

# MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY ASSOCIATION, Inc.

## Quarterly Newsletter

June 2012  
Editor,  
Jarrelyn Lang

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Founding Editor,  
Dianne Middlebrooks

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*MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY ASSOCIATION, INC.*

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**MAZE** by Team Leaders, published by Joyce Arnold

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**ON-GOING PROJECTS**

Cemetery...J.A. Middlebrooks

and William Sterling [wgs10@embarqmail.com](mailto:wgs10@embarqmail.com)

DNA.....Bob Middlebrooks,

Dave Clark, and Henry Middlebrooks

MFA Website.....Dave Clark

and Leonard Middlebrooks

Family Repository...Michael Kerry Middlebrooks

Family Register Update.....Leonard Middlebrooks

Military Register Update...M. Kerry Middlebrooks

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**MFA Web Site:** <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~midregerrata>

Middlebrooks Family Association (MFA) was founded in 2001 for the purpose of assembling and preserving genealogical and historical material for future generations. MFA has two publications, as below:

THE MAZE, issued each February, May, August, and November, is sent to everyone on the MFA mailing list. It is free to both paid and unpaid members. If you want to be removed from this list, please contact Joyce Arnold: [joycenjim@bcglobal.net](mailto:joycenjim@bcglobal.net).

MFA Quarterly Newsletter is published four times a year (December, March, June, and September) by the Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc., 274 Wilder Drive, Forsyth, GA 31029. Subscription to the Quarterly is included in membership dues. Articles for inclusion in the Quarterly, or suggestions for topics, may be sent to Jarrellyn Lang, Editor, at [MFAEditor@gmail.com](mailto:MFAEditor@gmail.com).

MFA membership is \$20.00 per year, September 01 thru August 31.

If you would like to become a member, please make your check payable to MFA and mail to MFA, c/o Joyce Arnold, 2904 Trinity Dr., Pearland, TX 77584.

**From the President –**

In my opinion there should be time for a Family Reunion with our MFA family meeting. The main aim of a Reunion is meeting a lot of our relatives. The possibilities to stop or back up time, even if only for a very short time! The Reunion gives us the opportunity to meet with our relatives whom we haven't seen in years, and it allows us to look back and remember our ancestors... A Reunion – it has a unique atmosphere, which makes all the people become closer, even if it's their first time to see each other. There is time for memories, time for talking and looking at old photos, time for playing and singing. Old cousins who haven't been seen for years, a little history, a moment of inspiration, memories...

Please bring your family pictures, stories, and history to share. **Plan to attend the 2012 Annual Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc. Meeting/Reunion October 3-6, Mineral Wells, Texas. (MFA)**

Joyce Arnold,  
President

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**2012 MFA Meeting**

This year, on the 4<sup>th</sup> through the 6<sup>th</sup> of October, the MFA meeting will be in Jacksboro, Texas, focused on the descendants of John Floyd (1848-1909) and Mary Jane (Jenny) Jarrell Middlebrooks (1846-1908) of the Thomas Middlebrooks (1763-1825) line. John Floyd and Jenny emigrated to Texas in the 1880's following the Civil War and settled first in Panola County, then moved to Jack County a few years later. From this start, more than five generations have lived and worked in and around Jacksboro, and many of them are to be found in the family cemeteries in Jack County.

The meeting will be a 3-day event organized similar to previous meetings according to the following schedule:

Date	Time	Event	Location
Thursday, October 4	9:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Registration, initial meetings, and invited talks Tours & sightseeing: 1. Fort Richardson, Jacksboro 2. Jack County Museum, Jacksboro 3. Jacksboro Library genealogical collections 4. Jack County Court House family and deed records sections	Conference Hotel  In and around Jacksboro
Friday, October 5	All Day	Field Trip to Middlebrooks family homesites and cemeteries	In and around Jacksboro
Saturday, October 6	8:30 A.M.	Invited talks, presentations, and business meeting	Conference Hotel

While all the field trips and tours will be in the Jacksboro vicinity, the conference hotel has been chosen to be the Holiday Inn Express in Mineral Wells, Texas, as there are no conference accommodations in Jacksboro. Mineral Wells is an easy 30-mile drive from Jacksboro, and the Holiday Inn Express is very similar to the Holiday Inn Express hotel that hosted last year's meeting in Ashland, Virginia. A block of rooms has been set up for the conference at a special rate and can be booked using the Middlebrooks Family Association name.

The address and phone number of the hotel:

Holiday Inn Express  
6801 Highway 180 E

Rooms with King bed: \$92.99 per night  
Rooms with 2 Queen beds: \$89.99 per night

Mineral Wells, Texas 76067  
Hotel Front Desk: 1-940-325-7829  
Hotel Fax: 1-940-325-2309

Reservation cutoff date is August 24, 2012;  
after that date, you will have to pay regular rates.

There are also numerous RV parks and campsites in the area as well as a very nice Texas State Park RV campsite at Fort Richardson, just south of Jacksboro.



John Floyd Middlebrooks Family Photograph circa 1899

Standing L-R: William James Amerson and John Floyd Middlebrooks's sons Charles Eugene, Joseph Anderson, Thomas Lee, Atticus Floyd, and John Randolph

Seated L-R: John Floyd's only daughter, Emily Elizabeth Middlebrooks Amerson (holding her children, Archie & Floyd), John Floyd Middlebrooks (holding Frank & Bessie, children of Joseph Anderson and Nellie Ann Allison), Mary Jane (Jenny) Jarrell Middlebrooks, Nellie Ann Allison Middlebrooks (holding her baby Ruth & son John), Idella Weir Middlebrooks, wife of John Randolph (holding her children Lloyd & Columbus)

This year's meeting will provide an excellent opportunity to explore and see first-hand the lifestyle lived by our Texas forebears as they made their way in Texas during the period of the transition from being on the edge of civilization on the frontier of Texas, and on through the settlement of this part of the country. We look forward to seeing you there.

Sam Middlebrooks  
Vice President  
Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Buster B. Crider** passed away July 23, 2011, in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. He was 82 years old. A native of Centreville, Alabama, he was born November 7, 1928, to Herman and Zora Middlebrooks Crider.

Buster was an honored U.S. Navy veteran and a retired businessman. He served as a deacon in the First Baptist Church of Lumberton, Mississippi, over fifty years. A member of the Mississippi Lions Club, he served as International Director from 1990 to 1992, and he was inducted into the Mississippi Lions Club Hall of Fame in 1994.

Buster was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, Jane McClellan, a brother, Herman Crider Jr., and two sons, Edward Brent Crider and Darren Lee Crider.

Survivors include two sons, David Kent Crider and Kendell Lee Crider; one sister, Alice C. Lightsey; nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Services were held July 26, 2011, at First Baptist Church of Lumberton. Burial was held in Lumberton City Cemetery, Lumberton, Lamar County, Mississippi.

**James William Middlebrooks**, 83, went to be with his Lord May 19, 2012. He was born August 23, 1928, in Bastrop, Louisiana, to the late Howard Middlebrooks and Agnus (Laing) Middlebrooks Howard.

He founded Middlebrooks Electric in 1945. He was a member of West Bauxite Missionary Baptist Church in Bauxite.

James is survived by his wife of 56 years, Bobbie Webb Middlebrooks; sons James Ross Middlebrooks, Greg Middlebrooks, and Allen Middlebrooks; daughters Debbie Middlebrooks Restum and Carolyn Middlebrooks Wright; ten grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; a sister, Norma Middlebrooks Taylor; two brothers, Will and Marvin Middlebrooks.

Funeral services were held May 22, 2012, at Roller-Ballard Funeral Home in Benton, with burial following in New Rosemont Memorial Park in Benton, Bossier Parish, Louisiana.



### **A Plea for Our Old Graveyards**

By Sara John English

**Beneath the roots of tangled weeds afar in country graveyards,  
Lie the ones whose uncrowned heads have stamped this nation's destiny.  
Beneath those tottering slabs of stone, whose tribute moss and mold efface,  
Sleeps the calm dust that made us great, the true sub-stratum of our race.**

## Websites to Explore

### **From Joyce Arnold:**

Georgia Archives -

<http://sos.georgia.gov/archives/>

Early American Roads and Trails - includes Trail of Tears, Wilderness Road, Oregon Trail, and many more -

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~gentutor/trails.html>

*Family Tree Magazine's* 101 Best Websites for 2010 -

<http://familytreemagazine.com/article/101-Best-Websites-2010>

### **From familysearch.org:**

Nineteenth Century British Library Newspapers digital archive - fully searchable database of the British Library's newspaper holdings; provides a complete run of 48 national and regional Victorian British newspapers for the 19th century from 1800 to 1900. These support the study of colonial history, genealogical research, politics, urban studies, and media courses.

<http://find.galegroup.com/bncn/>

Alexander Street Press - American Civil War - Research data contains indexed, searchable information on over 4 million soldiers and thousands of battles, together with 15,000 photographs.

<http://alexanderstreet.com/cwdb/>

Letters and diaries - contains approximately 100,000 indexed pages of diaries, letters, and memoirs, including 4,000 pages of previously unpublished manuscripts, such as the letters of Amos Wood and his wife, and the diary of Maryland planter William Claytor.

<http://Solomon.cwld.alexanderstreet.com>

Images, photographs, posters, and ephemera (written and printed material not intended to be retained or preserved) - provides a vivid history of the American Civil War with over 1,400 pages

<http://cpho.alexanderstreet.com>

## THE WOMEN'S TITANIC MEMORIAL

By Jarrelyn Lang

From "Remembering the Forgotten Titanic Memorial," an article by Kim A. O'Connell at historynet.com

Ms. O'Connell begins her article with this paragraph:

*Just past midnight on April 15, 2012, a group of 20 men in tuxedos lined up at the Women's Titanic Memorial in Washington, D.C. As a mild breeze rolled across the Washington Channel, a bell tolled. The crowd of more than a hundred people immediately hushed. A liveried waiter distributed flutes of champagne. One by one, the men gave toasts in honor of the famous ship that sank in the North Atlantic exactly 100 years ago. "To those brave men," the men repeated, raising their glasses. "Hear, hear," the crowd responded.*

This year marked the 34<sup>th</sup> year that the members of the exclusive Men's Titanic Society has held a ceremony at the memorial in honor of the men on the *Titanic* who sacrificed their lives so that women and children could be saved. Many notable men, whose names have faded into history, were aboard that fateful night.

Planning and fundraising for the memorial began almost immediately following the ship's sinking. The first donation to the Titanic Memorial committee was given by Helen Herron Taft, wife of President William Howard Taft. Clara Hay, widow of Secretary of State John Hay, chaired the committee. *Titanic* survivors and family members were prominent contributors, including the wife of John Thayer, Pennsylvania railroad magnate, who went down with the ship. Mrs. Archibald Forbes donated the cash she had won playing bridge against John Jacob Astor, who also perished with the ship.

Fundraising parties, benefit concerts, and other events were held in Washington, New York, and elsewhere. A collection was also taken up aboard the ocean steamer *Berlin* in July 1912, as it crossed near the spot where the *Titanic* sank. By the summer of 1912, the Women's Titanic Memorial Committee was receiving around \$300 in donations daily. In all, more than \$40,000 was raised.

Several designers submitted proposals for the memorial. The committee chose the design submitted by Gertrude Vanderbilt, which depicted an angelic male figure with a raised head and outstretched arms, carved in granite by the Horrigan Studio of Quincy, Massachusetts. The base for the statue was designed by Henry Bacon, architect of the Lincoln Memorial.

There was controversy over the *Titanic* memorial, however. Philanthropist Evelyn Gurley-Kane wrote to the *Washington Post* in 1914 that a memorial only to men was "a strange affront to . . . the women, whose bravery was even greater than the men's, and it is man's privilege to help protect women and children if he is any sort of man." Others thought that the monies collected should be used to help sailors in need and their families. Another writer to the *Post* even suggested that the memorial also recognize the captain and crew of the rescue ship *Carpathia*.

In spite of the complaints, work went on, and a prominent site was chosen along the Potomac River near Rock Creek Parkway, which Col. Ulysses S. Grant III, City Director of Washington's public buildings and parks, helped to secure. On May 26, 1931, Mrs. Taft was

given the honor of dropping the veil to reveal the completed memorial. For three decades, the memorial was one of the most popular memorials to see during a visit to Washington.

When the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts was built in the mid-1960s on the same spot, however, the Women's Titanic Memorial was stored away for two years and later moved to its current location, a quiet, out-of-the-way spot on the Capital's southwest waterfront.

The memorial's whereabouts might have forever remained unknown, but Jim Silman, founding member and president of the Men's Titanic Society, persuaded a few other like-minded men to join him in honoring the Titanic Memorial in 1979. The Society's invitation-only membership rarely goes above 20, including media and journalism types, and it has met after midnight every April 15 since.

"These fellows came along at a time when virtually nobody knew there was a Titanic Memorial in Washington," according to Michael Freedman, seven-year member of the Society and public broadcasting producer. He adds, "They took it upon themselves to honor the 1,500 brave souls who perished in the disaster."

Says Silman, a former television producer, "There are always new stories being discovered about the *Titanic*. We thought about doing something more elaborate in honor of the centennial. But we're traditionalists. We just did what we always do. We're dedicated to this memorial."

The inscription on the base of the memorial:

TO THE BRAVE MEN  
WHO PERISHED  
IN THE WRECK  
OF THE TITANIC  
APRIL 15 1912  
THEY GAVE THEIR  
LIVES THAT WOMEN  
AND CHILDREN  
MIGHT BE SAVED

ERECTED BY THE  
WOMEN OF AMERICA

Pictures of the memorial, and other *Titanic*-related images, can be seen on Wikipedia.

The last survivor of the *Titanic* was Millvina Dean, born February 12, 1912, to Bertram Frank Dean and Georgette Light Dean in Branscombe, Devon County, England. She died May 31, 2009, in Ashurst, Hampshire County, England. Millvina was only nine weeks old when she traveled on the *Titanic* with her parents and a brother, Bertram Vere Dean. Her father died on the *Titanic*. They had hoped to settle in Wichita, Kansas, where Millvina's father was to become co-owner of a cousin's tobacco shop. Her mother had in mind to fulfill her husband's wishes but decided instead to return to England with her children. Both her mother and brother preceded Millvina in death.



## Outline for Internet Research – 10 Steps

By Neal Middlebrook

- I. Census History (Find family on every census during which a person lived and was named)
  - A. Names
    1. Surnames: spelling is always considered variable [Steward/t], [Stuard/t]
    2. First Names: may use middle name, nickname, or initials [Martha=Patsy; Sarah=Sally; William=Will or Bill; Richard=Dick, etc.]
    3. Seek by first name and location if you cannot find the family.
  - B. Always seek state censuses to include if the families are in the correct locations.
  - C. Pay attention to the surrounding families in each location.
- II. Make a Family Group Sheet after completing all or most of the census history.
- III. Seek Vital Statistics (Birth, Marriage, Death) for everyone on the group sheet.
  - A. Check "Joe Beine Online" for data at specific locations (includes Family Search).
  - B. Check "Family Search" Narrow options by clicking on "Collections" then B.M.D..
  - C. Check Social Security Death Index (SSDI) for deaths after 1962 when necessary.
- IV. Seek Tombstone Data.
  - A. "Find A Grave": remember that entries without photos may be questionable.
  - B. "[Internet.net](http://Internet.net)" is another source of extracted tombstone information.
  - C. "USGenWeb Tombstone" project has yet other transcriptions and photos.
- V. Seek family on Pedigrees at Ancestry, Family Search, and Rootsweb. With the above four steps completed, you **can** compare the pedigrees with what you already know of the family. This will help you evaluate the accuracy of what you see on the pedigrees and eliminate the absurd.
- VI. Check "USGenWeb" locations for additional data.
- VII. Google Name "First Name, Last Name" or "Last Name, First Name." Middle Initial changes results.
  - A. Use every common spelling of the surname.
  - B. Add location if you get too many hits.
  - C. Results are dependent on search term. Use both county and state name completely spelled out AND abbreviated: "Coos Co., OR" and "Coos County, Oregon."
- VIII. Look for State Archives or Local Historical Societies.
  - A. Seek online data at these repositories: "SOS State Name" or "State name + Archives/Historical Society" at Google.
  - B. Seek for each state listed on the census history.
- IX. Check "Historical Newspapers Online" for digitalized newspapers of the area online.
- X. Repeat for Everyone on the Group Sheet if you found the names in the preceding generation. Repeat the process for that family.

Neal adds: "This is a handy outline to use, especially when starting with a new family or making sure you covered all the internet bases for an existing family. We use this outline at the family history library when working with patrons."

# TRUMBULL SCHOOL NAMED FOR HERO WHO DIED IN REVOLUTIONARY WAR

By Marcia C. Morgan

(Editor's note: This is a newspaper article written in an unnamed Trumbull, North Carolina, newspaper. The only date given is March 17 - . I have had the article for some time, but I don't remember who submitted it. My apologies to whoever sent it to me. If the person who sent it will let me know, I will give credit to him or her in the September 2012 Quarterly. I have reproduced the article's actual spellings, etc.)

The Middlebrook School, scheduled to open in September, has been named in honor of Lieut. Ephraim Middlebrook, who was killed in the battle of Ridgefield in 1777 during the War of Revolution. Middlebrook, a native son of Trumbull, is buried in a hilltop cemetery in what is now Long Hill.

Lieut. Middlebrook met death in the battle with the British. His final resting place is in full sight of the new school.

In 1930, the Long Hill Burial association, with the help of the Trumbull Board of Finance provided \$300 for restoration of the war hero's tomb. It was renovated and the inscription was recut.

History says that mortally wounded in the battle of Ridgefield, Lieut. Middlebrook was brought back to Trumbull in the ambulance of that era - an ox cart - and died in his residence in Long Hill. This mansion once stood on the state highway opposite the residence of the late Samuel Beardsley. The house was torn down in 1834 and once was owned by the late Charles B. Hawley. Today maple trees mark the spot.

So far as is known, Lieut. Middlebrook was the only officer in the War of the Revolution from Trumbull who was killed in battle within the State.

The Middlebrook family was well known in Trumbull. Some members of the family settled here as early as 1640. Lieut. Ephraim's grandfather, John M. Middlebrook, was one of the settlers of Long Hill. He came here in 1728. His grave is the oldest one in the Long Hill Cemetery.

John M. Middlebrook II was the father of Lieut. Middlebrook. An uncle of Lieut. Middlebrook, Stephen Middlebrook was the first treasurer for the Town of Trumbull. He was elected at the first town meeting Nov. 20, 1787.

Lieut. Middlebrook married Elizabeth Manson in 1757. They had seven children.

The full inscription on Lieut. Middlebrook's tomb, set under an American eagle, reads as follows:"In memory of Lieutenant Ephraim Middlebrook, who fought, bled and died in defence of his country at the Battle of Ridgefield on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of April 1777, in the forty-first year of his age, and the third day of May as interred here with the honors of war."

Here on his tomb cast an eye  
And view the eagle great -  
Who represents our Liberty -  
The union of the States  
View in his claws the arrows sharp.  
The branch of oak, likewise;  
A lively emblem of our smart  
For liberty o'er our enemies.

For which cause this hero bled,  
On Ridgefield's bloody plain;  
And there was numbered with the dead  
His country's freedom to obtain.  
In memory these lines were wrote  
And to perpetuate his name, that  
His descendants ne'er forget that  
For freedom he was slain.

The new school will open Sept. 9 with an anticipated enrollment of 800. It is a regular 20 classroom school with a cafeteria to accommodate 220 pupils, an auditorium-gymnasium to accommodate 1,000 persons, health unit, school administration unit with separate accommodations for the principal and superintendent, all purpose rooms, and other required storage rooms, boiler rooms, and toilets. The space below the auditorium will provide a home-making unit, industrial shop and planning unit, and locker, shower and dressing room facilities for boys and girls participating in physical education.

Grades five through eight will be in session there next Fall. Seven rooms will be used by grade five. Grades six, seven and eight will be on the departmental system. The cafeteria will be used as a study hall, vocal and instrumental classroom when meals are not being served. The increased overflow this next year will be permitted for one year to eliminate the need for double sessions, school officials said.

The outdoor facilities will have a hard surfaced area arranged so it may be used in the daytime for a play area and in the evening as a parking area. There will be an entrance for buses and unloading accommodations. A small recreation field will be located at the south-east of the main building for a softball diamond. In the rear of the building will be service driveways which also will serve as a parking area.

The building will consist mainly of reinforced concrete with a minimum of structural steel. It is a fireproof building, officials said. The exterior finish will be of white and red brick of simple design. The interior will contain a protective wall throughout to help reduce maintenance costs.

The main lobby will have a flag-stone floor. Oak plywood wainscoting with wall-space lockers to the height of six feet will be included.

The heating system will be by classroom type unit ventilators. These automatically change the air to conform with the state's requirement for ventilation.

Fluorescent lighting will be used throughout the building, but in the rooms used the least there will be incandescent lighting such as now is in use in schools here.

\*\*\*To see the eagle on Lieut. Middlebrook's grave marker, go to Long Hill Burial Ground's website. If you continue to scroll down, you will learn that he served under Benedict Arnold.

\*\*\*The Middlebrook School is still in use. It is now Middlebrook Elementary School, located at 220 Middlebrooks Ave. in Trumbull, for Kindergarten through fifth grade students.

## CREATING A PERSONAL TIMELINE

By Emily Anne Croom, from *Family Tree Magazine*, November 2, 2009

See your ancestors' lives from different perspectives, and discover new avenues for research by building timelines.

Your ancestors were more than just names and dates. They were real people who experienced life in the contexts of their families and communities. To see them in these contexts, try creating personal, family, and historical timelines. These tools can help you organize, plan, and evaluate your research by showing at a glance what you've learned, what information is missing, and where you could turn next. Following are some guidelines.

### Personal Timelines

As you begin to focus your research on an individual, create a chronological profile of that person's life that you can expand on as you learn more.

Before you find a lot of information on any one person, you might want to create a timeline on your computer. A spreadsheet or a table in a word-processing document provides unlimited space and can be updated easily using these headings:

- ▶ **Date:** Write the date of each event in the ancestor's life in chronological order.
- ▶ **Age:** Record the person's age at the time of each event. When you don't have a specific birth date, censuses and other records can help you narrow the possibilities. Use the abbreviation *c* or *ca* (from the Latin *circa*, meaning "about") to show an estimated age - for example *c. 37* (about 37).

This column will keep you alert to errors and discrepancies - such as a child being born two years before her mother or a boy enlisting in the army at age four. If a census reports an incorrect age, record the reported age in the events column, not the age column.

- ▶ **Event and location:** Include any information you uncover about the ancestor, such as birth and death, religious milestones, education, employment, military service, marriage(s), and land transactions. If you have questions about specific details, use qualifiers such as *likely* and *probably* to explain your uncertainty (for example, "born April 6, *probably* in New York"). An event description can be as brief as "born somewhere in America," or it can be several sentences telling a family story. Recording the place is important because you'll want to look for additional documents in each locality. Remember that an important genealogy strategy is to use the "known," including places, to work toward the "unknown" family facts.
- ▶ **Documentation:** Citing your sources is essential. These data show where and when events happened. Entries in this column can be full or abbreviated citations, also. If you do abbreviate a citation, be sure to include the full documentation elsewhere in your notes.

When you list every event you've identified in a person's life, you see in one place what you've learned, which sources provided the information, which questions remain, and where discrepancies need to be resolved. As you plan your research, the profile helps you concentrate on even the smallest details. (Remember that if you include information from undocumented family histories – paper, electronic, or online – you must research them to determine their accuracy.)

As soon as you print out a timeline, underline and italicize questions and ideas for future investigation of each person. What you don't know about them might surprise you.

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## ONE MAN'S DIARY

By Dianne Middlebrooks, from *Diary of John Wesley Middlebrook*  
(originally published in the October 2004 MFA Newsletter)

John Wesley Middlebrook, Jr. was a farmer. He was 5 feet, 7 inches in height, with blue eyes, dark hair, and a light complexion. He was born at a place called Pine Grove Furnace, located in Lawrence County, Ohio, on the Ohio River. *Furnace* denotes the area of furnaces that processed ore into pig iron or processed the fire clay for bricks. Iron ore, coal, and fire clay were the products for the steel and firebrick industries in southern Ohio.

On February 3, 1864, at the age of 19, John joined the War Between the States as a Private. He was assigned to Company F, 91<sup>st</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry, in Portsmouth, Ohio. According to the Muster Rolls of the Union military, John was in the hospital and was missing on retreat in the Lynchburg Campaign. There were three battles in and around Lynchburg, Virginia. Sixteen months later, he mustered out on June 24, 1865, in Cumberland, Maryland. John returned home to Ohio.

After several applications, John finally began receiving a pension for his service in the War Between the States. He received his first check on January 8, 1897, for \$6.00, with increases every year. He received his last check on July 31, 1933, in the amount of \$67.50. On his initial application, he listed: rheumatism, lumbago (a painful condition of the lower back), and coxalia (hip pain). John was required to have an examination every year, to determine how much of a raise he would get for that year, if any. In subsequent years, he added heart trouble and heart disease., and in 1903, his symptoms were " . . . now totally unable to perform manual labor . . . ." John received 40 years of pension money for 16 months of military service!

John moved to Highland, Indiana, about 1870. Highland was a station on the stagecoach route from Lafayette to Terre Haute, Indiana, and was the oldest trading point located close to the Wabash River. He lived on the west side of the Wabash River and right across from the Wabash & Erie Canal.

The Wabash & Erie Canal became possible when the State of New York agreed to extend the Canal to Ohio, and the state of Ohio agreed to "take it to Ohio," that is, to the Ohio River.

The muddy Wabash River rises in Cranberry Prairie, near Fort Recovery, Ohio, and flows east to west to Logansport, Indiana, ". . . only thirty miles before it becomes entirely an Indiana River . . . ."

The small town of Alta, two miles from Highland, Indiana, was known for its pearl button factory. In the 1900s, mussels were gathered in huge quantities from the Wabash River. Alta was not a town, but it was a part of Hillsdale.

Hillsdale is located in Vermillion County and was platted in 1878. The town grew from being a frontier area as a result of the fire clay. Fire clay is mined by drilling ". . . holes through the clay to plant the dynamite which loosened the clay so it could be loaded on the cars . . . ." The clay was used to manufacture bricks. George Edward, son of John Wesley, Jr., worked as a laborer, . . . "fired kills [sic] at [the] brick factory, mining brick clay and making bricks . . . ." before his death in 1932.

When John was living in Hillsdale, the Wabash River was closer to Montezuma, located across the river in Park County; when he was living in Highland, the river was about two miles away.

Montezuma was a place where you could buy groceries, clothing, and other items, close to home. On July 1, 1899, John ". . . went to Montezuma and bought a cheap pair of pants . . . ."

The citizens of Hillsdale, Highland, and other towns had to go to the county seat to pay their taxes. On May 7, 1900, ". . . went to Newport . . . to pay [his] taxes . . . ." The following year, on April 26, John, and most likely George, paid their taxes.

Newport was established in 1824 as the county seat of Vermillion County because it was centrally located and had a natural spring, and there were two industries already on-site – saw and grist mills. Newport was incorporated in 1870, the year John moved to Highland.

The first courthouse of Newport, Indiana, was built in 1825 and burned in 1844, and it was destroyed by fire in 1923; in 1924, a new courthouse was built that was still standing in 2010 (the latest date I could find – JL).

In John's diary, he mentions ". . . George celebrated . . . "the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, 1901, in Cayuga," 13 miles away from Highland.

In September of 1900, John wrote ". . . Hot, hot, fair at Clinton Ind. . . ." Clinton is 10 miles south of Highland on State Highway 63 and was established in 1824.

The Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad reached Clinton in 1868 and remains today (October 2004, the date this was originally published) a vital link to Chicago and the South. In the 1920s, the population was about 15,000 people; in 2000, the population was 5,126. Coal was the most important industry in Clinton until 1964.

The second state park in Indiana is in the town of Rockville and is known as Turkey Run State Park. It became a state park in 1916 and is eleven miles east of Highland.

Ronald Middlebrook, Sr. drew a map of Highland and Hillsdale ". . . as he remembered the area from the year 1925 . . . ." On this map, Ronald Sr. labeled the

houses with numbers. John W.'s house was labeled 18 on State Highway 63. Albert and Nellie Middlebrook Cole lived next door to John, and Julie Middlebrook Perman lived three doors down.

John Wesley Middlebrook, Jr. (1844-1933) was the son of John Wesley, Sr. (1819-1865), whose father was Garland Middlebrooks, born 1774. John, Jr. had five children – four daughters and one son. The son, George Edward, was killed in an auto accident in Hillsdale, Indiana, in 1932. He was 54 years old and was survived by three sisters and seven children. Two sons of George Edward are still living (as of 2004) – Ronald Hugh Middlebrook, Sr. and Wayne Middlebrook.

### THE DIARY Hillsdale, Indiana

John Jr. started writing in a diary in 1895 where he wrote, "...Annie Middlebrook Brown fixed George a clove apple (an apple covered with cloves) in the fall of 1895 ...." The next entry was on February 8, 1898, in which he tells about a death. After a lapse of three years, John began writing on a regular basis.

The daily writings always began with the date and his name. The first couple of months were mostly about the weather; in January 1899 "...first day fine & bright..." and on the 30<sup>th</sup>, "...Colds [sic] morning ter(???) so far, 15 degrees below zero...." On March 5, 1899, Hillsdale, Indiana received "...14 to 15 inches of snow...."

In April, the writings gave more details. John wrote about going fishing and hunting with one certain person and about three of his children. George and Maggie went "...buggie [sic] riding in afternoon...Julia moved to highland...." Throughout the diary, he mentions friends and neighbors as well as his family.

John must have been down in the dumps when he wrote in April, "...I, John W. Middlebrook have been trying to chop some wood, but I am not doing much at it. I find that I am not worth a dam for any thing any more. I can't do a days [sic] work and I dont [sic] know what I will do or how I am going to get along...." By the end of the month, he was feeling better as he wrote, "... able to cut stove wood...Hauled load of wood in afternoon...."

On September 18, 1901, John wrote: "...Highland Ind. Martha Elenor Craft Middlebrook bought a damed little runt of a pig off Gale Brown...." Gale Brown was the husband of Margaret (Maggie) Middlebrook.

The writings stopped on December 25, 1901, with this note: "...Mrs. Martha Middlebrook sick this morning at...sick about eight...." Mrs. Martha died in 1903.

At the end of her 2004 article, Dianne told readers how they could obtain a copy of John's diary. However, I was unable to locate the publishing company, and a search for the book on several sites were fruitless.

## FRIENDLY FIRE ?

By Jarrelyn Lang

During World War II, Dalhart, Texas, was home to Dalhart Army Air Field, located two miles southeast of town. Activated in September 1942, the main base consisted of a 3,000-acre field. Two auxiliary fields, one west of town and another in a more easterly direction, were added later.

Originally intended for glider training, the main field was instead used for B-17 and B-29 training and for fighter planes to be used in conjunction with bombers. The base was closed in 1946, and the property was turned over to the city of Dalhart. Since that time, several of the remaining buildings have continued to be used as the Dalhart Municipal Airport.

On July 5, 1943, pilots at Dalhart Army Air Base prepared their B-17 bombers for a practice run. They loaded hundred-pound practice bombs filled with four pounds of dynamite and ninety pounds of sand. The nighttime training mission was to begin a few hours after dark.

Their "target" was a small square area lit by four lights at each corner, near the tiny town of Conlen, about nineteen miles northeast of Dalhart.

The training mission began late in the evening, as planned. The navigator was confident in his abilities, and the pilots were well prepared. Everyone expected the training mission would be a success. It was a simple mission, but something went very wrong.

Thirty miles due north of Dalhart lay Boise City, Oklahoma. The town's residents had retired for the night, and most of the lights of the town had been turned off, with the exception of the lights at each corner of the courthouse square.

Just past midnight, the sleeping townspeople were rudely awakened by a series of explosions. The explosions weren't very loud, but they were loud enough to wake most, if not all, of the 1,200 inhabitants of Boise City.

The raid continued for thirty long minutes. The first bomb went through the roof of a garage and exploded, digging a four-foot-deep hole in the floor. A second bomb struck the Baptist Church, exploding beside the building and breaking out several windows. The crater was three feet deep. The driver of a munitions truck parked on the square wasted no time in getting his vehicle out of the way.

After the first bomb fell, Boise City's air-warning officer, John Adkins, phoned the FBI in Oklahoma City and sent the Adjutant General a wire: "Boise City bombed one A.M. Baptist Church, garage hit."



The third bomb struck between the sidewalk and curb in front of the Style Shoppe Building, just a few feet away from where the driver of a gasoline tanker was rushing to get out of town.

The fourth bomb also came close to hitting a parked fuel transport truck, striking the ground and exploding only yards from the McGowan Boarding House.

Frank Garrett, the light and power man for Boise City, ran to the Southwestern Public Service Building and quickly pulled down the town's main power switch, throwing the town into complete darkness. The only lights that could be seen were from the remaining two bombs as they struck the ground and set off small explosions.

Either the blackout or a radio message to the pilot in response to Adkins's wire caused the navigator to realize his near-fatal error. Somehow, after leaving the Dalhart base, the young navigator had made a 45-mile error: he mistook the four lights centered on Boise City's main square for the intended practice target. After realizing the error, the pilots quickly returned to their base.

Although the bombing left a number of craters in the town, no one was actually injured. There was no damage besides the garage and the church – and the craters.

The accidental bombing made Boise City famous. It is the only continental American town to be bombed during World War II. The estimated property damage to the city was less than \$25.00.

A year after the incident, that same bomber crew led an 800-plane daylight raid on Berlin and became one of the most decorated crews of World War II. All the crew members survived the war and went on to tell stories about their "slightly misguided" raid on a small Oklahoma town. One crew member even married a Boise City girl.

The crew members were invited to attend the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attack in 1993, but they all declined. The former radio operator did, however, send an audio tape that was played at the celebration.

**Sources:** "Boise City, Oklahoma," *Wikipedia*; "Dalhart Army Air Field," *The Handbook of Texas Online*; "The WWII Bombing of Boise City in Oklahoma," *hubpages.com*.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF BIRTH ORDER

Contributed by Dianne Middlebrooks

(originally printed in the March 2011 MFA Quarterly Newsletter)

The study of family history invariably takes us into the details of family units. While a pedigree chart reflects the line of ascent or descent in the family hierarchy, a family group sheet presents a picture of the structure of a family unit and gives details about the family members. It is important to examine that structure carefully because the birth order of the children can be very revealing.

A child's place in the family hierarchy is important for a variety of reasons, not the least of which are the records left behind to assist your research. Some researchers concentrate their investigative efforts on nailing down vital dates for only direct ancestors. But ignoring your ancestors' brothers and sisters can be a costly omission. Birth order is important.

Family structures have changed over the centuries. Couples typically produced more children in earlier times than they do today. Above and beyond the joys of a large family, there were practical matters to consider. The offspring of families with farms or small businesses became members of the family workforce - cheap labor contributing to the family's economic success and security. They also married, producing alliances with other families and perhaps bringing additional resources into the family. And of course, they produced additional families of their own.

As you compile family records, you should focus your attention on the details of all members of the family group. Here are a few reasons why birth order can be important to your research:

**Sons:** The first-born son often grew up with the expectation that he would work with his father and share the responsibility of providing for the family, and he was often designated as the person who would inherit the farm or business. In most cases, he was groomed to assume this role and given heavy responsibilities to help manage the family affairs. Depending on his age at the time of his father's death, he was usually the person who took over, settled the estate, cared for his mother and other siblings, and performed other functions. The law of the land may also have dictated that he inherit everything; the Latin term *primogeniture* refers to the hereditary right of a first-born son to inherit, especially under the laws of some areas and in some historical periods.

Widows were often considered incapable of providing for their children, and the custody of the children was often awarded to guardians - including older male siblings. An eldest son may have been named guardian or trustee of one or more of his younger siblings. Consider the age of the oldest son at the time of a parent's death against the ages of the other children. Look for probate records related to the parent, including probate court minutes in the absence of a will or probate packet. Examine land and property records for evidence of the transfer of land to the eldest son. Also, look for guardianship records for any and/or all of the minor children.

While many fathers provided for their sons, we also have to face the reality that most of our ancestors were of modest means. The second- and third-born sons often lived in the shadow of one or more older brothers. Unless the father was a man of some means, the younger sons' right of inheritance was usually diminished either by the family or by the law. If a younger son inherited at all, it was usually a bequest of lesser value or of inferior quality than that of his older brother. Also, his prospects of making a living in the area where he grew up may have been lessened if he inherited little or no land.

You may find that younger sons left the area where they were born and raised, to find other opportunities. Without the security of land or the prospect of "guaranteed employment," they may have migrated elsewhere. Also, a younger son may have become an apprentice to a tradesman – indentured by his father or as a means of bettering his prospects. In this case, court records may include evidence of these legal contracts and agreements.

**Daughters:** The older female children were often enlisted to share the household duties. These certainly included caring for younger siblings, sewing, cooking, and performing many essential tasks. However, eldest daughters also tended to receive gifts or an inheritance from their parents. A father might bestow a dower gift of land at her marriage, and the wills of both the father and the mother often reflect bequests. Sometimes a parent's will specifically names a daughter and/or the daughter's husband as an heir, and the will may even designate that a daughter provide a home for, and care for, younger siblings.

Look for deeds registered in daughters' married names or the names of their husbands. Sometimes, on reading the will, you will find that acreage has been granted by a parent as a gift or as a dowry. Also, look in parents' wills or probate court minutes for evidence of the order of birth for daughters. Don't overlook guardianship records in the name of the daughter's husband.

**Naming Patterns and Names Recycled:** On the topic of naming patterns among our ancestors, suffice it to say that studying names of siblings can be helpful in determining birth order. Eldest sons tended to be named after their fathers, or after grandfathers and other family members. Daughters were sometimes named after their mothers, or an eldest daughter may have been given one of her mother's names. (These naming-pattern tendencies are often relative to culture. Scandinavians, for instance, traditionally named the first son after the paternal grandfather and the first daughter after the maternal grandmother, with subsequent naming patterns for the second daughter and son.) There is some validity in studying naming patterns, but don't place too much emphasis on it. There are too many exceptions, one being the recycling of names.

Tragically, the mortality rate among our ancestors' children was high due to disease and accidents. The death of a first son who was named after his father was certainly devastating, but the desire to leave a namesake could also be high. Researchers have run across numerous instances of the re-use of a given name. Therefore, when visiting cemeteries, you may be confounded by vast differences in tombstone dates and the vital dates you had verified with other sources. In some instances, there may have been TWO children with the same name. Sometimes a family gave the name of a child who died

young to the next boy/girl to be born, so that the name was preserved. Be careful to look for this possibility when you encounter such discrepancies.

**Puzzling Out Birth Order:** One of the biggest challenges arises when a male ancestor is married multiple times and fathers children by each wife. In those cases, establishing birth order can be extremely important. You want to make sure you match the children with the right mother.

Sometimes you may be unable to locate evidence of birth dates, but clues derived from studying patterns that point to birth order – such as which son inherited the land and which daughter inherited her mother's bed or silver spoons – may provide the pointers you need in order to focus research on specific records.

Do your best to try to determine the birth order for each child in the family. Knowing where your ancestor fell in the hierarchy may help you understand more about him or her. Perhaps your great-grandparents had ten children, and your grandmother was the oldest child. If your great-grandmother died when she was fourteen, there's a good chance that your grandmother became "mother" to the other children. That might explain a lot about your grandmother's household management skills and her take-charge abilities within your own family.

Spend some time puzzling out the birth order of the children in each family group, and you may learn more about your ancestors and find pointers to other records at the same time.



**From Southwest Airlines' *Spirit* magazine, June 2010:**

Everyone in the entire world could fit into Rhode Island, with four square feet of personal space each. In terms of land area, Rhode Island is the smallest of the states, measuring 37 miles by 48 miles (1,045 square miles total). At 261,797 square miles, **Texas** would give us each about 1,070 square feet to ourselves, roughly the equivalent of a two-bedroom apartment.

*ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!*