the daughter of Ruby Middlebrook Berry and granddaughter of Thomas A. Middlebrook of Hope, Arkansas. She was also the cousin of MFA member Henry Middlebrook.

Heartfelt sympathies are extended to all the family of this Thomas 1763 descendant.

**Ila Middlebrooks Page**, 87, passed away December 10, 2008, in Wichita Falls, Texas. Ila was born in Jack County, Texas, on September 23, 1921, to Atticus Floyd and Nettie Mae Umberson Middlebrooks. On January 18, 1941, she married Troy Alton Page, who preceded her in death.

Ila was a retired toddler nursery teacher at First Baptist Church of Muleshoe, in Bailey Co., Texas. Survivors include one son, Troy Wayne Page; daughters Lawana Sue Page Kadel and Ruby Nell Page; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; and nieces Joyce Arnold and Lilly May West, both MFA members.

Services will be Monday, December 15, at the First Baptist Church of Muleshoe. Ila will be buried next to her husband in Muleshoe Memorial Cemetery, Bailey County, Texas. MFA extends sincerest sympathy to this Thomas 1763 descendant's family.