

Quarterly Newsletter
of the

**MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY
ASSOCIATION, INC.**

Founded 2001

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Editor,
Jarrelyn Lang

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Founding Editor,
Dianne Middlebrooks

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Happy St. Patrick's Day and **Happy Easter** to one and all!

President's Message March 2010

MFA 2010 Meeting/Reunion, Macon, Georgia

The location for our 2010 Middlebrooks Family Association meeting/reunion will be Macon, Georgia. Plan on setting aside September 9-11, Thursday through Saturday. The meeting will be at the Wingate Hotel, 100 Northcrest Blvd., Macon, Georgia 31210. The phone number for the Wingate is 478-476-8100. The web address for the Wingate Hotel: http://www.travelpost.com/hotels/Wingate_by_Wyndham_-_Macon/hid39531/p1.

We have a block of rooms reserved for the meeting, so be sure to mention, when you make your reservation, that you will be attending the Middlebrooks Family Association meeting/reunion. You must make your reservation before August 8 to receive the family rate of \$84.00 + tax. This rate includes their hospitality breakfast with over 30 items. The conference room where we will be meeting is located adjacent to the hotel.

We would like to encourage you to bring family history information and photos to share with other relatives. The conference room will accommodate 70-100 people, so we will also have plenty of room if you would like to display items of family history interest. We will also have the ability to copy photos or family documents you would like to share.

At this time, we have not scheduled any speakers or family presentations. If you have any suggestions on local speakers or would like to make a presentation at the meeting, please let us know. Also, if you have family stories or have documented your Middlebrooks family history and would like to make a presentation, I am sure we can make time on the agenda, although we do need an advance copy of your presentation to include in the meeting notebook.

We have two field trips scheduled so far. One will be on Thursday afternoon to the Washington Memorial Library, Genealogy, and History Room. One floor of the Library is devoted to genealogy and history. They have one of the most outstanding reference collections in the South. So, if you have Georgia relatives and enjoy family history, you are in for a treat. We spent time here researching on one of the previous MFA meetings. Side trips on your own to the county courthouses where your relatives lived can also be very rewarding. Is it time to start organizing your Georgia family history information?

On Friday morning, we will take a tour of Jarrell Plantation, a Georgia State Historic Site. This tour will have special meaning to those relatives with ancestors of Thomas Middlebrooks (b. 1763) line. Another field trip possibility close by is a trip to the Jones County Courthouse in Clinton, where our Sims (b. 1762) and Thomas (b. 1763) lived and died. The Jones County Courthouse has an excellent collection of early records. If you have any suggestions on field trip stops, please let us know.

Lastly, the success of our meeting depends on outreach to other relatives. Georgia has the highest number of Middlebrooks descendants of any other state, so we should be able to make this one of our best-attended meetings. However, we will need your help in spreading the word. We would appreciate your efforts in passing on information about the meeting to other relatives, and we can always use additional help with outreach.

If you have suggestions or questions about the 2010 Macon meeting, please contact Joyce Arnold at joycenjim@sbcglobal.net. Others serving on the committee to plan the MFA meeting are Kathleen Hunter (AR), Charles Middlebrooks (TX), Betty Holland (NC), and Beautye Tyus (TN).

MFA Quarterly Newsletter Availability and Access

After consulting with Jarrelyn Lang, Dave Clark, and Joyce Arnold, it was decided that we would make quarterly newsletters available to everyone on the website one year after they are published. For example, when Dave posts this March 2010 quarterly (for members-only

access), he will make the March 2009 issue available to anyone accessing our website: <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~midregerrata/>.

It is also your choice as to how you want to receive your issue of the quarterly. Jarrelyn will send you the quarterly via e-mail, attached as a PDF, or she can send you the link to our MFA website address above. The website link will only be for current, paid, members until after one year has expired. In either case, you can print the quarterly. If you have questions on this newsletter policy, let me know.

Neal Middlebrook

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**I was born a Middlebrook – e-mail received by Neal Middlebrook**

Please read carefully and help this woman find her Middlebrook ancestors.

The message:

Hello, my name is Sherie Budro. My birth father was Gary Lynn Middlebrook. My mother, Linda Gilmore, married him 52 years ago. She quickly divorced and married another man, Budro. He adopted me. I have been looking for Middlebrook family for quite awhile and haven't come across anyone that might have known about me. Please let me know if you're part of that family, from Texas. Thank you, Sherie Budro

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“Who Do You Think You Are?”

Ancestry.com and NBC have joined together to produce this series, bringing exciting stories that will inspire viewers to discover their roots. Share heartwarming journeys through family history with Lisa Kudrow, Matthew Broderick, Brooke Shields, Susan Sarandon, and Spike Lee as they discover the stories of their ancestors.

The seven-part series began airing on NBC March 5, 2010, with Sarah Jessica Parker. The following week's program featured Emmitt Smith. Lisa Kudrow is the subject of the March 19 airing. Look for these shows on NBC Friday nights at 8/7 Central.

(Submitted by Jarrelyn Lang)

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**First century Roman soldiers** were paid not only with money but also with a salt ration to make their food taste better. (The Latin *salarium* is where we get our word “salary,” and it's where we get the saying “worth his salt.” –David Foust, “John the Job Coach,” *The Lookout*, Sept. 6, 2009.

## Jack C. Middlebrook's U.S. Air Force Service Record: February 1946 thru November 1949

Submitted by Kathleen Hunter

Jack's story.

I signed up for service in Newport, Arkansas, and rode a train to Camp Robinson in Little Rock, Arkansas; from there I rode a bus to Texas and took my basic training at Sheppard Field near Wichita Falls, Texas.

After Basic training, I went to Georgia Field base in Spokane, Washington. From there I went to Germany, on to Rhein Main Air Force Base near Frankfurt, Germany. [I] stayed there 33 Months and 9 days. The weather was very cold there. During the stay there we were involved in getting supplies to West Berlin, known as the Berlin Airlift (described below\*), to help keep them out of the hands of the Soviet Union. Russia hated the Polish and Jewish people. Some Polish people worked as civilians for the air base there.

\*THE BERLIN AIRLIFT----From the internet ([www.spiritoffreedom.org](http://www.spiritoffreedom.org)):

At the end of WW II, a defeated Germany was divided amongst the victors, the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and France. The Soviet Union took control of the Eastern half of Germany, the Western half was divided amongst the U.S., Great Britain, and France. The capital city (Berlin) was sitting dead in the middle of the Soviet-controlled Eastern half. It was also divided into four parts, one half being Soviet-controlled, and the rest divided amongst the others. A four-power provisional government, called the Allied Control Council, was installed in Berlin. This union of governments was to control and rebuild the city of Berlin.

By 1948, it became apparent that the Western Powers' (Great Britain, France, and U.S.) plan to rebuild Germany differed from the Soviet Union's plan. Currency, German Unification, Soviet War reparations, and mere ideology were among the many differences the two sides had. There would be no compromise. As a result, Stalin wanted them out of Berlin. In early 1948, tensions between the once former Allies climaxed. On April 9, 1948, Stalin ordered all American Military Personnel, maintaining communications equipment, out of the Eastern Zone (Soviet controlled Berlin). Trains were halted on June 1 and June 10. On June 21, the Soviets halted a U.S. Military Supply Train and refused it passage to Berlin. On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, they placed armed guards aboard, attached a Soviet engine, and hauled it back to Western Germany. In a final move to spurn the Americans, British, and French out, on June 24, 1948, all land and water access to West Berlin was cut off by the Soviets. There were to be no more supplies from the West. What was going to happen? Where were the necessary supplies going to come from for the Occupation Forces? Where were the supplies for the 2,008,943 Berliners going to come from? It was a grave situation.

The Allies were certainly not going to stand for this. Diplomacy failed, ground invasions were planned, and World War Three was on the brink of existence. However, there was an alternative; supply the city by air. Supplying the Occupation forces was easy, but the entire population?

The only aircraft the Americans had available for the task were 5-year-old Douglas C-47 Skytrains, which would only hold 3.5 tons each. After some consultation, the decision was made; it was worth a try. Earlier in April, U.S. Forces airlifted in supplies to replace the ones being delayed by the Soviets. This was what became known as the "Little Lift." West Berlin had two airports, Tempelhof, which was Berlin's main airport and located in the American sector, and Gatow, in the British sector. Supplies could be airlifted in by C-47, and there was nothing the Soviet Union could do about it because, in 1945, someone had foresight. On November 30, 1945, it was agreed, in writing, that there would be three 20-mile wide air corridors providing access to the city.

When the blockade began, the Soviets rejoiced, because they believed the Western powers had only one option, to leave Berlin. But they underestimated the West airlift supplies. General [Lucius] Clay

called upon General Curtis E. LeMay, commander of USAFE, and asked if he could haul supplies to Berlin. LeMay responded, "We can haul anything." Two days later, General LeMay called upon Brigadier General Joseph Smith, commander of the Wiesbaden Military Post, and appointed him Task Force Commander of an airlift operation estimated to last a few weeks. The only U.S. aircraft initially available were 102 C-47's and 2 C-54 Skymasters. On June 26, the first C-47's landed at Tempelhof Airfield, foreshadowing the great operation that was to come. Smith dubbed the mission "Operation Vittles" because, he said, "We're hauling grub." The British called their part "Operation Plane Fare."

It was determined that the city's daily food ration would be 646 tons of flour and wheat; 125 tons of cereal; 64 tons of fat; 109 tons of meat and fish; 180 tons dehydrated potatoes; 180 tons of sugar; 11 tons of coffee; 19 tons of powdered milk; 5 tons of whole milk for children; 3 tons of fresh yeast for baking; 144 tons of dehydrated vegetables; 38 tons of salt; and 10 tons of cheese. In total 1,534 tons were needed daily to keep the over 2 million people alive. That's not including other necessities, like coal and fuel. In fact, the largest quantity of anything required was coal. It wasn't needed to heat homes as much as it was necessary for industry. In addition, there was limited electricity because the city's power plant was located in the Soviet sector, so that was cut off, too. It was determined that, in total supplies, 3,475 tons would be needed daily. A C-47 can haul 3.5 tons. In order to supply the people of Berlin, C-47's would have to make 1000 flights each day. Impossible.

General Clay determined that, with the number of airplanes available to him, he could haul about 300 tons of supplies a day; the British effort was estimated to be capable of 750 tons a day. This left a 2,425-ton deficit daily. Realizing that this kind of tonnage could not be achieved using C-47's, General Clay and General LeMay made requests for more C-54's, for they could carry over three times more cargo than C-47's. On June 27, an additional 52 Skymasters were ordered to Berlin. On June 28, President Truman made a statement that abandoning Berlin was out of the question. He then ordered US B-29 Superfortresses to be stationed at British airfields to show the Soviets that the Western powers were not taking this lightly.

By July 1<sup>st</sup>, C-54's were slowly taking over the airlift flights, and they were operating 24 hours a day. Rhein-Main Air Base in Frankfurt was made an exclusive C-54 base, and Wiesbaden was a mix of C-54's and C-47's. To accommodate these two different aircraft, General Smith established a block system, giving the bigger, faster C-54's priority. They were also given codes to identify each type and the direction it was going. C-47's going east to Berlin were called "Easy"; returning C-47's traveling west were called "Willie." C-54's had the names "Big Easy" and "Big Willie." Aircraft were also given a spacing of three minutes apart.

Lt. General William H. Tunner assumed command of airlift operations on July 28, 1948. The airlift had been operating for just over a month. Lt. General Tunner streamlined the operation even more and made the operations run more efficiently.

Life for the Berliners was hard. In the beginning, there was about a month's worth of supplies to be had, but stockpiles were dwindling. The airlift had not reached its predicted consumption rate yet, and starvation was near. In addition, when the winter of 1948-49 hit, there was little fuel to run the remaining industry, let alone heat the homes. Berliners soon found themselves chopping down all of the trees in the city for fuel, and learning what grasses could be eaten for food. It was a dire circumstance, but still they knew that their suffering in this manner would be better than succumbing to Soviet control. They had seen the treatment the Soviet soldiers had given them when they arrived. [The Soviets] were stealing everyone's valuables, systematically stripping the industry and all of the necessary equipment and shipping it back to Moscow. In addition, German wives and daughters were being raped and abused all of the time. German scientists and engineers were forcibly sent to Moscow and forced to reveal all of the German technological secrets. Starvation was far better than that treatment. When it was decided that an airlift would be attempted, Berlin's Lord Mayor Ernst Reuter held a public rally in support of the effort. The German resolve was strong, even in such a desperate situation.

One of the biggest problems during the airlift was the lack of manpower. It was decided to use the very people that the airlift was helping, the Berliners themselves. They were eager to help because it was all for them anyway. In addition, those who helped got an extra ration.

This was very important to them, as the allotted ration was very small. It also gave the people a great sense of pride that they were helping the effort. So, soon German volunteers were used for unloading crews at Tempelhof. They would board the aircraft as soon as it stopped and commence unloading. If the crews did an especially good job, they might get a reward, such as a pack of cigarettes or an extra ration. This became quite the incentive, as the record for unloading 10 tons of coal was set at 10 minutes. Another large problem was the lack of skilled mechanics. There just weren't enough mechanics to keep a fleet of C-54's maintained so that there could be no disruption in the conveyor belt of supplies to Berlin. They needed people to perform inspections, repairs, engine replacements, cleaning and servicing for these aircraft. There was a large number of skilled former Luftwaffe mechanics available right in Berlin. It was decided to create crews comprised of these men, an American maintenance supervisor, and an interpreter. Soon the manpower was there. Soon, any aircraft that wasn't being fixed, inspected, or overhauled was flying the corridors.

Pilots flying the corridors encountered numerous problems; one was the erratic German weather. Weather changed so often that it was not uncommon to leave a base in West Germany under ideal conditions, only to find impossible conditions in Berlin. What made it even more treacherous was the approach to Tempelhof. In order to land there, a pilot had to literally fly between the high-rise apartment buildings at the end of the runway so he could land. A second runway required a steep drop over a building in order to land soon enough so there would be enough runway for braking. All these conditions, plus a fully loaded C-54 with a 10-ton cargo load, were more than enough for any pilot to handle, especially during the German winter. Unfortunately, that wasn't all the pilots had to deal with. The Soviets constantly harassed the pilots during the operation. Between 10 August 1948 and 15 August 1949, there were 733 incidents of harassment of airlift planes in the corridors. Acts of Soviet pilots buzzing, close-flying, and shooting near, not at, airlift planes were common. Balloons were released in the corridors, flak was not unheard of, radio interference and searchlights in the pilots' eyes were all forms of Soviet harassment in the corridors. However, this did not stop the pilots, and the planes kept chugging on in. In spite of all these acts of harassment, no aircraft was shot down during the operation. That would have started a war, and the Soviets did not want that, especially with B-29's stationed in England. Although the B-29's that were there were not atomic bomb capable, the Soviets did not know that and did not want to find out.

So, the airlift went on. American C-54's were stationed at Rhein-Main, Wiesbaden, Celle, and Fassberg in the British Sector. The British flew Lancasters, Yorks, and Hastings aircraft. They even used Sunderland flying boats to deliver salt, using Lake Havel in the middle of Berlin for a base. Every month the tonnage increased and soon exceeded the daily requirements. Every day, tonnage records were being set, and the constant drone of airplanes overhead was music to the Berliners' ears. Rations were increased and life in West Berlin was improving.

Berlin had only two airports at the onset of the airlift, Tempelhof and Gatow. Soon, it became obvious that a third was needed. Heavy equipment was needed, but there were no aircraft large enough to carry bulky items like that. So, it was cut into smaller pieces, loaded onto one of the 5 Fairchild C-82 Packet aircraft, flown into Berlin, and welded back together again. Incidentally, a new power plant for Berlin was constructed this way also. Nevertheless, an area in the French sector was chosen to become Tegel Airfield. American, French, and German volunteers broke ground on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1948. Through dedication, hard work, and extreme organization, the first C-54 landed with its 10-ton cargo only a mere three months later. Quite a feat. Tegel, incidentally, is Berlin's main airport today. There was an obstacle in the way on the approach to Tegel, however. A Soviet-controlled radio tower caused problems with its proximity to the airfield. Pleas to remove it went unheard. Finally, on November 20, French General Jean Ganeval made a decision. If they would not take it down, he would simply blow it up. So, on December 16, the dynamite was used. The tower fell, and the obstacle was gone.

One of the most poignant stories of the Berlin Airlift was that of one 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Gail S. Halvorsen. He was somewhat of an amateur moviemaker, and on July 17<sup>th</sup>, he decided that on one of his off days, he would hitch a ride as a passenger on a C-54 and visit the city he was saving. Once at Tempelhof, Halvorsen walked to the end of the runway to film some aircraft landings when he noticed a group of children near the fence watching the planes, too. He went over to them. They asked questions about the aircraft, the cargo, and how fast it was going and things like that. During this conversation he noticed that these children, unlike others he had encountered in Europe as a ferry Command pilot during the war, did not ask him for any candy or gum, like others had. This struck him funny, and he knew that they were too proud to beg for such things. Some, having been born during wartime, had not even heard of treats like that. He made a fateful decision at that moment which was to become one of the symbols of the airlift. He reached into his pocket and found that he had only two sticks of Wrigley's Doublemint Gum. He remarked that if they did not fight over it, he would drop some candy to them if they were there the next day. They agreed, took the sticks of gum, and divided it amongst themselves, some happy to get only a piece of the wrapper. Before he left them, a child asked him how they would know it was him flying over. He replied, "I'll wiggle my wings."

True to his word, the very next day, on approach to Berlin, he rocked the airplane and dropped some chocolate bars attached to a handkerchief parachute to the children waiting below. Every day, the number of children would increase and he made several more drops. Soon there was a stack of mail in Base Ops addressed to "Uncle Wiggly Wings," "The chocolate Uncle," and "The chocolate Flier."

Halvorsen didn't tell anyone about what he was doing for fear he'd get in trouble. Then, he was called into his commander and asked what he was doing. He replied, "Flying, Sir." He then pulled out a newspaper with a picture of Halvorsen's plane and tiny parachutes trailing behind. Apparently, a newspaper reporter narrowly escaped being hit on the head with a chocolate bar. His commander wasn't happy about it, but General Tunner thought it was just the kind of gesture that the operation needed. It was dubbed "Operation Little Vittles." It continued, and many C-54 pilots participated. Candy and parachutes were assembled and sent from Chicopee Falls, MA, to assist in the gesture. In the end, over three tons of candy was dropped over Berlin, some even in the Soviet Sector. For this simple kindhearted gesture, Halvorsen became the most recognized pilot of the Berlin Airlift.

#### The Easter Parade

By April 1949, airlift operations were going rather smoothly, and General Tunner wanted to break up the monotony. He liked the idea of a big event that would show the capabilities of his command, as well as give everyone a big morale boost. He wanted to set a record. In order to do that, much planning was necessary, and it was decided that on Easter Sunday, the only cargo was to be coal. In fact, General Tunner wanted to shatter all previous tonnage records set so far. Secretly, coal was stockpiled for the event. Maintenance schedules were altered so that the maximum number of plants was available. Everyone put in extra effort for this special event. From 12: 00 PM April 15 to 12: 00 PM April 16, 1949, crews worked overtime to deliver more tonnage than had ever been delivered in a 24-hour period. When it was over, 12,941 tons of coal had been delivered as a result of 1,383 flights without a single accident. As a matter of fact, as a result, the daily tonnage also increased from 6,729 tons a day before the Easter Parade, to 8,893 tons per day, an unexpected benefit. This was the straw that broke the camel's back.

#### The End of the Blockade

On May 12, 1949, the Soviets capitulated. The blockade was over. It was decided to continue supplying Berlin by air in addition to the land route in order to build up a sufficient supply of goods. The airlift officially ended on September 30, 1949, fifteen months after its meager beginnings in June of '48. In total, the U.S. delivered 1,783,572.7 tons, while 541,936.9 tons were delivered by the British, totaling 2.3 million tons from 277,569 total flights to Berlin. C-47's and C-54's alone traveled over 92 million miles in order to do so. These were astounding figures, considering that in the beginning it seemed impossible

to even try. Nevertheless, even the greatest operation is not without risk. A total of 101 fatalities were recorded as a result of the operation, including 31 Americans, mostly due to crashes.

60 Years Later (The Associated Press)

#### RAISIN AIRDROP MARKS BERLIN AIRLIFT'S SUCCESS

BERLIN – A World War II-era cargo plane dropped hundreds of boxes of chocolate-covered raisins on tiny parachutes into a crowd of tens of thousands on Tuesday, re-creating a highlight of the operation that kept West Berlin out of Soviet hands.

The drop came on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day the Soviets lifted their blockade strangling West Berlin.

More than 100,000 Berliners turned out in honor of the 120 American, British, and French veterans of the airlift who were on hand at Tempelhof, the hub for U.S. planes during the airlift, for the celebrations.

U.S. airlift pilot Gail Halvorsen said the city's around 2 million citizens were the unsung heroes.

"They slept in bombed-out buildings with little heat—but they said, "We'll never give in," Halvorsen told the Associated Press. "They said, "We don't have enough to eat, just give us a little—someday we'll have enough—but if we lose our freedom, we'll never get it back."

I (Jack) returned to Little Rock at the end of service time and married Jean, to whom I am still married.

What a wonderful privilege to be a part of an effort of this magnitude.

Jack told this story to his cousin, Kathleen Hunter, a few months before he died. (See Jack's obituary on p. 21.)

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GENEALOGY RESEARCH GUIDES – STATE CENSUS RECORDS

Contributed by Neal Middlebrook

Here is some useful information for some State Census Records and other censuses taken during non-Federal Census years. (Note: this is not a complete listing of all available state census records. Also, items at Ancestry.com require a subscription to their online genealogy records collection.)

► General:

- Online State Census Indexes & Offline Finding Aids for Colorado, Dakota Territory, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, & New Mexico Territory 1885-1895
- State Census Records from FamilySearch Labs, free to use; click on "record search" when you get there; note that FamilySearch Labs is testing these and other record sets, so there may be downtime or occasional errors; includes:
 - Florida State Census Records 1885, 1925, and 1935 (census images only, no index)

- Massachusetts State Census Records and Index 1855 (not yet complete; presently includes Boston only), and 1865
 - Minnesota State Census Index 1895
 - New York State Census 1865 (images only), 1892 (index & images), and 1905 (images only)
 - Rhode Island State Census Index 1915
 - South Dakota State Census Index and Images 1905, 1915, and 1925
 - Wisconsin State Census Records 1855, 1875, 1885, 1895, and 1905
- ▶ **Alabama:**
- ◉ Alabama State Census Records 1820-1866 (Ancestry) includes digitized images of the census records; records do not exist for every county
 - ◉ Alabama Department of Archives & History State Census Enumerations, info for offline searching
- ▶ **Arizona:**
- ◉ Arizona Territory Census, 1864 (Ancestry)
- ▶ **Colorado**
- ◉ Colorado 1885 State Census – Arapahoe County, includes the present Denver, Arapahoe, & Adams counties
 - ◉ Colorado State Census Index & Images 1885 (Ancestry), includes digitized images of the census records
- ▶ **Florida:**
- ◉ Florida State Census Collection, 1867, 1875, 1885, 1935, & 1945 Index & Images (Ancestry), includes digitized images of the census records
- ▶ **Illinois:**
- ◉ Illinois State Census Collection, 1825-1865 (Ancestry), includes digitized images of the census records; coverage varies by year and county
 - ◉ Illinois State Census Records, microfilm information from the Illinois State Archives
- ▶ **Iowa:**
- ◉ Iowa State Census Collection, 1836-1925 (Ancestry), coverage varies by year and county
 - ◉ Iowa State Census for Warren County, Iowa, 1853, online transcription
 - ◉ Iowa State Census Records Search Engine (partial)
- ▶ **Kansas:**
- ◉ Kansas State Census Collection, 1855-1925 (Ancestry)
 - ◉ Kansas State & Territorial Census Records, 1855-1930, info for offline searching
 - ◉ Kansas State Census 1895, includes partial online index
- ▶ **Maine:**
- ◉ Special Maine 1837 Census
- ▶ **Massachusetts:**
- ◉ See the General Section above
- ▶ **Michigan:**
- ◉ General Research with Michigan State Census Records, information from the Michigan Department of History, Arts, and Libraries
 - ◉ Also see the General Section above

- ▶ **Minnesota:**
 - ◉ Minnesota Territorial & State Censuses, 1849-1905 (Ancestry), database contains Minnesota territorial and state censuses for 1849-1850, 1853, 1855, 1857, 1865, 1875, 1885, & 1905
- ▶ **Mississippi:**
 - ◉ Mississippi State & Territorial Census Collection, 1792-1866 (Ancestry)
- ▶ **Missouri:**
 - ◉ Missouri State Census Collection, 1844-1881 (Ancestry), very few records have survived
 - ◉ Missouri State Census Records Information, info for offline searching – very few records have survived
 - ◉ Missouri Territory Census 1805
 - ◉ 1776 Reconstructed St. Louis Census
 - ◉ St. Charles County, Missouri, 1876 State Census Index
- ▶ **Nebraska:**
 - ◉ Nebraska Territorial Census Records, 1854, 1855, 1856, & 1865, plus 1869 State Census (partial for some years)
 - ◉ Nebraska State Census Index, 1885 (Ancestry)
- ▶ **New Jersey:**
 - ◉ New Jersey State Census, 1895 (Ancestry)
 - ◉ New Jersey State Census Records Information, 1855-1915, from the New Jersey State Archives
 - ◉ Passaic County and Atlantic City Census Index, 1885
- ▶ **New Mexico:**
 - ◉ See the General Section above
- ▶ **New York:**
 - ◉ New York State Census Records Information, 1825-1925, basic information about New York State censuses, including links to some online indexes
 - ◉ New York City 1890 Police Census Research Guide (Manhattan), a special census taken by NYC policemen in Manhattan in 1890 – about 88% of the census books have survived
- ▶ **North Carolina:**
 - ◉ State Census of North Carolina, 1784-1787, searchable scanned book (Ancestry)
- ▶ **North Dakota:**
 - ◉ North Dakota State Censuses, 1915 & 1925 (Ancestry)
- ▶ **Oklahoma:**
 - ◉ Oklahoma Territorial Census, 1890 & 1907 (Ancestry), 1890 census includes Beaver, Canadian, Cleveland, Kingfisher, Logan, Oklahoma, & Payne counties; 1907 census is for Seminole County only; census records for other OK counties have not survived for 1907
- ▶ **South Dakota:**
 - ◉ South Dakota Territorial Census, 1885 (Ancestry)
 - ◉ South Dakota State Census, 1895 (Ancestry)
 - ◉ For 1905, 1915, & 1925, see the FamilySearch link in the General Section above

- ▶ **Texas:**
 - ◉ Original Residents of Texas, 1782-1836 (not complete; includes Census Reports of Texas, 1835)
- ▶ **Washington:**
 - ◉ State of Washington Assorted Census Records, includes many online indexes for various counties & years 1847-1890s, and the 1910 Federal Census
- ▶ **Wisconsin:**
 - ◉ Wisconsin State Census Index and Images, 1895 and 1905 (Ancestry), includes digitized images of the census records
- ▶ **Helpful Book:**
 - ◉ *State Census Records by Ann Lainhart*, an overview of what is available in state census records, listed by state and sometimes by individual county
- ▶ **Microfilm Guide:**
 - ◉ To find state census records in the LDS Family History Library Catalog, do a place search for the state you need, then look for the census topics for that state. Microfilm rolls can be ordered for viewing from many local Family History Centers, for a fee.

Not all states took their own censuses, and the number and frequency of the enumerations in those states that did take censuses vary greatly from state to state. Information given in censuses is often suspect: just who gave the information? The more times you can find your ancestors in any census records, the better picture you can draw of their lives.

Many of the state censuses ask different questions from the ones on Federal censuses, and this can provide additional information about your families. It is not until the 1880 Federal census, which asks for "relationship to head of household," that one can be sure how all members of a household relate to each other. New York began to ask for "relation to family head" in 1855. Censuses in Michigan in 1854, Massachusetts in 1865, and Rhode Island in 1875 ask for marital status (whether single, married, or widowed).

Federal censuses give only state or country of birth, whereas some of the state censuses will give county of birth for those born in that state. Iowa does this in 1885 and 1895 and New York in 1855, 1865, and 1875. In the 1865 Rhode Island state census, the town of birth is given for those born in Rhode Island.

In the 1855 and 1865 Massachusetts state censuses, the forms simply ask for state or country of birth; however, some censuses asked for names of the specific town of birth in both censuses. In some cases, this is just for those born in Massachusetts, but in other cases it is for everyone. Specific birthplaces are given for everyone in both 1855 and 1865 for Ipswich, Massachusetts, where many English weavers lived, and for them it gives the county or parish of birth in England.

State censuses can fill in gaps in missing Federal censuses, especially the missing 1890 census. Many states have censuses within a few years of 1890: Colorado, 1885; Florida, 1885; Indiana, 1889; Iowa, 1885 and 1895; Kansas, 1885 and 1895; Michigan, 1894; Minnesota, 1885 and 1895; New Jersey, 1885 and 1895; New York, 1892; Oregon 1885 and 1895; Rhode Island, 1885; South Dakota, 1885 and 1895; Washington, 1889 and 1892; and Wisconsin, 1885 and 1895.

State census records are still a largely unused source, especially by those new to genealogical searching. They are not all as readily available as the Federal censuses, but because of the additional information they may contain, they are well worth the extra time and trouble it may take to find them. They can help fill in gaps for missing Federal censuses and fill out the information you have on your families.

Sources: “Genealogy Research Guides – State Census Records,” researchguides.net/census/state; Ann Lainhart, “State Censuses,” *Family Chronicle*, online.

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## The Anderson Crawford Middlebrooks Family of Oconee County, Georgia

By Evelyn Bugg

On December 5, 1801, Watkinsville was named the county seat of the newly formed Clarke County, Georgia. Clarke County was cut from Jackson County and originally contained Oconee County and parts of Madison and Greene counties. The county seat was moved to Athens, Georgia, in 1872—a thriving university town. Oconee County was created in 1875 to satisfy southwestern Clarke County residents’ demands for their own county after the county seat was moved. Oconee County was named for the river that forms its eastern border, and Watkinsville was retained as the county seat.

Farmington is one of the oldest communities in Oconee County, having been settled about 1830. Prior to that time, Salem had been a bustling community. It seems the railroad played a part in helping to establish the town of Farmington when it by-passed Salem and was built near Farmington. The town had a couple of names before it became Farmington: Williams Crossroads and Farmersville. Farmington is located six miles south of Watkinsville on Highway 441 and got its name because of it being in an agricultural area. It was incorporated in 1919, but the incorporation expired in 1995. “In 1830, according to the census, families already in Farmington who later were known as owners of large plantations, were the Middlebrooks, Williamsons, Thrashers, Prices, Overbys, and Knotts.”<sup>1</sup>

The Middlebrooks of Farmington are believed to be descendants of Joseph Middlebrooks who was born in 1610 in England and came to Massachusetts in 1635. Over the generations, various members of the family migrated south. This particular line in Oconee County migrated first to Caswell County, North Carolina, and eventually to Georgia. John Middlebrooks, Sr., was the head of one of these families that came to live in North Carolina. His son John Middlebrooks, Jr. (John ’55) married Mary Lyon July 16, 1781, in North Carolina, started his family, and then moved to Newton County, Georgia, in 1784. Mary died soon after arriving in Georgia and by 1785 her widowed husband had remarried to Milly Sutton. Together they had four children.

John’s son Anderson Crawford Middlebrooks was born January 1, 1784, before his family left North Carolina. He moved to the Salem District of Clarke County about 1830 and began acquiring land. Anderson was widowed twice. His first wife, Dorenda Jackson, died October 6, 1815, three months after the birth of their daughter, Lodisca. Sadly, the baby died about three weeks after birth. Anderson subsequently married Mary Barton, who died February 27, 1833, with no issue. He then married Mary Thrasher about 1833-34 and together they raised five sons. His first son, John Anderson, died in 1843 before the age of ten, and his youngest son, William David, died at South Mountain, Maryland, on September 12, 1862, at the age of eighteen, while fighting for the Confederacy. He never married.

When Anderson died in 1871 at age 87, he left a considerable estate to his three living sons, James Lyon, Zara Barton, and Thomas Elder Middlebrooks. Anderson and his wife Mary are buried at the site

of the first Baptist church in Farmington, Georgia, on Freeman's Creek. Freeman Creek Baptist Church was established in 1795. Over the years, due to growth in membership, a new church was built and in 1897 relocated. Presently, "the cemetery is located .3 mile west of Mt. Zion Church, 50 yards into the woods on the north side of the road."<sup>2</sup>

James Lyon (2<sup>nd</sup> son of Anderson C. Middlebrooks) and his wife Ann Olivia Overby Lenoir appear to have married in the late 1860s. Ann was a widow with two small children. They built a two-room log cabin in the middle of Farmington which he enlarged over the years as his family grew. The original house is now encompassed by a much larger two-story house. It is known as the Middlebrooks Cabin even though the cabin is no longer visible. James and Ann had three children together: Minnie Olivia, Earnest A., and Percy Middlebrooks. It was into this family that Lottie Moon came shortly after 1865 to become a tutor and governess. (See "Women – Past and Present, Lottie Moon," by Jarrelyn Lang & Dianne Middlebrooks, Nov. 2005 MFA Quarterly, p. 3.). Minnie married and moved to Alaska and Washington State. Earnest, too, moved west to Oregon. Percy remained in the Oconee/Clarke County area and became a lawyer, marrying, but later divorcing.

In September 1892 James Lyon and his wife sold some acreage (possibly some of his father's holdings he had inherited) to Mary E. Middlebrooks Haygood (daughter of his brother Zara Barton) and her husband Dr. Walter Truman Haygood, for them to build a house on. (Side note: Mary's brother-in-law, W. A. Zuber [husband of Daisy], was one the contractors on this new house). However, Mary and Walter did not get to live there long; Dr. Haygood died of appendicitis in 1907. The house was rented for several years and in 1918 it was purchased by the Preston Family and stayed in this family until 2007. This house, known as Preston House, is currently (2010) owned by Phil Goulding.

James Lyon died at St Mary's Hospital in Athens, Georgia, April 30, 1908, at age 72 and was buried at Farmington Cemetery alongside his wife Ann Olivia who died five years earlier.

Zara Barton Middlebrooks (3<sup>rd</sup> son of Anderson C. Middlebrooks) was born in Newton County, Georgia. When he was 21, he married Martha Elizabeth Maddox. Together they had ten children: James H., William D., John B., Mary E., Charles Anderson, Martha C. (Mattie), Anna Crawford (See "A Surprise Found When Looking for Someone Lost," by Evelyn Bugg, Apr/Jun 2007 MFA Quarterly, p. 8, for more information on Annie), Eula Lee, Thomas A., and Daisy B. Middlebrooks. Zara was in the Civil War, being an original member of the Clarke Rifles, Third Regiment. He participated in over 50 battles with the Army of Northern Virginia, enlisting Aug 20, 1861, and he was discharged in 1862 after being wounded and furnishing a substitute. When he died in 1926 at age 90, only six of his children were still living.

Anderson's 4<sup>th</sup> son, Thomas Elder, lived south of Farmington on Highway 441, on a plantation known as the White House. He and his wife Lanette are buried in Oconee Cemetery. Thomas, too, was a member of the 3<sup>rd</sup> GA Regiment and "was a veteran of the War Between the States enlisting as a Private on August 20, 1861. He was so severely wounded that he lost a leg in action at Griswoldville, Ga."<sup>3</sup> Thomas was at the Ocmulgee Hospital in Macon, Georgia, in 1865. He was promoted to full 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant before war's end. He was a cotton planter and owned many acres. He and his wife raised seven children: Mary Lou, W. Guy, M. Jessie, Flora, Chester O., Ruth, and Tom (daughter). About 1907 Thomas and Lanette moved into Athens to be near their children and grandchildren. Thomas was 84 when he died in 1924 and all of his children survived him.

From just one son (Anderson Crawford) of John '55, three additional families raised children in the Oconee/Clarke County area—a total of twenty children, and only two moved from the area. Three of his five sons participated in the Civil War. (No information has been found to indicate James Lyon served.) The three sons who were living at the end of the war lived long and prosperous lives. They have left a tremendous legacy. There are descendants of these early Middlebrooks families still living in this area today.

**Sources:**

1. "The History of Oconee County, Georgia," compiled by Margaret F. Sommer, 1993.
  2. Transcribed Farmington Cemetery records by Natalie Davis and Tricia Miller, 2005.
  3. Obituary for T. E. Middlebrooks, *The Madisonian*, 15 Aug 1924, pg 2.
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"The Anderson House," by Sue Belle Preston Lutz.



## **TWO GENEALOGICAL LIBRARIES TO MERGE**

Contributed by Evelyn Bugg

Two large regional genealogical libraries are set to merge, creating what may be the most comprehensive independent genealogical facility in the southeastern United States.

Elmer's Genealogy Library in Madison, Florida, established by Judge Elmer C. Spear, will be merging with the Huxford Genealogical Library in Homerville, Georgia. The merged library will be housed in Homerville. The Madison library's materials will be moved to the Homerville site. The combined Huxford-Spear library will be moving to a larger Clinch County facility provided by the city of Homerville.

The new library will be named the Folks Huxford and Elmer Spear Genealogical Library. This new facility will be managed by the Huxford Genealogical Society.

The merger has already been approved by the Board of Directors of both libraries, and the transfer of more than 25,000 books, nearly 4,000 rolls of microfilm, and more than 10,000 sheets of microfiche will start taking place as soon as the City of Homerville completes the renovation of the building that will house both libraries. The City of Homerville provides utilities as well as housing for the Huxford Genealogical Library and will continue to do so.

Since Elmer's Genealogy Library is a 501(c) (3), a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation, the existing library building on Range Avenue in Madison, Florida, also will be donated to the Huxford Genealogical Library. The decision to merge was made to ensure the survival of Elmer's Genealogical Library into the future.

The Huxford Genealogical Society has 800 memberships, representing more than 1,200 people; married couples are counted as one membership. The existing Huxford Library has thousands of materials, including Judge Huxford's original card files on 5,000 families. The Huxford files have continued to grow, methodically collecting family files from numerous parts of the United States, a collection that Judge Huxford started nearly 100 years ago. In addition to the primary focus on the southeastern U.S., the Huxford collection also includes many volumes for all of the states in the Eastern U.S. For example, the Huxford Collection includes more than 1,000 volumes from the Pennsylvania archives. The Huxford Library collection is insured for \$1 million.

Elmer's Genealogy Library members will be extended an invitation to transfer their membership to the new, larger library.

Boe Williams, the Huxford chairman, described the Huxford Collection as being like a rifle, methodically aiming to complete certain states and regions, while Elmer has worked more like a shotgun, collecting research materials from everywhere, as long as they have come within the collector's reach.

Williams has been involved with the Huxford Library since its inception in the early 1970s. Judge Folks Huxford collected research materials throughout his life (1893-1981). He ran a magazine for years but lost it in a business deal in his later years. From this heartbreak, Huxford conceived the idea of a society committed to preserving and building upon his life's work. Judge Huxford had the foresight to realize he wouldn't live forever, so with the Huxford Society, his work would continue after he died.

Elmer Spear has a similar thought behind the merger for his library. Spear wants to ensure his life's work will not be scattered to the winds. By merging Elmer's Genealogy Library with the Huxford Library, his work will remain in one location, combined with the existing Homerville collection, all continuing to grow as time passes.

Williams has said it is hard to estimate the potential of this merger. He has cited an example from the Huxford Library where a man wished to find his roots. The man's surname was LEE. Williams noted just how many Lees have lived in the region through the past three or four centuries. Still, with only the man's great-grandfather's name, the Huxford materials permitted him to trace his Lee family roots to the 1600s within one afternoon.

Naming states like Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio that will be well represented in the merged collection, Williams said that some south Georgia folks may wonder what these states have to do with a south Georgia family. Current generations often think that their ancestors from South Georgia didn't move; however, they often did move to other parts of the country. Some stayed away and some came back to South Georgia.

Homerville is located between Waycross and Valdosta, Georgia, easily reached from both I-10 and I-75. More information concerning the Huxford Genealogical Society and Library, and the large collection of the Wiregrass area of Georgia's genealogical books for sale by the Society, is available on the Huxford website at [www.Huxford.com](http://www.Huxford.com).

**Source:** Robert B. Noles, "Merger of Huxford and Elmer's Libraries Will Give South Georgia a Huge Genealogical Resource," *The Scribe*, newsletter of the Georgia Genealogical Society, Nov. 2009, p. 4.



## RANCH LAND THAT BUILT A CAPITOL

By Jarrelyn Lang

By the mid-1870s, the Texas Capitol in Austin, built in the 1850s, was shabby and too small to house the state's officials, so a Constitutional Convention was called for the purpose of determining how to raise funds for a new building. The plan was to set aside 3,000,000 acres of public land located in the Texas Panhandle, to be sold in order to fund the project. This land was a small portion of the tens of millions of acres, located throughout Texas, that were deeded to the state by the Federal government when Texas joined the Union in 1845.

Action dragged, however, until a fire destroyed the old capitol building on November 9, 1881. The governor, Oran M. Roberts, called a special session of the Legislature. A Capitol Board, composed of the



governor, comptroller, treasurer, attorney general, and land commissioner, was appointed by the Legislature to sell the Panhandle land and contract for the building construction. Because the area was so remote, it had never been surveyed; so, in addition to the 3 million acres, the winning bidder would receive an extra 50,000 acres just for surveying the region.

Early in 1882, Mathias Schnell of Rock Island, Illinois, accepted the contract in return for the land. He then transferred three-fourths of his interest in the land to Taylor, Babcock, and Company of Chicago, which organized the Capitol Syndicate. The Syndicate's leading investors, all of Illinois, were brothers Charles B. and John V. Farwell, along with Col. Amos C. Babcock and Col. Abner Taylor. Several months later, Schnell also assigned the other fourth of his contract to the Syndicate after rumors circulated that he had bribed one of the capitol commissioners and had tried to bribe the designing architect, Elijah E. Myers. The Syndicate established the XIT Ranch in the unsettled Panhandle area, to utilize the land until it could be sold.

Money to build the capitol and meet the tremendous operating expenses of the ranch was borrowed from the Capitol Freehold Land and Investment Company, Limited. Incorporated in London, England, late in the fall of 1884 with an authorized capital of \$15 million, the company was organized by John Farwell. Wealthy English investors like the Earl of Aberdeen and Henry Seton-Karr were shareholders in the investment company but not in the ranch.

Total cost of erecting the state capitol, which was completed in April 1888, was \$3,744,630.60. Of this amount, the Capitol Syndicate's expenditures were \$3,224,593.45. About \$500,000 was assumed by the state of Texas (*The Handbook of Texas Online*). Groundbreaking for the capitol took place in 1882. Built with red granite from Burnet County, the majestic building was dedicated on May 16, 1888. Second in size only to the Capitol in Washington, D.C., the building has 393 rooms, a magnificent rotunda, and a dome that rises to 311 feet, seven feet higher than the nation's Capitol. The structure, which is the largest state capitol on the North American continent, still houses the Lone Star State's government.

In February 1888, a statue of the Goddess of Liberty was raised to the top of the capitol dome. A replica now sits atop the dome; the original is in the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, located a few blocks from the capitol. Bob Bullock served Texas as a Representative in the State Legislature, Assistant Attorney General, Secretary of State, Comptroller of Public Accounts, and Lieutenant Governor.

The XIT Ranch started operations in 1885. Since the 3,000,000-acre ranch covered all or parts of ten Texas Panhandle counties, rumor had it that *XIT* stood for "Ten In Texas." (*X* is the Roman numeral for the number 10.) However, the *XIT*'s brand arose from the low-cost, practical use of a single-bar branding iron, used to make an *X*, an *I*, and a *T*. Using the single-bar iron meant that no expensive custom-ordered, shaped, brand was needed. The brand was designed by the ranch's first foreman, Ab Blocker, a South Texas trail driver, and B.H. "Barbecue" Campbell, first general manager of the *XIT*. Their aim was to create a brand that cattle rustlers could not easily alter. Eventually however, rustlers managed to come up with a way to change the brand into what became known as the Texas Star, or Star Cross, if the *T* was crossed crooked. The five-inch-tall brand was burned onto the right thigh. In addition, the last digit of the year was branded on the right shoulder and the division number on the right jaw.

*XIT* land covered all or portions of Dallam, Hartley, Oldham, Deaf Smith, Parmer, Castro, Bailey, Lamb, Cochran, and Hockley counties. The ranch was roughly thirty miles wide, of irregular shape, and bordered on or near the Texas/New Mexico border on the west side and the Texas/Oklahoma border on the north side, extending about 220 miles, almost to the area that was to become Lubbock, on its southern boundary. In the 1880s, the ranch was the largest ranch in the world under fence.

The *XIT* ranch was intended as a new way of raising cattle – by confining them as opposed to raising them on the open range. By 1885, 476,000 acres had been fenced, and eventually 6,000 miles of barbed wire fencing was completed – enough barbed wire to stretch from New York to Los Angeles twice, with several hundred miles left over. Four strands of Brink's Buckle fencing, a flat strip of sheet metal with a two-point clip-on sheet-metal barb (later given the nickname of ribbon barbed wire) were stapled into cedar posts, which were set every thirty feet.



The XIT was an example of how barbed wire could effectively fence animals *in*, in addition to being useful for farmers who wanted to keep animals *out*. The success of the XIT and another Panhandle ranch, the Frying Pan, ensured the preservation of the barbed wire industry.

For convenience, the ranch was cut into eight divisions. Buffalo Springs, near the Oklahoma border in Dallam County, was used as a steer pasture. Middle Water, located twenty-one miles southwest of the present town of Dalhart in Hartley County, was reserved for culls and undesirables. Ojo Bravo ("Bold Spring"), also in Hartley County, south of the Romero community and considered the most scenic part of the ranch, grazed high-grade cattle. Another Hartley County division, Rita Blanca ("White Pearl"), located west and south of Channing, was utilized as a beef ranch. Escarbada ("EscarPMENT"), in the southwest corner of Deaf Smith County, ran graded cattle. Spring Lake, in northern Lamb County, was a breeding pasture, while Casas Amarillas ("Yellow Houses") was a general pasture in southern Lamb County. The eighth division, which came about with the building of the Pecos and North Texas Railway line in 1898, was centered in Bovina, in Parmer County. Another railroad shipping point was Perico, near the Farwell Park line camp in the Dallam County Buffalo Springs division.

On July 1, 1885, the first herd of 2,500 head of longhorn cattle, driven up from Mexico through central and south Texas, arrived at Buffalo Springs, the ranch's first headquarters. By November 1886, some 110,721 head of cattle, valued at \$1,322,587, had been purchased. After 1887, large-scale buying ceased, and the herd averaged out at 150,000 head.

Each division had a section headquarters, a foreman, its quota of employees and horses, and its specific characteristics. When the Fort Worth and Denver Railway was built through the Panhandle in 1887, the new town of Channing emerged as a shipping point in Hartley County. As a result, Channing became the center of ranch activities. The main XIT headquarters, containing twenty-two rooms, was established there.

In addition to its Panhandle acreage, the XIT maintained maturing grounds for its cattle in the northern Plains, first in South Dakota and later on a range north of Miles City, Montana. For eleven consecutive years, 12,500 cattle were driven annually to these northern pastures and fattened for the Chicago markets. Overall, some eight million XIT head were driven to market. Beginning in 1889, a program of breeding and herd improvement was launched with the introduction of Hereford, shorthorn, and Aberdeen-Angus cattle.

The 150 or so cowboys who rode for the XIT earned between \$25 and \$30 per month, plus three meals a day and a company horse, chosen from the 1,000 head carrying the XIT brand. They furnished their own clothing, bedding, saddle and tack, and feed for their own horses, two being the maximum number allowed. Even visitors were expected to pay for or provide food for themselves while on the ranch.

One cowboy who worked for the XIT was none other than the famous Oklahoman Will Rogers. Rogers worked on the Spring Lake Division in 1898. He recalled later that the XIT region was the "prettiest country I ever saw . . . prairie lakes scattered all over it . . . there wasn't a house or chicken in the whole country. And mirages! You could see anything in the world – just ahead of you" (Franz, p. 49).

Cowboys dealt with problems such as fence-cutting, cattle rustling, and wild predators, mainly wolves, on a daily basis. They fought hardships such as droughts, blizzards, and prairie fires. In addition, XIT cowboys were expected to follow certain rules, 23 in all. Card-playing, drinking, and gambling were forbidden. The only hunting allowed was for food, but there was to be no running of game on company horses. Stealing cattle meant instant separation from the ranch, and once fired from the XIT, a cowboy had little hopes of finding work at another ranch. For entertainment, ranch hands could enjoy dances and other social gatherings at Channing, especially during holidays and special occasions.

Possibly the most surprising rule was #11, which stated that "No employee of the Company, or of any contractor doing work for the Company, is permitted to carry on or about his person or in his saddlebags, any pistol, dirk, dagger, slingshot, knuckles, Bowie knife, or any similar instruments for the purpose of offense or defense. Guests of the Company, and persons not employees of the ranch temporarily staying at any of its camps, are expected to comply with this rule, which is also State Law" (*Friena* [Texas] *Star*).

As smaller ranchers moved into the Panhandle and the adjacent New Mexico Territory, instances of fence-cutting and cattle rustling increased. XIT men, along with certain "hired guns," often formed vigilante posses that struck back at known rustler abodes. Many cowboys also earned extra money by "wolfing," killing predatory wolves and collecting a high bounty for each pelt turned in. Wolves took a terrible toll among cattle, particularly during the calving season.

During "Barbecue" Campbell's tenure as manager, contracts for water wells were made with drillers, fencing projects were continued, and in 1886 the first ranch house was built. Frustrating delays in drilling wells, especially during the early years, sometimes resulted in cattle dying from lack of sufficient water. Because of such difficulties, in addition to droughts, blizzards, prairie fires, and declining markets, the XIT operated largely without profit throughout most of its lifespan. By 1900 there were 325 windmills and 100 dams on the ranch, all at a cost of around \$500,000.

In 1887 reports of inconsistencies in the XIT's management, including inferior cattle and the presence of wanted outlaws on the range, led to an investigation conducted at the Syndicate's request by state Senator Avery L. Matlock. Consequently, manager "Barbecue" Campbell resigned. Senator Matlock took over the management until January 1, 1888, when Albert G. Boyce came in as the new general manager. Boyce insisted on strict adherence to the ranch laws as set up by the Syndicate. Under his rule, the XIT reached its peak, with 150 cowboys who rode 1,000 horses and branded 35,000 calves in one year.

Cattle prices crashed in 1886 and 1887. By the fall of 1888, the ranch was unable to sell its cattle and break even. Rustlers and predators, especially wolves, were taking their toll, leading to further losses for the Syndicate.

By the late 1890s, the British creditors were clamoring for their money, and the Capitol Syndicate began the gradual process of selling out. To better promote its vast real estate holdings, the Syndicate established the office of Land Commissioner. That position went to F.W. Wilsey. Both Wilsey and a man by the name of James D. Hamlin were stationed at the town of Farwell (located in Parmer County and named for the Farwell brothers), to represent the owners.

Two experimental "poor farms," as the cowboys called them, were set up, one of which was located about seven miles southwest of Channing, in Hartley County. Operated by the ranch, these experimental farms used the newest equipment and experienced farmers, and they followed the latest advice of the Department of Agriculture. Their records became proof to new settlers that the land was good farmland and was capable of raising any number of dry-land grains along with livestock. By 1905 much of the XIT land was already being divided into small tracts and sold to farmers, at \$2.50 an acre.

In 1909 nearly all of the British bonds that had helped start the enterprise were redeemed in full, much to the satisfaction of the English investors. The last of the XIT cattle were sold on November 1, 1912, and the Capitol Freehold Land and Investment Company, Limited, was dissolved in 1915. By 1929 some 450,000 acres were still owned by XIT Ranch, but by 1943 that acreage had been reduced to around 350,000. The last parcel of XIT land was sold in 1963. While the original price of the 3,000,000 acres was about \$1 per acre, the selling price ranged between \$5 and \$20 per acre, thus providing the owners with millions of dollars for their hard work and expertise.

The XIT Ranch wasn't a typical Western ranch of the time. The traditional ranch had one boss or foreman to take care of the business end of running the ranch. The XIT had a president, board of directors, financial officers, bookkeeper, general manager, range bosses, wagon bosses, and straw-bosses, as well as cowboys, cooks, and wranglers.

In remembrance of the massive ranch, the city of Dalhart annually hosts the XIT Rodeo and Reunion, held the first Thursday through Saturday each August since 1937. The celebration includes three days of junior and professional (PRCA) rodeo events. In addition, there are three nights of dancing to live country music, an antique tractor-pull, a fiddlers' contest, a melodrama performed by the local amateur theater group, and many other activities.

The highlight of the three-day celebration is the world's largest free barbecue on Saturday night, feeding an average of 25,000 hungry mouths each year. Wood gathering begins in November and continues until volunteers (**many** volunteers!) have cut enough wood to fill two pits (each seventy-five

feet long by four feet wide, by five to six feet deep), plus five feet above ground level. The wood is set afire shortly past Thursday midnight.

In the early days, local ranchers donated beeves for the barbecue. For the past several years, however, the directors have purchased choice 30-pound chuck rolls from a packer, thanks to financial donors.

Each chuck roll is seasoned, put into a heavy paper bag, then into a burlap bag which is tied with wire. After being soaked with water, the bags of meat are quickly thrown onto the coals in the pits about 2:00 P.M. Friday afternoon. The meat is removed sometime after noon on Saturday, to be prepared for serving.

The romance of the XIT Ranch, enhanced by its sheer size, lives on in Western lore. In the late 1920s, the Farwell Estate commissioned historical writer J. Evetts Haley (*Life on the Texas Range; A Cowman's Comment on Art*, and many others) to write the ranch's colorful history. The result was *The XIT Ranch and the Early Days of the Llano Estacado*. Others also wrote their accounts of the ranch. The Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum in Canyon, Texas, houses the voluminous records of the XIT.

In 1907, Cordelia Sloan married Robert L. Duke, manager of one of the XIT Divisions. Realizing that she was witness to a unique experience, Mrs. Duke began carrying a tablet and pencil in her apron pocket, jotting down the day's happenings. She also persuaded more than 80 ranch hands to write about their experiences on the XIT. The result was *6,000 Miles of Fence*, published in 1961 – when Mrs. Duke was 84 – in collaboration with Joe B. Frantz. Published by University of Texas Press, the book is still available for purchase on the UT Press website as well as on Amazon.com.

Most of the cowboys who contributed to Mrs. Duke's book recalled fires, stampedes, rustling, roundups, food, bosses, mending fences – the everyday life of ranch work. Many did so with an air of nostalgia. However, one contributor, a man by the name of Blue Stevens, felt differently. He wrote that he had "picked up enough cow chips to heat branding irons for every cow in the U.S.A." (Frantz, p. 46).

In retrospect, the entire XIT experience might be considered as the end of the old traditional Western ranch and the beginning of modern-day ranching.

**Sources:** "Barbed Wire Capitol," Jacci Howard Bear, [about.com.austin](http://about.com.austin); "Cattle Kingdom," David Dague, [cowboypoetry.com](http://cowboypoetry.com); "Thumbnail History of the XIT Ranch," [xitmuseum.com](http://xitmuseum.com); "XIT Ranch," [wikipedia.com](http://wikipedia.com); "XIT Notes," Panhandle Plains Historical Museum, [redrat.net/family/xit](http://redrat.net/family/xit); "XIT Was on the Cutting Edge of Ranching," Delbert Trew, [texasescapes.com/DelbertTrew/XIT](http://texasescapes.com/DelbertTrew/XIT); "XIT Ranch," *Handbook of Texas Online*; "History of the XIT Ranch," [xit-rodeo.com](http://xit-rodeo.com); "Legacy of the Longhorn," *Friona Star*, [frionaonline.com](http://frionaonline.com); "A Little Bit of the Texas XIT Ranch History," [texasxitranch.net](http://texasxitranch.net); "XIT, A Really Big Ranch," Joe B. Franz, *Texas Highways*, June 1991, 42-49; "Holy Smoke!" Connie Sherley, *Texas Highways*, July 1991; "XIT Was One of First Texas Ranches to Use Barbed Wire," Marie Reynolds, reprinted in *Dalhart Texan*, Aug. 6, 2009, from *Trampling Herd*, Doubleday and Co., 1951.

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In Texas, it is illegal to put graffiti on someone else's cow.
(“The Lone Star Republic: State Facts and Trivia,” online)

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## OBITUARIES

**Vernie Mae Pruitt** was born July 27, 1914, in Jacksboro, Texas, to John Randall and Mary Idella (Weir) Middlebrooks. She passed away November 4, 2009, in Jacksboro at the age of 95. Vernie Mae married Sherwood Epps in 1934; he preceded her in death in 1958. She married Reese Pruitt in 1960; he passed away in 1964. Others who predeceased her include her parents; two sons, Dalton Epps and Joe Melvin Epps; sisters Dovie Middlebrooks Farris, Eula Middlebrooks Mathis, Lorena Middlebrooks Frank, Estaline Middlebrooks Knox, and Lura Middlebrooks Sartain; brothers Columbus Middlebrooks, John Middlebrooks, and Melvin Middlebrooks.

Vernie Mae was a member of the Live Oak Baptist Church and the Dorcas Sunday School Class. She served as Jack County Tax Assessor-Collector from 1965 to 1972.

She is survived by three daughters, Carolyn Epps King, Brenda Epps Mobley, and Neva Epps Ellison; two sons, Thoburne Epps and Dan Epps; and a multitude of grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren.

Services were held November 7, 2009, at the Live Oak Baptist Church, followed by burial in Graves Cemetery, Jack County, Texas.

Vernie Mae, a Thomas 1763 descendant, was a dear lady and will be missed by all her family, including MFA relatives Doyle Middlebrooks, Charles David Middlebrooks, Jan Rogers, Sam Middlebrooks, Betty Holland, Joyce Arnold, Bert Frie, Lilly May West, Charles Mathis, Barbara Gaston, Alice Holland, and Jarrelyn Lang. (I apologize if I omitted anyone.)

**Edna Elizabeth King DePue** was born August 17, 1914, in Hillsboro, Georgia, to William Edward and Pearl (Middlebrooks) King. After graduating from the Georgia Baptist School of Nursing, she worked as a Registered Nurse in the Atlanta area for a number of years and was recognized by the Georgia Baptist Nurses Association in 2005 for over sixty years of service to her community and to the nursing profession.

Edna married Charles DePue in 1938. They moved to Savannah, Georgia, in 1942, where Charles worked as a Funeral Director and later as an electrician. He also helped build minesweepers for the U.S. Navy during World War II. The couple founded the DePue Wilbert Vault Company in 1948.

Edna was active in the First Presbyterian Church of Savannah, the Charles Ellis P.T.A., the American Red Cross, Wymberley Garden Club, and many other organizations.

Preceded in death by her husband, Charles, and son Robert Edward DePue, Edna is survived by son Charles B. DePue, Jr., several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Services were held at First Presbyterian Church December 20, with burial at Bonaventure Cemetery in Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia.

MFA extends our sympathies to the family of this Thomas 1763 descendant.

**David (Mike) Mahurin** passed away December 15, 2009, in Wichita Falls, Texas. He was the pastor of Charlie Baptist Church, near Wichita Falls, for 15 years.

Mike is survived by his wife, Marilyn Mahurin; sons Aaron and Daniel Mahurin; daughter Sarah Mahurin Hamman; mother, MFA member Sandra Mahurin; a sister, Dianna Mahurin Way; a brother, Gene Mahurin; numerous nieces and nephews; cousins MFA Vice President Tommy Middlebrook and MFA member Tom Morris; and other extended family, all of whom descend from Robert 1766.

A memorial service was held January 2, 2010, at Grace Church in Wichita Falls.

Those of us who attended the 2008 MFA meeting in Hillsboro, Texas, will remember Mike's mother, Sandra Mahurin, as the lady who spoke at the museum about her family's grocery store. Our hearts go out to Sandra and to all of Mike's family.

**Jack C. Middlebrook** passed from this life January 3, 2010. He was born in Tupelo, Arkansas, August 22, 1928, to Robert and Julia Middlebrook.

Jack was retired from food sales, a part-time policeman for the city of Sherwood, a United States Air Force veteran, and a member of the Masonic Lodge. He was a descendant of Nathaniel (b. about 1763), one of the Virginia Middlebrooks.

He was predeceased by a brother, Ralph; half-sisters Mae Gann and Ludie Gipson; and half-brothers Raymond Middlebrook, Louis Middlebrook, and Elmer Middlebrook. Survivors include his wife of 57 years, Jean (Headrick) Middlebrook; a cousin, MFA member Kathleen Hunter; and a host of nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held January 8 at North Little Rock Funeral Home, and interment was in Rest Hills Memorial Park, in Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas.

Our sympathies go out to Kathleen and to all of Jack's family. (See related article on p. 4.)

**Barbara Briley Belk**, another Thomas 1763 descendant, passed away January 6, 2010, at Marigold House in Alexandria, Arkansas. Barbara was born to Dr. James Herbert and Gertrude Grace (Middlebrook) Briley in Arizona. She attended Ouachita Baptist College in Arkansas and graduated from the University of Arkansas.

Barbara taught school in Crossett, Arkansas, and worked for the Louisiana Baptist Convention for seven years. She was a member of Calvary Baptist Church in Alexandria and a former member of Emmanuel Baptist Church, where she taught Sunday School and the Girls Auxiliary and was involved in the music ministry.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 63 years, Robert "Bob" Belk, a daughter, Judith Belk Bozzuto, her parents, and a sister, Patricia Briley Sledge. Survivors include a son, Robert L. Belk Jr.; daughter, Linda Belk Franks; seven grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; and a cousin, MFA member Henry Middlebrook.

Services were held January 10, 2002, at Calvary Baptist Church in Alexandria. MFA extends our sympathies to Henry and to all of Barbara's family.

**Sallie Vetter**, also a Thomas 1763 descendant, died January 14, 2010, at Kingswood Nursing Home in Aberdeen, North Carolina. Born in Macon, Georgia, on July 25, 1934, Sallie was the daughter of the late Willis Price and Sara (O'Kelly) Middlebrooks.

Sallie earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from the University of Georgia in 1954. She worked in Atlanta as buyer for Davison's Department Store, which later was changed to Macy's. She married her late husband, Dr. John Stanley Vetter, in Haddock, Georgia, on January 23, 1955. The Veters lived in Rockingham, Georgia, where her husband practiced medicine, beginning in 1957.

Sallie devoted herself to her home and family and was a strong supporter of her daughters' school-related events. She and her husband were members of the First Baptist Church of Rockingham, Georgia. They were also members of the Cotillion Club and the German Club. In addition, Sallie participated in her Book Club, Bridge Club, National Society Magna Charta Dames, and the D.A.R.

She is survived by two daughters, Martha Vetter and Sara Vetter Mayhew; three grandchildren; a sister, MFA member Lilyan Hanberry; two nephews and one niece. Funeral services were held January 23 at the First Baptist Church in Rockingham.

MFA sends our sympathies to Lilyan and to all of Sallie's family.

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### ON-GOING PROJECTS

Cemetery Project – J.A. MIDDLEBROOKS

MFA Website – DAVE CLARK and

LEONARD MIDDLEBROOKS

DNA Project – BOB MIDDLEBROOKS

and HENRY MIDDLEBROOKS

Family Repository – JEAN SHROYER

Family *Register* Update - LEONARD

MIDDLEBROOKS

Military *Register* Update – KERRY

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