

MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY ASSOCIATION, INC.

Quarterly Newsletter

December 2010
Editor,
Jarrelyn Lang

Volume 10, Number 1
Founding Editor,
Dianne Middlebrooks

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MFA wishes each of you a Merry Christmas and a blessed 2011!

President's Message December 2010

We would like to thank Lana Shelton, Joyce Luck, and Stephanie Harris for providing the MFA with an opportunity to return to Virginia after five years. They will host the 2011 meeting with the focus on John Middlebrooks (b. 1754) of Caroline County. This is the first time the MFA will feature the John (b. 1754) line. Based on DNA results, we know John's line is connected to our Caswell County, North Carolina, brothers.

One of the things appealing about this area is the proximity to New Kent, Hanover, Louisa, and Orange Counties where our Isaac Middlebrooks (b. 1727) and Thomas Middlebrooks (b. 1700) ancestors lived. For our research day, we will go to the Library of Virginia in Richmond. We should also have an exciting field trip with stops at historical and ancestral homesteads, cemeteries, etc. **So mark your calendars for the middle of August and start making plans to attend the 2011 meeting in Ashland, Virginia.**

The Road Ahead: Highlights of 2011 Projects and Activities

We are planning some exciting projects for 2011. These projects and activities were discussed at our 2010 meeting in Macon, Georgia.

- We are also currently working with the Scotchtown DAR Chapter of Virginia to place a Revolutionary War plaque marker for John Middlebrooks (b. 1754) at the Middlebrooks Cemetery in Caroline County. Plans are also underway to clean – and possibly fence – the cemetery. Thanks to Lana Shelton, Joyce Luck, and the Scotchtown DAR Chapter, this project is moving forward. We will have an opportunity to visit the Middlebrooks Cemetery on our 2011 field trip.
- We are looking at the opportunity for restoration and possible fencing of the Middlebrooks Cemetery in Monroe County, Georgia. This is the burial place of Alfred Middlebrooks (1809-1887), of Robert's (b. 1766) line. The cemetery is an important part of our heritage. The present landowner is very aware of our interest in conservation of the cemetery. J. A. Middlebrooks and Lucy Moe have the lead with support from Joan Miller and Kerry Middlebrooks. Please contact J. A. if you are interested in helping with the cemetery, or contact Kerry Middlebrooks if you are interested in researching Monroe County Middlebrooks.
- Joyce Arnold has agreed to take the lead for the installation of a gravestone for Elizabeth (Middlebrooks) Jarrell. Joyce will work with the Thomas team, Jarrell Plantation, and Phillip Haynes to have the gravestone installed.
- Restoration of the cemetery where Joseph Middlebrooks (b.1773) is buried in Georgia. Leonard Middlebrooks proposed this cemetery as one in need of conservation and important to our heritage. He will send information to Neal and then have the Joseph team to take the lead.
- Joseph (b. 1610) Group Meeting is being scheduled for July 2011 near Trumbull, Connecticut. If you are interested in attending, contact Leonard Middlebrooks for more information: gambol@juno.com
- Middlebrooks England Research. We are continuing to look for a Middlebrooks researcher to work with Ian Middlebrook of England. Ian provided the MFA with an update on the search

(included in our newsletter) for Joseph Middlebrook (b. 1610) in England. Ian has also sent us a research strategy for Yorkshire County, England. If anyone would like to help Ian with the research, please let Leonard or myself know.

- Provide funds for a 12- or 25-marker Y-DNA test (\$100 or \$125) to evaluate the Joseph Middlebrooks (b. 1773) line. Dave Clark's proposal. The MFA will assist in funding if the participant or the Joseph Team is not able to fully fund a DNA test. We contacted Dave Clark and he will work on getting a Joseph participant.
- Cemetery data form, update on status and cemetery photos. Neal will e-mail examples of cemetery data forms to J. A. and he will design a form to be used by the MFA and posted on our website and included in the newsletter. J. A. will consult with Dave Clark on the best way to send our cemetery photos and information to Find-a-Grave website.
- Jones County, Georgia, Middlebrooks records. Elaine Neal (a Middlebrooks descendant) and Linda Aron are currently researching the Telamon Cuyler Collection for Jones County, Georgia, archived at the University of Georgia, Athens. The MFA is sponsoring this research in hopes of locating new information about our ancestors not available from other sources or repositories.

Please review the complete Macon, Georgia, 2010 meeting notes in this newsletter. If you have any comments or suggestions, or if you would like to participate in one of the 2011 projects or activities, please let us know.

Neal Middlebrook

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**MFA 2010 Meeting Notes  
September 9-11, 2010  
Macon, Georgia**

**MFA Business Meeting Notes**

**Cemetery Conservation and Management**

Cemetery data form, update on status and cemetery photos. Lead: J. A.

Decisions:

- Neal will e-mail examples of cemetery data forms to J. A. and he will design a form to be used by the MFA and posted on our website and included in the newsletter.
- J. A. will consult with Dave Clark on the best way to send our cemetery photos and information to Find-a-grave website.

Restoration of Middlebrooks Cemetery, Monroe County, GA. Lead: J.A. and Lucy

Decisions:

- J. A. will work with Lucy to find a local contact or group willing to work on the cemetery. Joan Miller and Kerry Middlebrooks will also help with the project.

Installation of gravestone for Elizabeth (Middlebrooks) Jarrell. Lead: Joyce

Decision:

- Joyce will work with Thomas team, Jarrell Plantation and Phillip Haynes to have the gravestone installed.

Restoration of Middlebrooks Cemetery, Caroline County, VA. Lead: Neal, Lana, Joyce and Stephanie.

Decision:

- Neal will contact the local DAR Chapter to get the project moving.

Restoration of cemetery where Joseph Middlebrooks (b.1773) in Georgia.

Decision:

- Leonard will send information to Neal and then have the Joseph team to take the lead.

Acknowledgment of restoration of Middlebrooks Cemetery, Newton County, GA by Sons of Confederate Veterans. Lead: Neal and Debbie

Decision:

- Joyce will send a check for \$100.00 along with the thank you letter to SCV

## **Joseph (1610) Group Meeting 2011 Connecticut**

Joseph Group Meeting 2011 and other CT. Middlebrooks activities. Lead: Leonard and Karen.

Decision:

- Leonard will coordinate activities with the Joseph Group and the MFA. Looking at July meeting.

## **Middlebrook England Research**

Middlebrooks England research and coordination with Ian Middlebrook. Lead: Neal and Leonard

Decision:

- Continue to look for a researcher willing to work with Ian Middlebrook

## **DNA Project Request**

Provide funds for a 12 or 25 marker Y-DNA test (\$100 or \$125) to evaluate for Joseph 1773. Dave Clark's proposal. Lead: Dave

Decision:

- Support Dave Clark's proposal. The MFA will assist in funding if the participant or the Joseph Team is not able to fully fund DNA test. I contacted Dave Clark and he will work on getting a Joseph participant.

## **MFA Election Results**

MFA elections were held on Saturday and we are happy to report that we have three new members on the Board of Directors:

**Charles Middlebrooks, Kerry Middlebrooks and Sam Middlebrooks.**

We would also like to thank our outgoing Board members **Jean Shroyer, Henry Middlebrooks and J. A. Middlebrooks** for serving on the Board for the past two years.

### **Suggested Meeting Locations for 2011**

- Connecticut. It was decided we should wait a couple of more years until we have more members of the northern branch of the family.
- Morrow, Georgia, the Georgia State Archives and the Southeast National Archives (NARA)
- Harris County, Georgia, Isaac Middlebrooks (b. 1753)
- Newton County, Georgia, John Middlebrooks (b. 1755)
- Caroline, Louisa, or Orange County, Virginia, John (b. 1754), Nathaniel (b. 1764) or other Middlebrooks VA ancestors.

### **Additional Meeting Follow-up**

- If you are contacted by Family Tree DNA about prospective matches with your DNA, send e-mails to Bob Middlebrooks and Joyce Arnold.
- Contact the University of Georgia Libraries about the early Jones County records in the Curly Collection. Lead: Neal I contacted the University and we are working on having Linda Aron review the early Jones County records.
- Contact the Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge about early maps and aerial photography to aid in possibly locating ancestor homesteads on the Refuge. Lead: Neal I contacted the Piedmont NWR and they have early land records for the lands they acquired in the 1930s/40s. I passed the information on to Sam Middlebrooks. He will follow up with the NWR in January 2011 and attempt to locate the Thomas (b. 1763) homestead.
- Contact Bill Bragg, Jones County historian, about the possibility of early property plat maps for Jones County. Lead: Neal. Results: No other early property plat/maps have survived, according to Bill.
- Look for a computer projector for the MFA to buy. Must be compatible with PC and MAC operating systems.
- Procure PDF software for editing of PDF documents. For Joyce and Jarrelyn.
- We need to send out thank you letters. Phillip and Amelia Haynes, Doyle Middlebrooks, Walter Jackson, John Albrycht, Aubrey Newby, Bill Bragg, and Jarrell Plantation Georgia State Park employees. Others?

## Meeting Critique

### **Ancestor Sharing**

- The ancestor sharing session was very informative and helpful. We could possibly have this before we do research visits to libraries or courthouses, etc. Also, make a list of the websites we talked about and the research tips/pointers and include in notebook.

### **Field Trip**

- Lunch was too long. Next time consider a brown bag picnic lunch or make the field trip 1/2 day to avoid the problem of slow service at a restaurant.
- To keep from getting people lost, rent a bus or van so people will be able to socialize and stay together. You could ask people to contribute when renting a van or bus.
- Before the field trip, encourage people to double up in vehicles to cut down the number of vehicles on the tour.
- Change the field trip to day 1 or 3 instead of day 2.

### **Meeting Room Etc.**

- Need name tags with ancestor listed.
- Where is the coffee?
- We liked the Tee Shirts. Send out e-mail further in advance notifying people of the availability of shirts. Advertise Tee shirts and bags on the MFA website. Post a picture of each.
- For research, include a facility that has church records.
- Post meeting notebook and group pictures on MFA website.
- Create an MFA Face Book to help with advertising. We need a volunteer to maintain the Face Book account.

## *Officer and Project Reports 2010*

**Treasurer's Report:** Prepared and read by Joyce Arnold. We have about \$3,000 in the MFA account. Report accepted as presented.

**Website Report:** Dave Clark has been doing an outstanding job in maintaining and adding information to the website. The number of hits on the website has increased 30-40% each year. We continue to need help

in answering the website requests. Dave posts the current newsletters on the websites for members to view. After the newsletter is one year old, it is posted so everyone has access. We are still considering if we need to move the website to use a password if needed. It will cost about \$150.00/year.

**DNA Project Report:** Prepared by Bob Middlebrooks and sent to Joyce. Since the project was started in 2007, we have 16-17 DNA tests completed. Ian is the first Middlebrooks in England who is being tested. Henry Middlebrooks has agreed to be a technical advisor while Bob continues to coordinate the project. Dave Clark has also been participating. As we have more participants, we need to better target participation so as not to waste money repeating similar DNA information. We also need to continue to look for new candidates for the project. Great job!

**Military Project:** Prepared by Kerry Middlebrooks. Kerry has done a wonderful job in compiling our Middlebrooks military service information. He is collecting information on all major wars. If you have not contributed, you need to send Kerry your military service information. Thanks to Kerry for all his hard work.

**Cemetery Project:** Prepared and read by J. A. Middlebrooks. J. A. will be working with Henry on an MFA cemetery form. The form will be sent to members and non-members to increase activity for this project. J. A. would like you to send your information so we can continue to post the information on the MFA website and, possibly, eventually add gravestone photos to Find-a-Grave website. J. A. will also be helping with the conservation of cemeteries.

**Newsletter:** Jarrelyn Lang as editor of our newsletter continues to do a great job. But she is in need of more articles and an assistant editor. Your family stories or other news items do not need to be perfect, because she will help in the editing. If you would like to help Jarrelyn as the assistant editor, please contact her: [thelangs@hotmail.com](mailto:thelangs@hotmail.com).

## **Middlebrooks Family Association Inc.**

### **Officers and Board of Directors**

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## OFFICERS

|                                              |
|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Two Year Terms</b>                        |
| PRESIDENT – Neal Middlebrook, 2010-2011      |
| VICE PRESIDENT – Tom Middlebrooks 2010-2011  |
| SECRETARY/TREASURER – Joyce Arnold 2010-2011 |

## Board of Directors

|                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Two Year Terms</b>                                                    |
| Joyce Arnold, 2010-2011                                                  |
| <a href="mailto:joycenjim@sbcglobal.net">joycenjim@sbcglobal.net</a>     |
|                                                                          |
| Sam Middlebrooks 2010-2012                                               |
| <a href="mailto:semiddlebrooks@gmail.com">semiddlebrooks@gmail.com</a>   |
|                                                                          |
| Kathleen Hunter, 2010-2011                                               |
| <a href="mailto:kathleen@bscn.com">kathleen@bscn.com</a>                 |
|                                                                          |
| Charles S. Middlebrooks, 2010-2012                                       |
| <a href="mailto:cmiddleb@bellsouth.com">cmiddleb@bellsouth.com</a>       |
|                                                                          |
| Tom Middlebrooks, 2010-2011                                              |
| <a href="mailto:tomdean4@embarqmail.com">tomdean4@embarqmail.com</a>     |
|                                                                          |
| Neal Middlebrook, 2010-2011                                              |
| <a href="mailto:nealmidbroo1@frontier.com">nealmidbroo1@frontier.com</a> |
|                                                                          |



|                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------|
| Charles H. Middlebrooks, 2010-2011                   |
| <a href="mailto:chasmid@att.net">chasmid@att.net</a> |
|                                                      |
| Kerry Middlebrooks, 2010-2012                        |
| <a href="mailto:mbrooks@gci.com">mbrooks@gci.com</a> |
|                                                      |

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New Genealogy Search Tool

Contributed by Jean Shroyer

A great new state-specific genealogy search tool is being developed by the people who created Rootsweb. Mississippi is ready for you to use now, as are a few other states. More are being added daily, or as time permits. Just enter your surname and have fun! It is still in beta, but it will improve: <http://laboratory.linkpendium.com/>

William Sims Middlebrooks Mentioned in *Janesville* (Wisconsin) Gazette

Contributed by Leonard Middlebrooks (Thomas 1763 descendant)

December 25, 1847: "This is to certify that we have used Dr. Champion's Vegetable Ague medicine, and also his anti-billious [*sic*], anti dyspetic [*sic*], purifying, and cathartic pills in our families for a number of years, and also learned much of their celebrity from great numbers who have used them in their families. We do think their [*sic*] very efficient and valuable medicines for the cure of diseases for which they are recommended: W.S. Middlebrooks, Planter, Jones Co., Georgia, along with seven other names from Georgia, 15 from Mississippi, and three from Alabama.

The Genealogist's Twelve Days of Christmas

On the twelfth day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Twelve census searches,
Eleven printer ribbons,
Ten e-mail contacts,
Nine headstone rubbings,
Eight birth and death dates,
Seven town clerks sighing,
Six second cousins,
Five coats of arms,
Four GEDCOM files,
Three old wills,
Two CD-ROMS,
And a branch in my family tree.
--Author Unknown

The Search for Joseph Middlebrook (born circa 1610)

By Ian Middlebrook – ian@middlebrook.org.uk

1. Introduction

A little while ago, as a part-time professional genealogist (and a Middlebrook) in England, I was approached by the Middlebrooks Family Association (MFA) to assist in researching the origins of Joseph Middlebrook.

Joseph Middlebrook was an early settler in New England and is believed to be the direct forefather to many (if not most) of the Middlebrooks currently living in the USA. Much study has been conducted into his life once in America, and I do not intend to repeat that work here. Suffice it to say that the key information for me is that he was born around 1610 and is assumed to have left England around 1635.

This report details the progress made so far in identifying Joseph's possible origins and will hopefully provide some food for thought and inspiration for further studies.

2. Other Middlebrooks in New England

Amongst the initial information provided to me by MFA was mention of the "Middlebrook Sisters," Mary and Esther, who were also amongst early settlers in New England. I was provided with a copy of a well-researched article¹ which showed that these sisters originated from Batley parish in the West Riding of Yorkshire, England.

Although there was no reason to assume a direct link between Joseph and these two sisters, on scanning through the genealogical information in the article, I noticed the name of Dr. Joseph Wheeler of Concord. As I knew that Joseph Middlebrook had married into the Wheeler family of Concord, I investigated this line and tentatively confirmed (through a couple of reasonably sourced websites^{2,3}) that they were indeed linked (see Figure 1 for details).

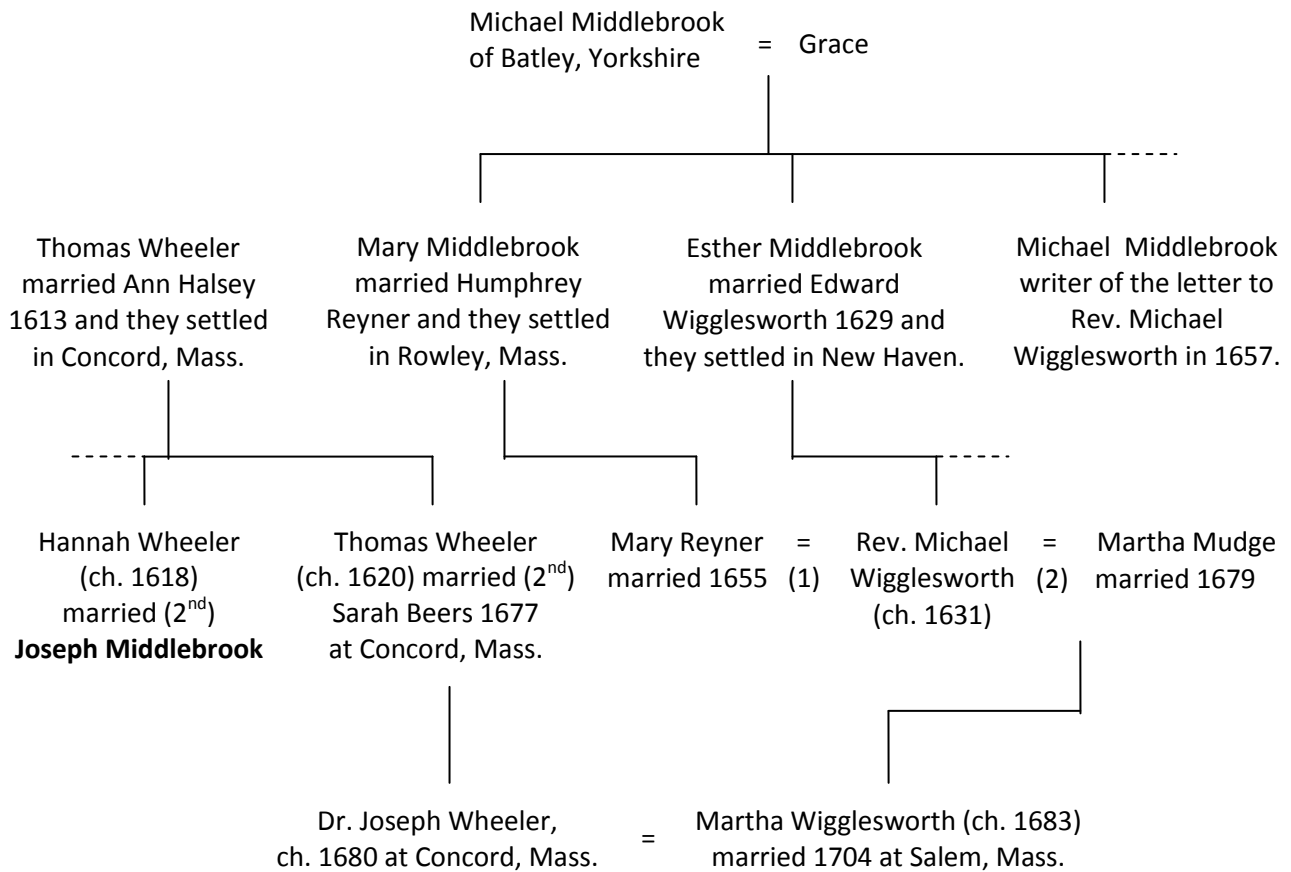
Internet genealogies are not always very reliable and often contradictory, so they should be treated with some skepticism until original sources can be checked. Also this family link is only made after the migration of both Joseph and the sisters, so it does not necessarily imply that the families were closely related beforehand in England. Nevertheless, it is an interesting possibility to keep in mind.

¹ Stansell, M. (2002) *The Middlebrook Sisters: Mother and Mother-in-Law of Michael Wigglesworth*. The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Vol 156, pp309-321

² Thaler, D (2010) Descendants of Thomas "the elder" Wheeler
http://armidalesoftware.com/issue/full/Thaler_1072_main.html

³ Pane-Joyce, D. (2008) Pane-Joyce Genealogy <http://aleph0.clark.edu/~djoyce/gen/report/>

Figure 1 – Outline Family Tree connecting Joseph Middlebrook of Concord, Mass. to the Middlebrook Family of Batley, Yorkshire



3. Joseph Middlebrooks in England, UK

For an initial UK search, I naturally started with the International Genealogical Index (IGI)⁴, which includes genuine extracts from a large number of parish registers across England, in some cases stretching back to the earliest registers in 1538. The IGI also includes a lot of family data that has been submitted by individuals – some of which can be traced to original sources but much of which is unattributed.

The Myth

When searching the IGI for a Joseph Middlebrook, the first thing I noticed was dozens of entries suggesting that he had been born in Salford or Cranfield in Bedfordshire. This was a surprise to me, because that is not an area of England where I would expect to find the Middlebrook surname.

Unfortunately, none of those IGI entries seem to be the result of a genuine extraction from any parish register – they all appear to be un-sourced individual submissions. This assumption of a Bedfordshire birth has also found its way onto a few internet genealogies, but again I was unable to identify any genuine source from these.

It seemed pertinent to clear this up, and members of the MFA kindly rented and searched microfilm copies of the registers for Salford and Cranfield parishes. They found no Middlebrook entries whatsoever, never mind any sign of Joseph.

It is most likely that this assumption has originated from Joseph's connection with the Wheeler family of Concord who, I believe, can be traced back to this area. But the real evidence does suggest that Joseph must have originated elsewhere.

The Reality

There are a couple of facts in our favour when searching for a Joseph Middlebrook in England in the early 1600s. Firstly, Middlebrook was quite an unusual and localized surname, largely restricted to areas of Lincolnshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire (see Figure 2), so by knowing where the name was found, then the search can be narrowed down quite sharply. Secondly, Joseph was not a particularly common first name at that time⁵, so I would not expect to find very many to investigate.

From searching various indices, including the IGI, Boyds Marriage Index, the National Burial Index, and Yorkshire probate records, and from additional searches of some key parish registers not covered by those indices, I was able to compile a provisional list of Joseph Middlebrooks found in England before 1700. The results of this are shown in Table 1.

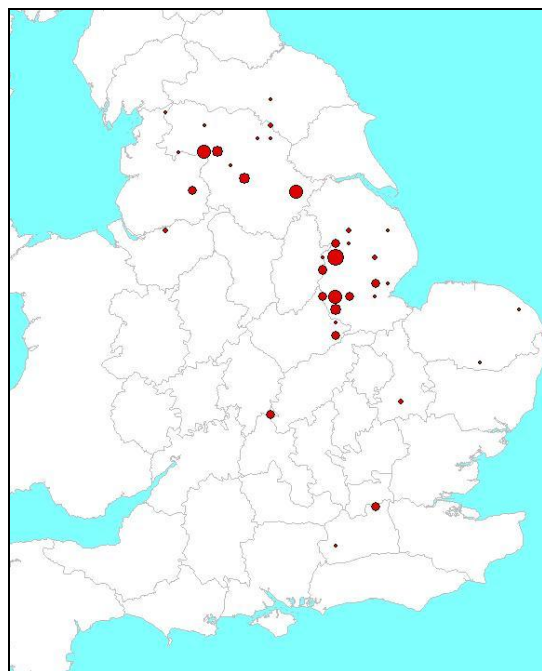
⁴ See <http://www.familysearch.org> for details of the IGI

⁵ Smith-Bannister, S. (1997) Names and Naming Patterns in England. Appendix C cited by <http://victoria.tc.ca/~tgodwin/duncanweb/documents/names.html>

Table 1 – List of Joseph Middlebrooks found in English parish registers before 1700

| Parish | Year | Event | |
|-------------------------------|------|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Dewsbury, Yorkshire | 1613 | baptism | Joseph son of Edwarde Midlebroughe |
| Leeds, St Peter, Yorkshire | 1656 | baptism | Joseph son of Mr Michael Midlebrough |
| Carleton-in-Craven, Yorkshire | 1686 | baptism | Joseph son of William Midlebrooke |
| Leeds, St Peter, Yorkshire | 1688 | baptism | John son of Mr Joseph Midlebrook |
| Carleton-in-Craven, Yorkshire | 1690 | burial | Joseph son of William Midlebrooke |
| Leeds, St Peter, Yorkshire | 1690 | baptism | Susanna dau of Mr Joseph Midlebrough |
| Alne, Yorkshire | 1693 | baptism | Josephus Midlebrook |

Figure 2 – Approximate distribution of Middlebrooks in England around 1600⁶



What I found was that Joseph Middlebrook was a very unusual name. There are only seven entries from four parishes (probably only relating to four separate individuals) for the whole of the 17th century. Note that all of these Josephs were in Yorkshire, despite the surname being possibly more frequent in Lincolnshire at that time.

Of course I would never claim that this list is complete. None of the indices are fully comprehensive, many parish registers from that time are lost or incomplete, and whilst I have tried to fill in some of the gaps for parishes in key areas, there could still be more entries hiding elsewhere.

Nevertheless, the majority of core areas for the Middlebrook surname have been covered, so we have a good indication of just how unusual the name was.

Clearly the first Joseph Middlebrook to appear in the records, at Dewsbury in 1613, is the only one born in the right time frame for the man who emigrated to New England in 1635 and therefore worthy of further research.

As an additional point of interest, the second Joseph Middlebrook to appear in the records, at Leeds in 1656, is actually the son of Michael Middlebrook who was brother to the “Middlebrook Sisters” – see Section 2 and Figure 1 for earlier discussion of this family.

⁶ This map is based on the location of all Middlebrook/Middlebrough baptisms that I have found between 1550 and 1649.

4. The Middlebrook Family of Dewsbury, Yorkshire

The parish registers of Dewsbury survive from as far back as 1538, when they were first required to be kept by the church (thanks to Henry VIII). Transcripts and indices of these registers, in addition to the IGI, have now been searched up to 1722^{7,8}. The Middlebrook surname (note also the common variant of Middlebrough) does not appear in these parish registers until the 1590s, when a man called Edward Middlebrough began to father a large family there.

By reconstructing his family as best possible from the register entries (see details in Section 5 below), we find that Edward was married three times and had 14 children. Of these 14 children, 6 were buried before they reached adulthood – meaning that Edward was survived by 8 children when he died in 1627.

Fortunately, Edward left a will⁹, which is transcribed below:

Edward Midlebrough of Ossit did make his will nuncupative in manner as followeth First he did comitt his soule to God and his body to be buried in the church yard of Dewsbury then he gave unto Edward Midlebrough his sonne and to his heires and assigns forever one acre of copihould land in the new close Item he surrendered unto Thomas Nayler his heires and assigns forever one close called ... ??? ... and he should sell it to the full worth and the money therefore received to be equally divided amongst his youngest children that is to say to **Joseph** John Joney Alice Elizabeth and Dorothis Midlebrough It he willed if his wife was with child that that child should have forty shillings of the ... of his goods and the remainder of his goods he gave to be divided amongst his children witness hereof Thomas Nayler Thomas Spence ...

The list of children mentioned in Edward's will (including Joseph) matches precisely with the children thought to be alive at that time, based on my interpretation of the parish registers, with the exception of his son William. Given that William was his eldest son, and he was an adult by the time of Edward's death, the implication must be that William had already been set up with his own establishment prior to the writing (speaking) of the will, which is why he received no further bequest.

Thankfully, William [*Willime Midlebrough de Ossitt ...*] is mentioned in the probate for Edward – albeit amongst some legal Latin at the end of the document that I am unable to interpret due to the quality of the photocopy. I think it is reasonable to assume that probate was granted to William as, by that time, Edward's widow had already re-married.

⁷ Yorkshire Archaeological Society transcript (1538-1653) – extracts supplied to me by Neal Middlebrook

⁸ Huddersfield and District Family History Society transcripts (1653-1722)

⁹ Probate of Edward Midlebrough of Ossit, proved at York on 5-Aug-1628. Borthwick Institute ref. Vol.41/f.46a

5. Family Chart for Edward MIDDLEBROUGHE of Ossett, Dewsbury, Yorkshire

Edward Middlebroughe of Ossett married, firstly, Alice (nee ?) in or before 1592 and they had 6 children:

1. John Middlebroughe, baptized on 21st December 1592 at Dewsbury, but buried there on 10th February 1617.
 2. William Middlebroughe, baptized on 25th March 1593/4 at Dewsbury, but buried there on 25th February 1602.
 3. Agnes Middlebroughe, baptized on 20th March 1596/7 at Deswbury, but buried there on 1st January 1598.
 4. Jonye Middlebroughe, baptized on 10th November 1601 at Dewsbury. She married Nicholas Hargrayve in January 1626 at Dewsbury.
 5. William Middlebroughe, baptized on 26th December 1603 at Dewsbury. He married Sara (Rawsom or Ransom) in February 1629 and they had at least 4 children:
 - i. An unbaptized child was buried on 23rd September 1630 at Dewsbury.
 - ii. William Middlebroughe, baptized on 13th October 1631 at Dewsbury.
 - iii. An unbaptized child was buried on 25th August 1633 at Dewsbury.
 - iv. Joshua Middlebroughe, baptized on 25th January 1634/5 at Dewsbury. He married Mary Harrison of West Ardsley on 4th February 1657 at Dewsbury and they had 6 children:
 - i. Joshua Middlebrook, baptized on 18th February 1661 at Dewsbury, but buried there on 12th July 1665.
 - ii. Ann Middlebrook, baptized on 22nd June 1663 at Dewsbury.
 - iii. William Middlebrook, baptized on 20th May 1665 at Dewsbury, but buried there on 6th February 1666.
 - iv. William Middlebrook, baptized on 22nd July 1667 at Dewsbury. He married and had 3 children at Dewsbury: Sarah (ch. 1699), Ann & William (ch. 1708). William was probably buried at Dewsbury in 1713.
 - v. Sarah Middlebrook, baptized on 17th October 1669 at Dewsbury. She married Timothy Megson on 15th June 1690.
 - vi. Joshua Middlebrooke, baptized on 1st January 1672, but buried there in November 1672.Joshua was then buried in November 1672 at Dewsbury and Administration¹⁰ was granted to his widow Mary in 1673.William Middlebroughe was buried on 27th December 1644 at Dewsbury and his widow, Sara, then married William Beatson on 2nd February 1645/6 at Dewsbury.
6. Alice Middlebroughe, baptized on 10th October 1606 at Dewsbury. She married John Garnall on 25th April 1630.

¹⁰ Probate of Joshua Middlebrough of Ossett, granted on 4-Jun-1673. Borthwick Institute ref. Admon/f.107

Alice, the wife of Edward, was buried on 10th October 1606 at Dewsbury. Edward Middlebroughe then married, secondly, Alice Brouke on 30th January 1608 at Dewsbury and had a further 6 children:

7. Elizabeth Middlebroughe, baptized on 28th December 1609 at Dewsbury. She married William Milner on 30th April 1632 at Dewsbury.
8. Edward Middlebroughe, baptized on 28th July 1611 at Dewsbury.
- 9. Joseph Midlebroughe, baptized on 12th September 1613 at Dewsbury.**
10. Dorothe Midlebrouke, baptized on 24th August 1615 at Dewsbury. She married Matthew Speight of Gawthorpe on 1st July 1635 at Dewsbury.
11. Sara Middlebroughe, baptized on 25th September 1617 at Dewsbury, but buried there on 20th October 1617.
12. John Midlebrouke, baptized on 9th May 1619 at Dewsbury.

Alice, the second wife of Edward, was buried on 9th April 1621 at Dewsbury. Edward Middlebrouke then married, thirdly, Margaret Medlay on 23rd November 1624 at Dewsbury and had a further 2 children:

13. Andrew Midlebrouke, baptized on 4th December 1625 at Dewsbury, but buried there on 25th December 1625.
14. An unbaptized daughter was buried on 12th August 1627 at Dewsbury.

Edward Middlebrouke was buried on 1st December 1627 at Dewsbury, and his widow Margaret then married John Mitchell on 27th May 1628.

6. Further Records for Dewsbury, Yorkshire

Of Edward's surviving children, the four daughters all married within the parish between 1626 and 1635. However, out of the four sons, only the eldest, William, is definitely accounted for in the parish registers – remaining in the area until his death in 1644 and being survived by two sons.

This leaves three other sons – John, Edward and Joseph – who cannot definitely be accounted for in the registers of Dewsbury after the death of their father (although John possibly fathered a couple of children at Dewsbury in 1657 and 1660, but I cannot be certain this is the same man).

This means that a wider area and variety of records need to be consulted in order to trace their movements (if possible). Firstly, a number of registers from neighbouring parishes¹¹ have been searched for the relevant time period, but they have not produced any evidence of these men moving around in the local area, so other local records have been identified.

¹¹ Including Rothwell, Batley, Birstall, Mirfield, Leeds, Calverley, Thornhill, East Ardsley, Horbury, Hartshead, Wakefield, Whitkirk & Woodkirk parishes

Wakefield Court Rolls

In his will, Edward Middlebrough left an acre of copyhold land to his son, the younger Edward. Copyhold land was owned by a ‘manor’ and Ossett belonged to the manor of Wakefield. Any transfer of such land should be recorded in the court rolls of the manor, and fortunately those for Wakefield survive in an almost unbroken run from 1274 to the 20th century. It is possible that these rolls may tell us more about what happened to the Middlebrook family in this area, although they are not easy documents to read or interpret.

The Yorkshire Archaeological Society has a program of transcribing and indexing these Court Rolls, although they are only able to complete one year at a time (14 volumes since 1974). In addition to land transfer, the rolls report on a host of other matters, such as road and ditch maintenance and the swearing in of court officials.

The Table below shows the Middlebrooks that have been found in those years currently transcribed:

| YAS volume | Years covered | Middlebrooks mentioned |
|------------|---------------|--|
| Vol. 3 | 1331-33 | None |
| Vol. 2 | 1348-50 | None |
| Vol. 6 | 1350-52 | None |
| Vol. 9 | 1537-40 | None |
| Vol. 7 | 1550-52 | None |
| Vol. 4 | 1583-85 | None |
| Vol. 11 | 1608-09 | None |
| Vol. 1 | 1639-40 | Edward Midlebrooke (Ossett)
William Midlebroughe (Ossett, lord’s tenant)
John Middlebrough (Midgley) |
| Vol. 8 | 1651-52 | William Middlebrooke (Northowrome) |
| Vol. 5 | 1664-65 | William Middlebrooke (lord’s tenant) |
| Vol. 13 | 1687-88 | William Middlebrooke (Wakefield, Northgate) |
| Vol. 10 | 1790-92 | None |

The most important of these volumes covers the year 1639-40, where there seems to be evidence for the younger Edward Middlebrook remaining in Ossett along with his elder brother William, and possibly evidence for a third son, John, at Midgley. However, these court rolls have not yet produced any evidence that Edward’s son Joseph remained in the area.

Hearth Tax

The Hearth Tax is the closest thing we have to a national census in England in the second half of the 17th century. Every household in the country was required to pay tax based on the number of hearths within their building (unless they were so poor as to be exempt), so in theory the returns list nearly all householders in any area.

Dewsbury lay within the Administrative District of Agbrigg and Morley Wapentakes, and the 1672 returns for that district¹², which cover 18 parishes, list the following Middlebrooks:

| Township | Parish | Householder | Hearths | Notes |
|------------|-----------|-------------------------|---------|--|
| Bramley | Leeds | Mr. Michael Midlebrough | 5 | <i>Brother of the "Middlebrook Sisters". Nobody had more hearths in Bramley.</i> |
| Gildersome | Batley | Math. Midlebrough | 1 | <i>Almost certainly a brother of Michael above¹.</i> |
| Northgate | Wakefield | Wm. Midlebrough | 3 | <i>Presumably the eldest grandson of Edward (bapt 1631).</i> |
| Ossitt | Dewsbury | Jos. Midlebrooke | 1 | <i>Presumably Joshua, the second grandson of Edward (bapt 1633).</i> |

Michael, Matthew and Joshua Middlebrook are known, from the relevant parish registers, to have headed families at that time and to have died after 1672, so we can be fairly certain about their identities. William at Wakefield may not have had a family, but is mentioned regularly in the Wakefield Court Rolls.

So there is actually no sign of any Middlebrooks in this area other than those descended from Edward Middlebrook and those related to the Middlebrook sisters. And again, no sign that Edward's son Joseph had remained (or survived) in the area.

7. Middlebrooks Family DNA Project

Genetic genealogy is a very useful tool for supporting or disproving possible links between different families with the same surname, and the MFA has established a very successful DNA project looking at the Middlebrook surname. In return for my assistance with this research into Joseph, the MFA very kindly contributed towards a DNA test for myself.

The results of this were a great surprise, with my DNA showing a close affiliation with the main group in America known to descend from Joseph Middlebrook¹³.

Without going into technical details here, this result, combined with the sharing of an unusual surname, indicates that Joseph Middlebrook almost certainly shares a common direct male ancestor with myself. And given that the majority of surnames in Northern England did not become fully established as

¹² Heath Tax Returns 1672: Vol 1. Agbrigg and Morley Wapentakes. Ripon Historical Society. (index in Vol. 2)

¹³ My FTDNA kit number is 159527 and the results of the Middlebrook project can be seen here <http://www.worldfamilies.net/surnames/middlebrooks/results>

hereditary family names until the late 14th century (if not later), then our common ancestor is most likely to have lived within the two centuries (just a handful of generations) before Joseph's birth.

My own ancestry can be traced with certainty back to Colne in Lancashire, and the records also show that the Middlebrooks of Colne had moved there from the remote parish of Burnsall in the West Riding of Yorkshire. The Middlebrook surname has a long history in this area of Yorkshire, close to the Lancashire border.

Despite Joseph's own migration to New England, the reality is that most migrations in the preceding period were very local (i.e. within a few parishes) and that long-distance cross-country migration was quite unusual. So the affinity of Joseph's DNA with a Middlebrook family known to originate from a remote area of Yorkshire does suggest that his origins may not lie too far from that same area.

8. Summary of Evidence

1. Hard genetic (DNA) evidence demonstrating a strong link between descendants of Joseph Middlebrook in America and a current Middlebrook family in England. This is supported by the knowledge that the English family can be traced back to the West Riding of Yorkshire, and that a common ancestor is not likely to date much more than a handful of generations earlier than Joseph.
2. Circumstantial genealogical evidence that links Joseph Middlebrook, subsequent to his settling in New England, with members of another Middlebrook family who are known to originate from the parish of Batley in the West Riding of Yorkshire.
3. Hard genealogical evidence of the baptism and survival of a Joseph Middlebrook born around the right time (1613) in the parish of Dewsbury in the West Riding of Yorkshire (which lies adjacent to the parish of Batley).
4. Circumstantial evidence that the Joseph Middlebrook born in Dewsbury did not remain in that area as an adult, despite finding evidence for most of his siblings. (More strictly, an absence of evidence that he did remain in the area).
5. An absence of evidence for any other individual called Joseph Middlebrook in England in the first half of the 17th century, despite fairly extensive searches across the main areas where Middlebrook families are known to have lived at that time.

So did Joseph Middlebrook migrate from Dewsbury to Concord? Well, there isn't enough clear evidence yet to say that for certain, but at the moment it is the only possibility backed up (or not contradicted) by all the evidence that is currently available.

Letters from a '49er

By Bob Middlebrooks
and Jarrelyn Lang

Through our connection with Terry Barton of World Families Net, we have come in possession of documents made available from a lady in California. She contacted Terry Barton of World Families Net who in turn contacted me (Bob).

This basically consists of papers found among miscellaneous genealogy papers in the Ventura County Genealogical Society in California. They were compiled by Helen Flower Hartman Beeler in 1982 and titled "Letters from a '49er." They are typewritten transcripts from records found in the Wilton Historical Society collection, housed at the Wilton Public Library in Wilton, Connecticut.

The first part lists the children and grandchildren of Charles Otway Harry Middlebrook (b 1794) and his wife Sarah Monroe. It is followed by 27 pages of copies of letters from son Charles (b 1824) to his brother James Monroe Middlebrook (b 1826). Charles is the 4th great-grandson of Joe 1610.

Just goes to show how our DNA project provides visibility for our association and in this case we have some interesting material for Leonard to use in his research for our registry update. The letters are dated as early as 1849 and provide an interesting insight into the travels of Charles from Connecticut to Sacramento, California, and his life in California as it was just becoming a state. In February of 1848, Mexico and the United States signed a treaty which ended the Mexican War and yielded a vast portion of the Southwest, including present-day California, to the United States. Several days earlier, January 24, 1848, gold had been discovered on the American River near Sacramento, and the ensuing gold rush hastened California's admittance to the Union, in 1850. With the Gold Rush came a huge increase in population and a pressing need for civil government.

Charles's letters to James document his travel by boat from New York to California, including observations of his fellow passengers. After his arrival in Sacramento City, California, the letters tell of the hard life in the mining camp and of his discouragement that the mines didn't fulfill his dream of riches. They are very much a first-hand account of the Gold Rush days by someone who lived it.

Gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill on January 24, 1848. The mill was the property of Captain (a title he conferred upon himself) John Sutter, who was born Johann August Suter in Germany in 1803. News of the discovery spread quickly, bringing some 300,000 hopefuls from other states and abroad. Approximately half arrived by sea, as did Charles. The other half chose to walk overland.

Charles left New York on May 25, 1849, aboard the steamer *Crescent City*. His first letter, dated May 31, 1849, was written from the *Crescent City*, which lay off the coast of Chagres, a village in Panama. He describes his fellow passengers as "intelligent, civil, and kind" and goes on to say "we could not have enjoyed ourselves more if we had been in New York." Charles boarded the *California* on June 2, 1849, which was at anchor off the coast of Chagres, and started across the Isthmus of Panama the next day.

The *California* reached Acapulco, Mexico, on July 2, 1849. Onboard were 80 cabin passengers and 120 steerage passengers. Charles states that "three passengers have died of 'the fever'," probably either typhoid or cholera, both of which were rampant during this time.

The *California* took on provisions in Acapulco. There were "about 50 Americans in town, and most of them without money. Probably 20 of them will be able to get aboard the steamer. The others will have to trust in Providence, for there are no accommodations on board."

Charles goes on to say, "All we get to eat is some stinking pork, sometimes a little rice and beans (but they are like angels' visits) and served up to the passengers in rations of about a teaspoonful to the passenger. The steward will not even let you have a little meal to make gruel for the passengers that are sick. The town poor in Wilton (Connecticut) fare ten times better than the steerage passengers do on this ship. However, I have the satisfaction of knowing that I will be in San Francisco by (July) the 20th, providing we meet with no accident."

He also offers this advice for others who plan to make the trip to the gold fields as steerage passengers: "Do not bring any more baggage than is absolutely necessary; that is, bring two small trunks and not let them weigh more than 75 or 80 pounds each. Bring one or two smoked hams, a few smoked tongues, a few crackers, a jar of pickles, a little sugar, coffee, and tea." For passengers fortunate enough to book cabin passage, Charles advises bringing about half of the foodstuffs mentioned above. He says, "Let no man start with less than \$500."

In a letter from Sacramento City, California, on August 27, 1850, Charles tells James that "Emigrants [are] continually arriving from the States and all parts of the world. In fact, California is overrun with people, and thousands would willingly return to their homes had they the means to do so. The mines have not turned out as rich as expected. The take would not average \$3 a day to the man. Some few, say one in a hundred, are making their fortunes. It is these lucky ones' doings that are heralded throughout the States while the 99 unfortunate individuals are not mentioned. However," he writes, "I would not say anything to discourage any person from coming to California that has any desire that way, for it is natural in human nature for every person to see for himself in order to be satisfied."

He asks James to "write me at least once a month and let me know how affairs stand in Wilton. Write me how you and Samuel (another brother) are doing and what you have done with my place. I shall not leave California before next spring."

Charles's next letter, dated January 27, 1851, is also posted in Sacramento City. He thanks James for the letter he wrote, which had arrived the previous November (1850). He sends orders to Samuel to clear his (Charles's) land then "seed it down with timothy and clover seed and not be afraid of putting too much on." He also asks how his fruit trees are doing.

In the same letter, he adds that many miners have left their digging and have instead turned to agriculture, raising vegetables which can be sold at \$3.00 a bushel. "Taking it all around, farming at present is much more preferable and sure than mining." He expects the mining industry to go by the wayside soon.

In a letter dated March 1, 1851, Charles chides his brother: "I wrote you by the mail of the 1st of February, and hereafter intend writing you regularly on the first of every month and I wish you to do the same." Apparently brother James was not faithful in sending news to his brother, as he had asked in a previous letter.

New mining sites were discovered, raising hope of a brighter future for the forty-niners. Charles tells his brother that he has "just returned from Rodeling's Springs on the Upper Sacramento and distant from here 200 miles. New mines have been discovered above the springs

near the Oregon line and said to be very rich. I saw thousands of miners enroute [*sic*] to the new diggings, all bent on making their fortunes." Ever the realist, Charles adds, "However, it may prove profitable to some, but the majority will be disappointed."

Although some miners have taken to planting gardens, Charles says that "our flour comes from Chili, our pork from the States and potatoes and other vegetables from the Sandwich Islands, Sydney, and Oregon. In eating our dinner, we see before us the products of every part of the globe."

As might be expected, tempers flared up now and then at the mining camp. Charles writes of a man being "shot down in the street by a gambler without any provocation whatever." The gambler was arrested, tried, found guilty, then hanged that same night. Having described the details of the hanging, Charles goes on to say, "It was the first and I hope the last execution that I may ever be called upon to witness."

On May 31, 1851, Charles tells James that "California is gradually improving in wealth and population and its resources are daily being developed. For the past six months many families have migrated from the States and taken up their future abodes in California. The climate of California is far milder and preferable to that of the States, and I think in ten years' time she will rank among the first states of the Union in wealth, resources, and population."

He continues his praise of California in his next letter, dated April 29, 1851: "I like the climate of California much better than that of the States. It is not so changeable." Then he tells James that he hopes to be home by Christmas or New Year's. He adds, "Tell the Old Woman (his mother?) to "make up a lot of pies, cakes and good things about that time, and I will try and be with you to help eat them."

In his letter of August 25, 1851, Charles tells James to allow their brother Samuel to sell his (Charles's) property. Samuel had written that he could get as much as \$100 per acre, and James is to give Samuel the go-ahead. Charles goes on to say, "I shall never work my place, and I think it would be better for me to sell it." He has debts, and he believes that the sale of his property will allow him to pay off those obligations.

He then adds "I shall not visit the States this fall unless you should sell my place. It would cost me \$500 to go home and return here again, in cash. I have not made anything in the mines this season, but will return to them in a few days. The mines, with but few exceptions, are not doing much, \$4 a day being about the general average to the man," and in a postscript, he reiterates "Show this to Samuel and if he can sell my place, I wish him to do so."

Things seem to be getting worse for Charles. In his letter of December 3, 1851, his loneliness is clear: "I have not received any letters from you since your letter of June last," he says to James. "Neither have I received any letter from Palmyra since that date. I cannot account for you all being so silent. I am sure that all of you cannot be sick. I write you once every month and I want you to do the same, and as much oftener as you can."

He goes on to tell his brother that he had "been sick most of the time for the past three months, with a kind of bilious remittant [*sic*] fever." However, he is much better and hopes to be completely recuperated in a few days. Due to his illness, he has not been to the mines since August.

Charles mentions that "The people (are) getting more civilized. Society is improving fast and the country is filling up with permanent settlers. Most of the comforts and luxuries of the Atlantic states can now be had in California. In fact, in a few years more, we shall not be dependent on the older States for scarce anything."

He finally receives a letter from James on December 7, 1851, and reprimands James for its tardiness. "It is over six months since you wrote me before."

Evidently, James has mentioned a problem which involves their sister Sarah. In his reply, dated January 15, 1852, Charles writes: "I was surprised to learn that George B. Middlebrook (probably George Beal Middlebrook, who also lived in Wilton and was likely a relative) had failed again and that he intended to swindle Sarah out of her money." He goes on to suggest that Sarah "sue the note and get it into judgement [*sic*] and leave it in your or Samuel's hands, so that, if he should ever have any property you can attach it at any time and anywhere."

Charles shows his temper and frustration when he adds, "If I should ever return to the States, and he has not paid her, there will be war in the wigwam." He plans to send Sarah a "quit claim deed of my place and then she can sell it if she has a chance. Sarah wants what little money she has, and you should see that she is not swindled out of it."

James's letter had also mentioned that he was thinking of joining his brother in the gold mines. Charles's answer is straightforward: "You write about coming to California. I do not know what to advise you. A man with money here can make money, or if a man is stout and able bodied enough to work in the mines, he can make three to five dollars per day. But it is very hard work and 'tis not everybody that can atend [*sic*] to work to advantage. The day has gone for making money very fast here, although a man with capital can do better here than anywhere else."

The 1852 Presidential election was foremost in everyone's mind. Charles says, "Everybody is preparing for the election which takes place next Tuesday (November 11, 1852). Politics seems high. Meetings and torchlight processions most every night. Both parties calculate on carrying the State. We can tell better after election, but I think the State will go for (Whig Party candidate Winfield) Scott."

The 1852 election, coming two years after California's statehood, marked the first time its citizens were eligible to vote in national elections. Democratic candidate Franklin Pierce won the Presidential election. Californians supported Pierce (53%) over Scott (46.8%).

Charles tells James that he attended a ball at the Orleans Hotel the previous night, October 29. It was given by the Sutter Rifle Company, a militia unit organized June 28, 1852, and assigned to the 4th Division, 1st Brigade, Sacramento, Sacramento County. The Marion Rifle Company of San Francisco, another militia unit, were special guests, as was Captain Sutter himself.

Charles's letter of November 15, 1852, tells of the Sacramento fire during the night of November 2-3. He writes, "The fire broke out a little after 11 o'clock p.m. and at 8 o'clock the following morning, the city was in ruins. I saved my trunk and most of my clothes. We had the grain room full of barley, and the front room full of oats. We only had time to save two loads." On November 4, the day following the fire, the Sacramento Fire Department was established.

Sacramento (dropping the word "City") became the capital of the state of California in 1854, after paying the state \$1 million for that distinction. In his letter dated December 15, 1854, Charles writes, "Our new State House is nearly completed but it appears to be uncertain where the legislature will sit this winter, they meet in January."

An uncertain economy takes center stage in Charles's letter of May 15, 1855: "We have had hard times in California the past six months, and they still continue. Nearly all the bankers have 'broke', besides a large number of our mercantile houses. Every few days more are added to the number of broken men. Most everything plenty but money, and that appears to be scarcer or harder to obtain than ever I saw it in the States. A good many men are out of employment. . . ."

The steamers take away more passengers from California than they bring. The steamers hereafter are to discontinue their weekly trips."

His next letter to James, written September 4, 1855, continues in the same vein: "In farming we have no outlet for our produce and we already produce more than we can consume. Every article of produce is lower (in price) here than with you. Wheat is selling from \$1 to \$1.25 per bushel, barley about 80¢ a bushel, potatoes 75¢. The above prices do not give the farmer a chance to make anything."

Charles's letter of December 3, 1855, tells of his trip 58 miles northeast of Sacramento to Iowa Hill's gold mines. "The mining is principally done by sinking shafts to the bed rock. The gold is mostly found on the bed rock. Many of the shafts that I saw were from 100 to 175 feet in depth. Another way of getting into the bowels of the mountain is by tunnelling [*sic*]. The process of mining in '49 and '50, as compared with the present mode, is almost entirely different," he writes.

He goes on to say that there is a renewed influx of hopefuls: "The last steamer that arrived in San Francisco brought 1,007 passengers. Immigration has increased very much the last month. Hundreds are arriving here now who do not know what to do. Nearly every branch of business is overdone, with the exception of mining, and that is now very precarious and requires capital. Wages are low, varying from \$30 to \$75 per month. Any person who can make a living in the States had better remain there."

In Charles's final letter, dated January 4, 1856, he wishes his family a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. "Another year has passed, and a New Year dawned once more. Still we are sojourning among the living in this wide world. How many more returns of the 'season' we may behold, time alone can determine. May it prove many, and may each succeeding year add to our health and happiness."

The Gold Rush was considered to be over by 1855. It is not known how much longer Charles remained in California. He married Ella (Ellen) Murphy on May 10, 1871, in Brooklyn, New York. He died in Brooklyn on January 13, 1888, at age 64, leaving Ella, aged 44, with five children: Charlotte Louise Middlebrook, b. May 9, 1872; twins Charles LeGrand Middlebrook and Wheeler Middlebrook, b. October 23, 1874; Albert Monroe Middlebrook, b. June 4, 1880; and Wilton Fairfield Middlebrook, b. October 2, 1885.

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"**Happy, happy Christmas**, that can win us back to the delusions of our childhood days, recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth, and transport the traveler back to his own fireside and quiet home!"

---Charles Dickens



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