

# MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY ASSOCIATION, INC.

Quarterly Newsletter

June 2013

Editor,  
Jarrelyn Lang

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Founding Editor,  
Dianne Middlebrooks

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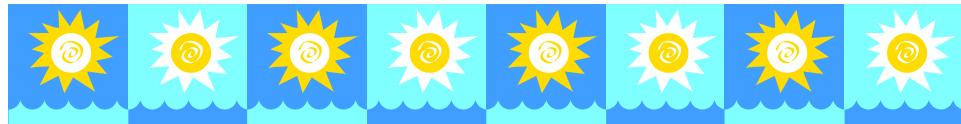
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**MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**2012-2013 OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT – Joyce Arnold**

**VICE PRESIDENT – Sam Middlebrooks**

**SECRETARY / TREASURER – vacant**

**ANCESTOR TEAM LEADERS**

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**England Research –** Ian Middlebrook and

Neal Middlebrook

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

Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc. (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 non-paid members. If you want to be removed from this list, please contact Joyce Arnold at [joycenjim@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joycenjim@sbcglobal.net).

MFA Quarterly Newsletter is published in December, March, June, and September by the Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc., 274 Wilder Drive, Forsythe, 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 Jarrelyn Lang, Editor, at [MFAeditor@gmail.com](mailto:MFAeditor@gmail.com). All submissions are subject to editing.

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 it to: Joyce Arnold, 2904 Trinity Drive, Pearland, Texas 77854.

**President's Message, June 2013:**

*Please use MFA's project leaders to share your family information. Let's continue to update our family history.*

***Middlebrooks Family Register Update Project***

We would like to continue to encourage you to participate in the family register update. If you have Middlebrook/s or allied family information and would like to contribute, please contact Leonard Middlebrooks, the project leader – [gambol@juno.com](mailto:gambol@juno.com).

***Middlebrooks Cemetery Project***

We are continuing to record Middlebrook/s and allied family cemetery information and photos. The goal of the project is to preserve and catalog cemetery information of our ancestors for future generations. If you would like to submit any cemetery information or have questions about the project, please contact J. A. Middlebrooks, the project leader – [middle3jam2012@gmail.com](mailto:middle3jam2012@gmail.com).

**Family Repository**

Family Repository...If you have any records of the Middlebrooks family, and you want a place to store them, please contact Michael Kerry Middlebrooks, the project leader – [mbrooks@gci.net](mailto:mbrooks@gci.net).

***Military Register***

Military Register Update...If you have any Middlebrooks military records, please share them with MFA, or

If you have a question about someone serving, please contact M. Kerry Middlebrooks, the project leader – [mbrooks@gci.net](mailto:mbrooks@gci.net).

**DNA Project**

DNA testing may help to determine our relationship to our long-dead ancestors within the Middlebrook(s) family tree. With the recent advances in DNA research, the use of DNA information is a very powerful genealogical tool. See what we've done so far... Our results are on the [World Families DNA site](#) and on the [Family Tree DNA site](#). For questions contact Bob Middlebrooks, the [Middlebrooks DNA Project Administrator](#) – [mid293@earthlink.net](mailto:mid293@earthlink.net).

**Place to search:** The Caswell County Historical Association (CCHA) was organized in 1956 to promote the study of local history, to collect and interpret historical artifacts, and to preserve local historical structures. The CCHA owns and operates the Richmond-Miles History Museum in Yanceyville, North Carolina. To become a member, go to [Join the CCHA](#).

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ncccha/memoranda/membership.html>

CCHA Website: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~ncccha>

**Joyce Arnold, President**

**2013 Reunion for the Descendants of John Floyd and Mary Jane  
(Jenny) Middlebrooks,**

to be held on Saturday, June 29, 2013

The reunion is to be held at the First National Bank Community Room, 201 South Main Street in Jacksboro, Texas. The meeting begins at 10:00 A.M. Five generations of Middlebrookses have lived in Jack County, beginning with John Floyd and Mary Jane (Jenny) Jarrell in the 1800s. This year marks the 77<sup>th</sup> reunion, with the first one being in 1936.

Come and enjoy getting together for fun, food, and fellowship, and to renew and strengthen family ties.

Meat, drinks, paper plates, etc., will be provided for the noon meal. Everyone is invited to bring your most famous recipe side dish or dessert. There will be a short business meeting after lunch to elect new officers and to review family activities and support to the Jacksboro community.

Sam Middlebrooks, President  
JoAnn Middlebrooks Ramsey, Secretary

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**The Zoning Improvement Plan**, a.k.a. ZIP Code, has now been in use for 50 years. In 1963, due to an overwhelming increase in business mail, the Post Office Department began implementing the plan to sort mail for delivery to specific locations.

**Interesting Trivia:**

Total U.S. ZIP Codes: 41,810

Military ZIP Codes: 538 (included in above total)

Average Population per ZIP Code: 7,348

Most ZIP Codes: California, 2,602 (3 more than Texas)

Fewest ZIP Codes: Rhode Island 90 (89 more than American Samoa)

## **Roads to the Ohio Country, Part I**

By Jarrelyn Lang, from *American Migration Routes, 1735-1815*, by William Dollarhide  
#3 in a series

After the French-Indian War of 1754-1763, France gave up its claims to the Mississippi and Ohio valleys. These areas, then, belonged solely to the British. The Mississippi River became the undisputed boundary between British and Spanish territories.

Britain surprised its American colonies with the Proclamation Line of 1763, which took away the colonies' right to grant lands west of the Appalachian Mountains and prohibited colonials from crossing the line at all. All land west of the Proclamation Line of 1763 was declared "Indian Hunting Grounds." However, the American Revolution would soon reverse British policies in regard to western expansion and relations with the American Indians.

After the Revolutionary War and the creation of an American government, expansion into western regions became a matter of national policy. The losers were the Indians who had supported the British during the war. For the next 100 years, American policy toward the Indians became one of "Manifest Destiny," the self-proclaimed right of the United States to take possession of the entire continent by whatever means possible.

### **A Federal Land Grab?**

The Manifest Destiny of the United States to expand from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean began at the very beginning of its existence as a nation. The Continental Congress of the United States began the process with the Ordinance of 1787, which was the original law providing for the creation of all new territories and states.

The national plan for expansion was part of ratifying the Constitution. The thirteen states were not only agreeing to the creation of a new Federal Government; they were giving up their claims to their western lands. Conflicting claims based on the Royal Charters of the original colonies were eliminated when the states of Virginia, Massachusetts, and Connecticut ceded their western lands to the U.S. Government. All three of these states had laid claim to the same area. By ceding their western claims, that issue was ended forever. In 1787, these lands became the Northwest Territory.

Soon afterward, Virginia gave up more land when its old Fincastle County became the state of Kentucky in 1792. Likewise, North Carolina ceded the area which became the Territory Southwest of the Ohio River in 1790, then the state of Tennessee in 1796. Georgia, with the most to lose, was a holdout in ceding its western lands. Finally, in 1802, Georgia ceded its large western area, which was added to Mississippi Territory and which would later become the states of Alabama and Mississippi.

With the exception of the states of Kentucky and Tennessee, all of the ceded western lands became the "public domain," with ownership in the hands of the Federal Government. Why did the thirteen states so readily and easily give up those lands? Was this a Federal land grab? Probably not. Other than a few customs fees and duties, the new Federal Government had no source of revenue – no federal taxes to run the government, no personal taxes, not even business taxes. For the first decade of its existence, the Federal Government was financed entirely by subsidies from the governments of each of its thirteen states.

The states gave up millions of acres of their western lands willingly for a very simple reason. As a landowner, the Federal Government would have a source of revenue by selling off land, and the states could stop subsidizing this new federal monster they had created. As it turned out, land sales by the U.S. Government were to provide enough revenue to run the Federal Government for the next century without any other significant taxes levied on the American people.

### **The Land Business Begins**

As an orderly plan for the creation of new territories and states was created, procedures for the sale of land by the Federal Government developed as well. Because the primary source of revenue to the new Government would be from the sale of land, migrations west of the Appalachian Mountains became a national policy. Any new territories created were to appoint a Governor. Provisions were made for a militia to maintain order and protect immigrants moving into the new lands. Congress determined that a territory could petition to become a state if there were at least 20,000 people living there.

The Northwest Territory of the Ohio River, established in 1787, became a proving ground for various methods of dividing up the land. It took another ten years before a consistent land measurement system was developed for the Federal Government to begin selling land in the new territory. Meanwhile, as the government developed their "cash cow" for making money selling land, some private land speculators got into the act, also.

### **Rufus Putman's Great Idea**

In 1785, Boston businessman Rufus Putman had a great idea for making lots of money. As a former Revolutionary War General, he knew that the new United States was filled with thousands of former Revolutionary War soldiers, all of whom had been given a suit of clothes and a certificate of land promised "out west somewhere," in the form of a Bounty-land Warrant. The certificates had a set value of \$1.25 per acre of land, but each soldier would have to travel to the western wilderness in order to claim his portion of land. The certificates could be legally "assigned," and the buyer of the certificate would then gain the claim to wilderness land "out west somewhere."

Putman came up with a plan to buy certificates from former Revolutionary soldiers, for a fraction of their worth. He then devised a way to combine the certificates in order to obtain large tracts of land in the western wilderness. He became a land speculator, using the rule of "buy low, sell high." First, he had to convince at least ten of his business friends to invest in his plan, thus creating the New Ohio Company. By early 1787, the company was able to obtain warrants representing millions of acres of land "out west somewhere," purchased by the soldiers.

The New Ohio Company had no trouble buying the certificates from former soldiers. Everyone knew that going out west was dangerous. There were hostile Indians there who had supported the British during the war and disliked Americans. There were no troops to protect settlers, and there were no decent roads to get there. It is estimated that over ninety percent of all Revolutionary War Land Warrants were sold in this way.

New Ohio Company agents set up shop in New York City. Their first "shop" was a soap box on a street corner, where a hawker could call out to passersby that he was buying Land Warrants. The soap box just happened to be on Wall Street, thus the practice of buying and selling Land Warrants is how the New York Stock Exchange got its start.

Rufus Putman's agents at the U.S. Capitol in New York City were well connected. Putman managed to convince legislators, who were drawing up the Ordinance of 1787, to include a huge land grant for the New Ohio Company. Based on his assignments of bounty-land warrants, plus purchases on credit, his company's land grant was drawn on a map (north of the Ohio River, including what would become present-day Washington County, Ohio), and was exempted from the lands to be sold by the Federal Government. He also managed to gain much more land by agreement to honor any soldier's Bounty-Land Warrants in the area granted to the company. All told, Putman and his associates managed to purchase seven million acres of land in the Northwest Territory for an average price of eight cents an acre. Some of the land grant was paid for by using Bounty-Land Warrants, and a small down-payment was paid for the rest.

Putman was willing to manage his company's large tract of land, sell to private buyers, and act as an agent for the Federal Government, all at the same time. Congress saw nothing wrong with this plan, and voted for it because that body had not yet developed a method to sell any land themselves. Thus the New Ohio Company became a land broker for the Federal Government and was selling land in the new Northwest Territory long before the Federal Government began selling land there. Putman told Congress he would pay for the land as soon as he sold it.

The amazing part of all this is that Putman actually came through with all his plans. He moved to the Ohio River and founded the town of Marietta, Ohio, where he began fulfilling his promise that Americans could buy cheap farm land in the Ohio Country. As a result, the earliest wagon roads into the Ohio Country were developed to get people to Rufus Putman's land holdings.

### **The Gateway to the West**

The first census of 1790 revealed that the U.S. had a population of 3,900,000 people. There was no enumeration for the Northwest Territory, but the entire white population was estimated to be about 4,300. Along with the settlements at Cincinnati and a few other Ohio River sites, there were already over a thousand families living near Putman's Marietta land office on the Ohio River in 1790, attesting to the success of Putman's "great idea."

Most of the earliest settlers came to the Ohio River settlements by way of Forbes's Road or Braddock's Road, both leading to Pittsburgh, which was becoming known as "the gateway to the west." In 1790, Pittsburgh had nearly 400 houses, mostly brick, and was already an industrial center where sawmills provided finished lumber and where a small iron works was in operation. Pittsburgh had the basic necessities and the manufacturing capability for wagon wheels, barrels, horseshoes, and virtually any accessory a migrating family would need to continue their journey west.

When reaching Pittsburgh, migrating families would buy or build their own flatboats for floating down the Ohio River to the new settlements. A flatboat was pretty much a large rectangular wooden box, which was built to hold all the family's possessions, including livestock. Such a boat was primarily built for a one-way trip down river. At the end of their journey, the family would dismantle the boat to provide some of the wood and nails needed for building a shelter.

### **The Boatmen**

Commercial flatboats carried goods from Pittsburgh to the new settlements as well. Such goods as produce and grain were loaded at various ports and floated downriver to Natchez or

New Orleans. These boats were often equipped with small cabins, including a stove for heat and cooking. Even commercial flatboats were built for one-way trips, which might take two months from Pittsburgh to New Orleans.

Most boatmen were rough-and-ready characters who often took advantage of the whiskey, boasting, and bare-fisted fighting at each port. These men worked and lived on the flatboats in an era that lasted only about 30 years and is rarely remembered as a part of American history. These men were rarely literate. There are few records of their trips or exploits except by a few visiting Europeans who recorded that boatmen were generally "unkempt, unsavory, and uncouth." But these men were absolutely essential in the navigation of flatboats. A boatman had to be ready to fight off Indians while also navigating the boats through any obstacles that a river might present.

Migrating families might hire a boatman whom they would recruit in a tavern in Pittsburgh or Wheeling. The boatman would often help design and build the boat that the family would use, then be the navigator during the trip. At the end of their journey, the boatman might walk back up river to the nearest settlement and head for the nearest tavern.

### **Wheeling Rivals Pittsburgh**

During parts of the year, the lower water levels and obstructions of the loop of the Ohio River from Pittsburgh to Wheeling made navigation difficult for flatboats. Once Wheeling was reached, the trip was usually easier, being able to float the rest of the way to New Orleans.

In the early 1790s, a cut-off trail below Pittsburgh, leading to Wheeling, was developed. A family could leave Braddock's Road at Uniontown, Pennsylvania, then head northwest to Brownsville. After crossing the Monongahela River, the trail led to the present-day town of Washington, then to Wheeling. The cut-off road was called Gist's Trace.

At first, Gist's Trace was suitable for pack teams only, but it was an important overland route to the Ohio River. By 1796, however, the pack trail was improved enough to allow wagon traffic to pass. As a result of its location on the Ohio River, and with this overland road access, Wheeling began to rival Pittsburgh as the "Gateway to the West." From Wheeling, the journey downriver to Marietta and Rufus Putman's land office was only a three- to four-day ride on a flatboat.

### **Zane's Trace**

A man named Ebenezer Zane, considered to be the founder of Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia), was one of the first men to be given a land grant on the Ohio River. Zane controlled land on both sides of the river and operated a ferry. With a virtual monopoly on ferry traffic at that location, he became a very prosperous man. Crossing the Ohio River to Wheeling gave access to an Indian trail into the interior of the Ohio Country. With Rufus Putman's land holdings nearby, and the new U.S. Military District, the Federal Government saw a need for upgrading the trail to provide access to these newly-opened lands.

In 1796, Ebenezer Zane contracted with the Federal Government to construct the first wagon road into the Ohio Country. The road began at the Ohio River opposite Wheeling, then moved west to the settlement at Zanesville, then southwest to Chillicothe, and south to the Ohio River again. A ferry ride across the Ohio landed at Limestone, Kentucky (now Maysville), where a road connection from Lexington to the Ohio River was already well-traveled in the 1790s.

When Zane's Trace was first blazed, the dense forests of Ohio meant that road construction consisted of cutting the trees, leaving the stumps, and clearing out any underbrush to create a

"trace" of a road. The wagons passing through tended to form two rows of ruts, which were often the only visible evidence of a road surface. Grading or leveling improvements were made only at places where it was impossible to pass by wagon. Travelers on Zane's Trace referred to a "stumped" wagon as one that was high-centered on a stump or stuck between stumps. The word is still used today when we are "stumped" over something.

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## Eight Steps for Breaking Down Walls, Brick by Brick

By Kimberly Powell, About.com Genealogy

You probably have one in your family tree – a great-grandmother who arrived on earth via outer space, a great-great grandmother known only as "wife of" her husband, a child without parents, a parent without children, an immigrant without a country of origin, etc., etc., etc. You have exhausted the traditional avenues of research and don't know where to go next. You may even be convinced that the records documenting your ancestor's existence will never be found and have abandoned your search. You have reached a brick wall, but not necessarily a dead-end. Most brick walls can be dismantled given time and perseverance.

### **Step 1: What do you know? Write it down.**

Even if you have been searching for your brick wall ancestor over the course of a lifetime, it is always best to start the brick wall breakthrough process by reviewing the information you already know. Gather together every scrap of evidence in one central location, whether that is a notebook or a genealogy software program. Look over each document, photo, newspaper clipping, etc., for new clues. Fresh eyes and the many hours of experience you have gained since first collecting these records may yield a new piece or two for your puzzle, if not the final solution. Land records may list neighbors that you have since learned married into your family. Photos may have names scribbled on the back which you didn't notice when your grandmother gave them to you ten years ago. You may find an old deed to be more intelligible now that you have more experience at reading old documents. The minister's name listed on an old marriage record may lead you to your ancestors' church and even more discoveries.

### **Step 2: Are you sure? Beware of false assumptions.**

It is very easy in genealogy research to jump to conclusions when you are just starting out. Pay special attention to family stories and legends because, while family members are usually your best source for information on your family history, memories often become faulty or exaggerated with time. Such oral histories should be confirmed with actual records and documents. The same goes for printed sources – just because a family genealogy or record transcription has been written down or published does not necessarily mean that it is correct. You should never make assumptions about the quality of the research done by others. Anyone can make mistakes, including certified genealogists.

Go over your research with a fine-tooth comb. Is it possible that you have misinterpreted something that someone has said or written? Have you made assumptions without sufficient proof? Intuition isn't always wrong, but it isn't always right either.

### **Step 3: What do you want to know?**

Once you have all of your facts collected in one location, it is time to record them on a timeline. Log every life event you have found for your ancestor, from birth to death. Then look for blank spots that need to be filled. What facts and dates about this ancestor are still missing? Do you have birth, marriage, and death dates? Parents' names? Each question that you have most likely has several sources where you can look for the answers. Create a list of the sources/places you have already checked, whether or not they yielded any clues. Have you tried them all?

### **Step 4: Are you an informed researcher? Counties have ancestors, too.**

Family history is, to some degree, local history; your ancestors cannot be adequately researched outside of the historical and geographical context of their location and time period. Knowledge of historical events such as weather disasters, pestilence, and wars can lead you to additional records or provide answers to puzzling questions. An acquaintance with the geography and political history of the area can prove invaluable in determining what records were kept, where copies may be found, and in which format they exist. If you are researching in the U.S., begin by consulting *The Handybook for Genealogists* by Everton Publishers, for up-to-date county contact information, migration trails, and more. Similar books and resources exist for many other countries around the world. Then follow up with a local genealogical society or a good book on genealogical research in the area to learn about more non-traditional sources of information that may be available. County, state, and even country boundaries have moved many times through the years, so it is also important to know where those boundaries were at the time your ancestor lived in the area. If you make the assumption that a certain town was located in a particular county back in 1850 just because it does now, you could waste hours of precious time searching for records in the wrong place. A simple obstacle, such as a river, between your ancestor's land and the county seat may have been all it took to cause them to go to a neighboring county for marriages and other events that required registration. Remember, never assume anything when researching your family tree!

### **Step 5: Still no luck? Try collateral lines.**

When every lead brings you back to the same brick wall, it is time to switch tacks and research your ancestor's siblings. Since they are descended from at least one of the same parents as your ancestor's, a search of their records may provide the missing pieces of your puzzle. Perhaps your ancestor was born before birth records were mandatory, but had a younger sibling whose birth was recorded. Early marriage records were often skimpy on details, but later marriages of siblings may contain further information, such as birthplaces and parents' names. Elderly or widowed parents may be found listed in the census with a sibling's family. The informant who provided the information for your ancestor's death certificate may not have

known the mother's maiden name, but a sibling's certificate may yield further clues. Wills, probate records, land records, and obituaries are also excellent sources to search for information on your direct ancestors through their siblings. If you don't know the names of your ancestor's siblings, you can often find them in census records, wills, probate records, and obituaries. Even if your ancestor had no siblings, you can still trace them through other collateral lines, such as aunts, uncles, and in-laws.

#### **Step 6: Not where they should be? Get creative with surname spellings.**

When you are fairly certain that your family lived in a particular area but are having no luck finding them in the records, it is time to get creative. Searching for alternate spellings of surnames is always important in genealogy, but you need to be sure to go beyond looking only for the traditional alternatives. Not only did families often change their surnames slightly to "Americanize," to aid in pronunciation, or just to set themselves apart, but surnames were also often misspelled in records by accident. People were not as well educated in the past as they are today, and names may have been written as they sounded or even just "invented." Get creative when identifying alternate surname spellings for your family and don't be afraid to try the odd or unexpected. The new alternate surname spellings that you create may be just the thing you need to demolish your brick wall.

#### **Step 7: Did they put down roots? Follow the land.**

Prior to today's modern transportation conveniences, families often lived close together. It was very common for families to migrate in groups with their cousins and friends and, upon arrival in the new location, take up land in the same area. It was also common for these neighboring families to intermarry. If your brick wall is related to tracking the country of origin of your ancestors, then you may find the answers by researching his/her neighbors. Deeds, mortgages, and other land records can also hold a myriad of answers to family relationships. A neighboring family may turn out to be the parents of your female ancestor with the unknown maiden name. Fathers often gave land as a deed or gift as part of a daughter's dowry, or sold it to their sons for a trivial sum. Family members may also be listed as witnesses on land deeds. It is a common practice among genealogists when recording census records to record the family under investigation and six families on either side of them. While they may seem unrelated now, you may find something in the future to indicate otherwise.

#### **Step 8: Still can't find them? Start over!**

OK, I know. You're most likely very discouraged at this point. You've done your absolute best and have turned over every stone with no success. Why would you want to start over?

Basically, we are going back to step one – review your information. The reason for this is that you are now older and wiser and have also probably found new clues and records. You need to go back to your files and update your timeline. Make sure that all of your new puzzle pieces have been entered. Look for things that you may have overlooked the first time, and the second. Even if you have already searched for a record with no success, you may now know of a new place to search. Genealogy is just another type of puzzle. If the pieces don't fit one way,

then try another. It is true that all of the answers may never be found, but I am sure there is something out there you have yet to discover.

**Sources for Missing Genealogy Information:**

**Birth Date or Location:** Vital Records, Church Records, Newspaper Notices, Family Sources, Military Records, Census Records, Immigration/Emigration Records, Land Records, Will/Probate Records

**Death Date or Location:** Death Certificates, Church Records, Newspaper Notices, Cemetery & Funeral Home Records, Family Sources, Census Mortality Schedules, Military Records, Will/Probate Records, Land Records, Social Security Death Index

**Marriage:** Marriage Certificates, Marriage Banns, Marriage Licenses, Marriage Bonds, Death Certificates, Church Records, Newspaper Notices, Family Sources, Census Records, Cemetery Records, Pension Records, Land Records, Will/Probate Records

**Divorce/Marital Status:** Court Records, Divorce Records, Newspaper Notices, Vital Records, Military Pension Records, Family Sources

**Maiden Name:** Marriage Record, Church Records, Newspaper Notices, Bible Records, Military Pension Records, Will/Probate Records, Cemetery Records

**Immigration/Emigration Date:** Ships' Passenger Lists, Naturalization & Citizenship Records, Newspaper Notices, Census (1900 on)

**Country/Town/Parish of Origin:** Ship Passenger Lists, Naturalization Records, Vital Records, Military Records, Census Records (Individual's birthplace from 1850; birthplace of individual's father and mother from 1880), Obituaries, Church Records

**Names of Parents:** Census Records, Vital Records, Newspaper Notices (wedding, engagement, obituary), Church Records, Social Security Records, Family Sources, Cemetery Records, Will/Probate Records

**Name of Spouse:** Marriage & Divorce Records, Census Records, Church Records, Family Sources, Military Pension Records, Will/Probate Records, Newspaper Notices, Cemetery Records

**\* Helpful Genealogy Books:**

*The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy*, edited by Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking, Ancestry, 2000

*Hidden Sources: Family History in Unlikely Places*, by Laura Szucs Pfeiffer, Ancestry 2000

*The Handybook for Genealogists*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, Everton Publishers, 1999 (There are also editions 10-12 now, as well as older editions.)

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Don't let your worries get the best of you.  
Remember – Moses started out as a basket case.

## Dutch, English, and American History of the Middlebrook(s) Name

Prepared by Neal Middlebrook

### **In HOLLAND and ENGLAND:**

The Middlebrook(s) name is believed to have originated in the northern area of the Netherlands known as Holland. Around the 6th century, our Dutch ancestors migrated to northern England and settled in Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and Yorkshire Counties. In this area, the name was considered pure Dutch until the late 1300s.

The Dutch meaning of Middlebrook is "marsh," and the English meaning is "dweller at the middle stream." Spelling variations, from both Holland and England, have changed over the centuries and include Middleburgh, Midleburgh, Myddelbrouge, Mydelbrough, Midlebrok, Mydelbrocke, Middlebrock, Middlebrough, Mistlebrooke, Middlebroke, Middlebrooke, and Middleborrow. The more recent English variations are Mittlebrook, Middlebrock, Meddowbrook, and Middlebrook. The *Middlebrook Family Register* lists nine variants of the name found between the years 1190 and 1664.

### **In AMERICA:**

Between 1600 and the early 1700s, there are four records of Middlebrook(s) in the early American Colonies. The **first** is Joseph Middlebrook, who came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in October 1635. The **second** is two Middlebrook sisters, Esther Middlebrook Wigglesworth and Mary Middlebrook Reyner, who arrived in Massachusetts, Esther in 1638, and Mary in 1642. The **third record** is Theophilus Middlebrook, a 21-year-old Cambridge, England, laborer who arrived on February 2, 1733/34. He paid for his passage with four years of service to Neal MacNeal in the Maryland Colony. We suspect a **fourth** Middlebrook served in the Kent County Militia 1776-78. Although Isaac's lineage is undetermined, many believe his ancestors later settled in New Kent, Hanover, Louisa, and Orange Counties, Virginia. In the early mid-1700s. Our ancestors then migrated from Virginia to North Carolina, Georgia, and Texas.

The earliest immigrant, Joseph Middlebrook, was one of the Concord Plantation planters. The plantation was located on the Concord River, sixteen

miles west of Boston. Nine years later, Joseph, along with 15 other families, moved to the Connecticut Colony for better growing conditions and lower taxes. They settled in the Pequonnock District of Fairfield, under the leadership of Reverend John Jones.

From the middle 1600s, and for nearly the next 100 years, most of the Connecticut family remained in the Fairfield area, while others settled in adjacent Greenfield Hill, Long Hill, Stratford, North Stratford, Norwalk, and Trumbull, Connecticut. However, during this period, (around 1724/25), the third Joseph Middlebrook's son, David, is reported to have moved to the Virginia-North Carolina border. The middle of this century saw many of this family staying in the same southern Connecticut area, while others are noted moving to areas in the adjacent New York and Vermont and the beginning of southerly migration to various Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina counties.

The late 1700s and early 1800s saw parts of what is by now the sixth and seventh family generations moving west and farther south. Movement is seen into New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin. This family group is referred to as the northern branch, while those settling in Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi are known as the southern branch. Parts of this particular branch continued westward to Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas, while others settled in Florida. Between 1820 and 1910, parts of the next two generations moved into Missouri, Kansas, Minnesota, South Dakota, Colorado, Idaho, California, and Washington, following our country's westward expansion.

Today, the United States has the largest number of Middlebrook(s) families, followed by Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. In the United States, Georgia, Texas, Florida, California, New York, Tennessee, Michigan, and Ohio have the highest number of Middlebrook(s) households. This is one of our country's oldest and greatest families, with members supporting our heritage from the early days of the Fairfield militia, through both world wars, to the current conflicts.

----- You can see this information on the MFA website:  
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~midregerrata>

# Salt Stones to Cyberspace

By Lisa Salazar, ancestrymagazine.com

*Back in my day, milk was a nickel and butter a dime . . .* One hundred years ago, you could buy a large house for a thousand bucks. Try that today and you might be able to house a doll. Society is constantly changing – and so is commerce. So what brought us to this point?

## The Barter Room

Commerce started out very simply – prehistoric tribes and early societies bartered goods and services to meet their needs. You grew grains, the family next door had sheep, and the man next to them made spears. What more did you need?

Unfortunately, as societies grew, the "double coincidence of wants" became more coincidental. Sure, you need a spear to hunt, but you won't need another for a few months. Meanwhile, your neighbor is dying for some more wheat, but he's got nothing to trade for it – at least nothing you need.

As trades became more specialized and wants more specific, bartering became inconvenient. But this wasn't the only cause of its demise. Religious and ceremonial symbols began to rise in prominence – and value. Bartering eventually became impractical and took a back seat to more modern commerce.

## Cold, Hard Cowhide

So when did money finally come into circulation?

"It really depends on how you define 'money,'" says Catherine Eagleton, Curator of Modern Money at the British museum and editor of *Money: A History*. "Thousands of years ago in Europe, if you had a bunch of cowhides, you could wear them, but you could also use them in exchange for other things. At what point does that cowhide become money instead of just a really valuable cowhide?"

Primitive monies came in many shapes and sizes. Eggs, feathers, iron nails, pigs, rice, salt, tools, stones, metals, and even vodka were used as forms of money. By 687 B.C., the Lydians fashioned the first coins. They set up the first permanent retail shops – today's equivalent of a strip mall. Greek historian Herodotus rebuked their gross commercialism. But within the next century, his own Greece began minting coins.

In the next thousand years, commerce flourished into an international affair. Mixed among achievements in exploration and printing were milestones in commerce: inflation, counterfeiting, plundering foreign monies, stealing domestic monies, debasing coinage, and legalizing interest.

After experimenting with many different money mediums – gold, silver, copper, then gold again – more and more countries began adopting paper banknotes. China had been using paper money regularly for more than 500 years, starting after a copper shortage in the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D., but it wasn't until Italian explorer Marco Polo visited the Far East that Europe began to take notice.

People were very suspicious of those paper banknotes at first. Persia, Japan, and India were all unsuccessful at circulating the flimsy currency. In fact, Britain actually forbade American colonies from issuing paper money when Rhode Island over-issued the tender. Ironically, it was

the colonists' ability to print legal tender that ultimately funded the Revolutionary War. Even if the Revolutionary War made most of those banknotes worthless.

### Promises, Promises

Despite the reluctance of select societies to move into modern commerce (in 1910 the Kirghiz people in the Russian empire were still using horse as their main monetary unit – with sheep and lambskin as small change), the rest of the world was moving forward in large strides. By 1890, for example, checks accounted for 90 percent of the total value of transactions in the United States.

In the mid 1900s, commerce went plastic surgery in the form of the credit card. Originally marketed to traveling salesmen, credit cards were created by local businesses to eliminate the amount of cash they had to have on hand. The Diners Club credit card was created in 1950 for use in restaurants. Within the decade, American Express and Bank of America issued their first credit cards.

With the advent of computer technology and the internet, wallets seem not to be better suited to carrying cards instead of cash. You can buy groceries, pay bills, and shop for just about anything with just an internet connection and a credit card number. And almost any store will take your credit card – often before they'll accept your check.

Commerce is evolving so quickly that, in a 2007 interview in the *Independent*, Peter Ayliffe, chief executive of Visa Europe, predicted that by 2012 Britain would be a cashless society and only a matter of time before other countries would follow suit.

### Save the Sayonara

Will money ever become completely obsolete? Not without a fight. Modern Money curator Eagleton sums it up like this: "People quite like cash still." There's just something about it that makes you feel good. It often speaks louder than words. She continues, "Suppose you're in a bar and there's a guy who pulls out a 50-pound note – he's trying to look impressive. I suppose you could use a gold card or a platinum card, but – money tells a lot more about a person – he likes that feeling of a nice fat wallet."

Most people would agree. Having a little cash on hand makes you feel more secure, immune to the idiosyncrasies of wavering technology. Plus, cash isn't traceable. And some people might not want their purchases to be on record for future posterity.

As long as there are impressions to be made in the open and deeds to be done under the table, money's not going anywhere. But keep your eye on commerce – the evolution is far from over.

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### From ancestrymagazine.com:

In 1611, Colonists in America took their religious beliefs quite seriously, starting with mandatory church attendance. Working, traveling, or kissing on the Sabbath could earn you a fine or an afternoon in the public stockade. More severe punishments, such as whippings and pierced tongues, were saved for those who blasphemed against God or denied the Scriptures.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Alfred George Middlebrooks Sr.**, born December 9, 1938, entered into rest November 30, 2012, surrounded by his loving family. He is survived by his wife Peggy of 54 years; children Robin Lehman, Ponch Middlebrooks, Candy Horigan, Debi Middlebrooks, and Steve Thomas. He is also survived by 11 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces, nephews, and extended family members. MFA member Kathleen Hunter, a cousin, is one of those extended family members.

Alfred served in the U.S. Army from 1958 to 1964. He retired from Sacramento County Water Quality Division in 1988, after 30 years. His retirement was spent driving a truck with his loving wife until they decided to come off the road in 2000. At that point, he drove end dumps locally. His last job was as an on-call driver for Eaton Well Drilling out of Woodland.

A celebration of Alfred's life was held December 15, 2012, at Rio Linda/Elverta Community Center in Rio Linda, California. Alfred, a descendant of Nathaniel, Archibald, Robert William, and Earl Middlebrook, was given private interment.

**Cloyes E. "Red" Morgan** passed away January 3, 2013, at McGehee Hospital in McGehee, Arkansas.

Born January 19, 1937, in Tupelo, Arkansas, he was preceded in death by his parents, Don and Mary Morgan, brother William Morgan, sister Rosa Lee Trent, and lifelong friend, Sharon Morgan.

He is survived by his wife, Teresa, son Mike Morgan, brother Verlion Morgan, sisters Flossie Mae Watkins and Teene Jackson, two grandsons, and a host of friends and family, including a cousin, MFA member Kathleen Hunter.

He loved to hunt and fish and spending as much time with his grandsons as he could. He retired from Arkla Gas Company as a leak crew supervisor. For those who knew Red, he never met a stranger and was loved and will be missed by many.

Red requested no service and was cremated by Griffin-Culpepper Funeral Service of McGehee, Desha County, Arkansas.

Cloyes was a descendant of Nathaniel Middlebrook, Archibald Middlebrook, Robert William Middlebrook, Betty Middlebrook Bolden, and Mary Elizabeth Bolden Morgan.

**Sammy Middlebrook**, beloved father, grandfather, and brother died on Wednesday, March 20, 2013, at his home in Jonesboro, Arkansas, at the age of 75. He was born October 5, 1937, in Tupelo, Arkansas, to the late Sam and Flossie Middlebrook.

Sammy attended school in Tupelo and graduated from Newport High School. After school, he left the farm and served his country in the Navy aboard the *USS Mississippi*.

Sammy is survived by his wife, Tomina, son Steve, daughter Debbie Blattler; brother Douglas; sisters Linnie Pelkey, MFA member Kathleen Hunter, Lucy Meise, and Betty Moody; and four grandsons.

Sammy's life was celebrated by a memorial service at the Tupelo Community Building on March 24, 2013.

Sammy was fifth of six siblings and leaves a large vacant spot in our lives. He is a descendant of Nathaniel, Archibald, Robert William, and Samuel Middlebrook.

\*\*\*Note that all three of these men were related to Kathleen Hunter – a brother and two cousins. Losing three loved ones so closely together must take a toll. We at MFA send our prayers and deepest sympathies to Kathleen and to all of the family members of these three men.

# DEATH AND BURIAL CUSTOMS

By Kimberly Powell, About.com:Genealogy

## Traditions and Superstitions Related to Death

Death has always been both celebrated and feared. For many thousands of years, mankind has buried their dead with ritual and ceremony. Researchers have even found evidence that Neanderthals buried their dead with flowers, much as we do today.

## Appeasing the Spirits

Many early rites and customs were practiced to protect the living, by appeasing the spirits who were thought to have caused the person's death. Such ghost protection rituals and superstitions have varied extensively with time and place, as well as with religious perception, but many are still in use today. The custom of shutting the eyes of the deceased is believed to have begun this way, done in an attempt to close a window from the living world to the spirit world. Covering the face of the deceased with a sheet comes from pagan beliefs that the spirit of the deceased escaped through the mouth. In some cultures, the home of the deceased was burned or destroyed to keep his spirit from returning; in others, the doors were unlocked and windows were opened to ensure that the soul was able to escape.

In 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe and America, the dead were carried out of the house first, in order to prevent the spirit from looking back into the house and beckoning another member of the family to follow him. Mirrors were also covered, usually with black crepe, so the soul would not get trapped and not be able to pass to the other side. Family photographs were also sometimes turned face-down to prevent any of the close relatives and friends of the deceased from being possessed by the spirit of the dead.

Some cultures took their fear of ghosts to an extreme. The Saxons of early England cut off the feet of their dead so the corpse would be unable to walk. Some aborigine tribes took the even more extreme step of cutting off the head of the dead, thinking this would leave the spirit too busy to worry about the living.

## Cemetery & Burial

Cemeteries, the final stop on our journey from this world to the next, are monuments to some of the most unusual rituals to ward off spirits, and home to some of our darkest, most terrifying legends and lore. The use of tombstones may go back to the belief that ghosts could be weighed down. Mazes found at the entrance to many ancient tombs are thought to have been constructed to keep the deceased from returning to the world as a spirit, since it was believed that ghosts could only travel in a straight line. Some people even considered it necessary for the funeral procession to return from the graveside by a different path from the one taken in, with the deceased, so that the ghost of the departed wouldn't be able to follow them home.

Some of the rituals that we now practice as a sign of respect to the deceased may also be rooted in a fear of spirits. Beating on the grave, the firing of guns, funeral bells, and wailing chants were all used by some cultures to scare away other ghosts at the cemetery.

In many cemeteries, the vast majority of graves are oriented in such a manner that the bodies lie with their heads to the west and their feet to the east. This very old custom appears to originate with the pagan sun worshipers, but it is primarily attributed to Christians who believe that the final summons to Judgment will come from the East.

# JACKIE CHANGED THE FACE OF SPORTS

By Larry Schwartz, ESPN.com

It's not often that the essence of a man, especially a complicated man, can be summed up in one sentence. But then again, there haven't been many people like Jackie Robinson.

"A life is not important," he said, except in the impact it has on other lives."

By that standard, few people – and no athlete – in the 20<sup>th</sup> century impacted more lives. Robinson lit the torch and passed it on to several generations of African American athletes. While the Brooklyn Dodgers infielder didn't make a nation color-blind, he at least made it more color-friendly.

And he accomplished this feat by going against his natural instincts. He was an aggressive man, outraged at injustice, and quick to stand up for his rights. He had the guts to say no when ordered to the back of the bus in the army and was court-martialed for his courage. His instinct wasn't to turn the other cheek, but to face problems head-on. He was more prone to fighting back than holding back.

That's what Robinson had to do when Dodgers president Branch Rickey selected him to become the first African-American to play in the majors. Rickey wanted a man who could restrain himself from responding to the ugliness of the racial hatred that was certain to come.

A shorthand version of their fateful conversation in August 1945:

Rickey: "I know you're a good ball player. What I don't know is whether you have the guts."

Robinson: "Mr. Rickey, are you looking for a Negro who is afraid to fight back?"

Rickey, exploding: "Robinson, I'm looking for a ballplayer with guts enough not to fight back."

This unwritten pact between two men would change the course of a country. Baseball might only be a game, but in the area of black and white, it often is a leader. Robinson's debut for the Dodgers in 1947 came a year before President Harry Truman desegregated the military and seven years before the Supreme Court ruled that desegregation in public schools was unconstitutional.

Rickey was dead-on about the racism. As Bill Nack wrote in *Sports Illustrated*: "Robinson was the target of racial epithets and flying cleats, of hate letters and death threats, of pitchers throwing at his head and legs, and catchers spitting on his shoes."

Robinson learned how to exercise self-control – to answer insults, violence, and injustice with silence. A model of unselfish team play, he earned the respect of his teammates and, eventually, the opposition.

The 6-foot, 195-pound Robinson was the 1947 Rookie of the Year, and two years later he was MVP. His lifetime average was .311, and he was voted into the Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility.

Pigeon-toed and muscular, it was No. 42's aggressiveness on the base-paths that thrilled his fans. It wasn't so much his two stolen-base titles or his 197 thefts. It was the way he was a disruptive force, dancing off the base, drawing every eye in the stadium, making the pitcher crazy, instilling the Dodgers with the spirit that would help them win six pennants in his 10 seasons.

"Robinson could hit and bunt and steal and run," Roger Kahn wrote in *The Boys of Summer*. "He had intimidation skills, and he burned with a dark fire. He wanted passionately to win. He bore the burden of a pioneer and the weight made him stronger. If one can be certain of anything in baseball, it is that we shall not look upon his like again."

He was born on January 31, 1919, in rural Georgia. His father, Jerry, was a ladies man who deserted the family six months after Jackie's birth. When his mother, Mallie, was told by her half-brother, "If you want to get closer to heaven, visit California," she took her five children west in 1920.

They moved into a working-class neighborhood in Pasadena, where they felt the sting of a town's prejudice. Jackie found his home on the playground, playing marbles, soccer, dodgeball, tennis, golf, football, baseball, and basketball. He was a demon competitor, desperately wanting to win no matter the game.

After starring athletically at Pasadena Junior College, he became the first to letter in four sports at UCLA. He was a brilliant broken-field runner in football; a pioneer point guard who introduced the fast break to a deliberate, white boys' game in basketball; a bandit on the bases in baseball; and an NCAA champion long-jumper. He also earned a reputation as a mad brawler, ready to smash any white man who insulted him.

After Pearl Harbor, he was drafted into the Army and wound up a second lieutenant. At his court-martial for not moving to the back of the bus, his lawyer said Robinson was on trial, not because he had violated any articles of war, but because a few officers "were working vengeance against an uppity black man."

All charges were dismissed, and several months later, Robinson received an honorable discharge from the Army.

In 1945, he played shortstop for the Kansas City Monarchs in the Negro League. That year, Happy Chandler became the major leagues' new commissioner, succeeding the late Kenesaw Mountain Landis, a racist at heart. Chandler, a former governor and senator of Kentucky, said about African Americans, "If they can fight and die on Okinawa, Guadalcanal, (and) in the South Pacific, they can play baseball in America."

That summer, Rickey selected Robinson to integrate baseball. In 1946, Robinson, playing second baseman for the Montreal Royals, the Dodgers' top farm team, batted an International League-leading .349 and stole 40 bases and led them to the Little World Series championship.

April 15, 1947, Robinson's first major-league game: "It was the most eagerly anticipated debut in the annals of the national pastime," wrote Robert Lipsyte and Pete Levine in *Idols of the Game*. "It represented both the dream and the fear of equal opportunity, and it would change forever the complexion of the game and the attitudes of Americans."

Robinson went hitless, but did score the winning run.

That season, the 28-year-old rookie played first base, the only position open on the Dodgers. (He would move back to second base the next year.) The new position was easy compared to all he had to endure – an abortive rebellion by some of his teammates, the threat of a strike by the St. Louis Cardinals, black cats thrown onto the field. Despite feeling the enormous pressure, he kept his considerable temper under control, just as he had promised Rickey.

One poignant moment occurred when Dodgers shortstop PeeWee Reese, a native of Louisville, draped an arm over Robinson's shoulder, a quiet expression of support that spoke volumes.

By 1949, Robinson was free to become his own man. He became animated, with his teammates, the oppression, the umpires. When he felt an injustice, he spoke his mind. For this, some thought he was an "uppity n----." Robinson said, "If a white player had shown the same fire, he would have earned praise, much like Pete Rose did."

The "real" Robinson came into his own this MVP season, leading the league with a .342 average and 37 steals. He also had career-highs in RBIs (124) and runs (122).

After a decade with Brooklyn, he was traded to the New York Giants in December 1956. A month later, the 37-year-old Robinson announced his retirement in *Look* magazine.

He became a vice president for Chock Full o' Nuts before going into other businesses and politics. But his body, which had served him so well as an athlete, gave out early. Diabetes and heart disease weakened him, and he was almost blind in middle age. On October 24, 1972, he died of a heart attack at 53.

In 1997, baseball dedicated the season to Robinson on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his debut.

How should we remember this grandson of a slave and son of a sharecropper? Maybe by what he told a white New Orleans sportswriter: "We ask for nothing special. We ask only to be permitted to live as you live, and as our nation's Constitution provides."

With such simple and justifiable demands, it's no wonder the man had such an impact on so many lives.

**Editor's Note:** Jackie Robinson married Rachel Isum on February 10, 1946. The two had met at UCLA when Rachel was a freshman and Jackie was a senior. They had three children: Jackie Jr. (November 18, 1946), Sharon (January 13, 1950), and David (May 14, 1952).

Jack Roosevelt Robinson died October 24, 1972, at his home in Stamford, Connecticut. An estimated 2,500 people attended his funeral at Riverside Church in New York City, and the Reverend Jesse Jackson gave the eulogy. Jackie is buried at Cypress Hills Cemetery in Brooklyn. He was voted 15<sup>th</sup> best athlete of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by ESPN's North American program, "Sports Century."

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#### **Why do dimes, quarters, and half-dollars have notched edges, while pennies and nickels do not?**

The U.S. Mint began putting notches on the edges of coins containing gold and silver to discourage holders from shaving off small quantities of the precious metals. Dimes, quarters, and half-dollars are notched because they used to contain silver. Pennies and nickels aren't notched because the metals they contain are not valuable enough to shave.

--- from the N.W. GA History & Genealogy Society Quarterly – Winter 2001  
(contributed by Dianne many years ago)