

THE MAZE

Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc.

274 Wilder Drive, Forsyth, GA 31029

MAZE 2010 November Edition

The Paper Clip Middlebrook

William D. Middlebrook, 1846-1914

Submitted by Leonard Middlebrooks

This issue will be devoted to one of our many Middlebrooks of unknown ancestry. William D was brought to my attention by Kevin Lane, a Joseph 1610 descendant. It turns out that William is an unknown relation, one who came out of nowhere and left his mark on our everyday lives. Kevin sent the link <http://www.ideafinder.com/history/inventions/paperclip.htm> from which parts of this article have been abstracted. Read the original article for interesting pre-invention and European history facts.

Today's paper clip was patented by William D on November 9, 1899. A resident at the time of Waterbury, Connecticut, he not only invented the paper clip but also the machine to produce this innovation. In the same year as his patent, William sold it to Cushman and Denison (sic), who in turn registered GEM as the trademark for their paper clip. The sale amount has not been found.

The first step in identifying any Middlebrook is to access the 1909 Middlebrook Family Register. To our surprise, there was no William D listed. It is not unusual for Middlebrookes in the sunny south and the far west to have been omitted from the Register, but to find one omitted in the author's (Louis F. Middlebrook) own back yard is most unusual. Waterbury is 24 miles from Louis' home town of Hartford, Connecticut . The research for William D's ancestors begins in earnest.

Googling William D led to this informative link: HISTORY OF WATERBURY AND THE NAUGATUCK VALLEY CONNECTICUT ILLUSTRATED, VOLUME 111, CHICAGO NEW YORK , THE S. J. CLARKE , PUBLISHING COMPANY, 1918, pg 212-13. Part of the article is as follows: "William D. Middlebrook, whose inventive genius made him an important factor in the development of industrial activity in Waterbury, occupied for many years the position of master mechanic with the Oakville Pin Company and his expert skill along mechanical lines was acknowledged by all with whom he came in contact. He was a native of Fairfield county, Connecticut, his birth having occurred in Newtown, March 19, 1846.

His parents were Sidney S. and Adaline (Wooster) Middlebrook, of that place. William D. Middlebrook spent his boyhood days in his native county and attended its public schools. While still in his teens he removed to Naugatuck, New Haven county, and there learned the machinist's trade under John L. Isbell of ???(n)ion City. On his removal to Waterbury he entered the employ of the Oakville Pin Company and for thirty years was connected with that corporation, most of the time as master mechanic...

Mr. Middlebrook was married in Naugatuck Connecticut, to Miss Phebe (sic) Morey, who was born in Lithgow, New York, a daughter of John and Susan (Anson) Morey. Mrs. Middlebrook still resides [~1918] in Waterbury and is a consistent and faithful member of Trinity Episcopal church. To the marriage were born two children, Floyd and Florence. The latter became the wife of Di-[?] Herman L. Schulke and has one child, Justine, who was graduated from St. Margaret's school in Waterbury and is now the wife of Kenneth Mintie, of Waterbury, by whom she has one child, Esther.

Mr. Middlebrook made his home for some years in Waterbury but afterward removed to Oakville, settling in the town of Watertown, and there the remainder of his life was passed. In all matters of citizenship, too, he stood for high standards and did everything in his power to uphold civic honor and promote the public welfare."

Loaded with so much info about William it should be quite easy to locate his father' ancestors. We have his father's name, who he married and his vitals, but all of this leads to a brick wall.

A family time line:

~1804 CT: Sidney is born per Connecticut 1860 census.

~1811 NY: Sydney's wife, Adaline Wooster is born per Connecticut 1860 census.

1830 CT, Fairfield, Sandy Hook: Sidney takes the Freemans oath. [Newtown's History and Historian, Ezra Levan Johnson, p. 129]

1839-42 CT, Fairfield, Sandy Hook: Sidney Middlebrook was among the contributors to the subscription paper circulated outside of the 45 members of the First Ecclesiastical Society. He contributed \$1.00. [Newtown's History and Historian, Ezra Levan Johnson, p. 75]

1840 CT, Fairfield Co, Newtown: There is a Sidney MK, b. bet 1811 and 1820. Age does not agree w/1850-60 birth year of 1804

1850 CT, Fairfield Co, Newtown: Sidney [b~1804CT, Machinist], Adaline [b~1811NY], Frank [b~1842CT], Wm D [b~1846CT] and Di?ty Wooster, age 31 [b~1819NY], possible brother of Adaline.

1850 CT, Fairfield Co, Newtown: Sidney issued patent for inventing a new and improved machine for felting hat bodies.

1860 CT, Fairfield Co, Newtown: Wm D w/ parents and possible uncle, Mark Wooster, age 35, all born CT.

1866-67: William and Phebe Morley [b~ Apr 1853] Lithgow. NY married based on 1910 and 1900 CT census records.

1870 CT, Fairfield Co, Newtown: Wm D's parents, Sidney [b~1804CT] and Adeline [b~ 1812NY] are living alone.

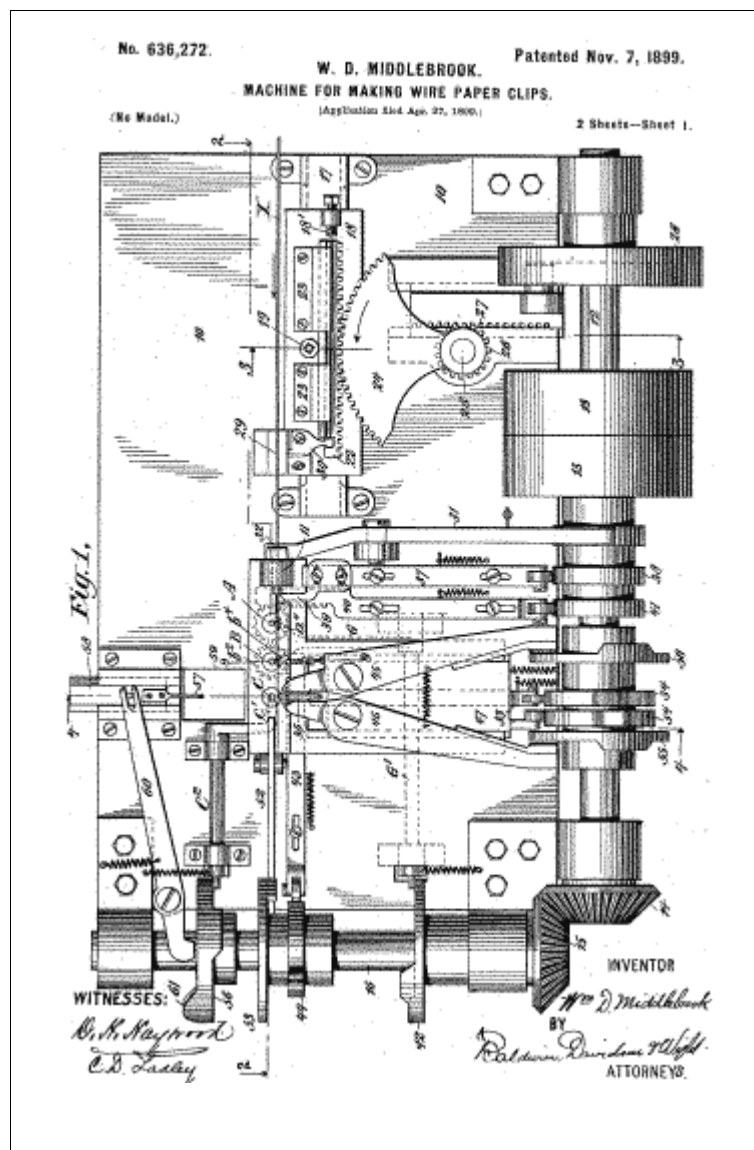
1871 CT, Fairfield Co, Newtown: Sidney b1798 dies 22 Mar 1871, buried Newtown [Conn. Deaths and Burials 1772-74; THERE ARE TWO SIDNEY'S IN CT, THE OTHER BEING BORN UNK AND DYING IN 1879...MORE RESEARCH NEEDED IN THIS AREA.

1880 CT, New Haven Co, Nauquatuck, Dist. 47: Wm [b~1846CT], Pheby (sic) B [b~1848NY], Floyd A [b~1868CT], Florence A [b~1870CT].

1900 CT, Waterbury, New Haven Co: Wm, Phoebe [b~ Apr 1853NY], son Floyd A [b~Dec 1868CT], dau. Florence A [b~Nov 1870CT], granddaughter Justine M [b~Dec 1893]. No mention of Florence's husband.

1910 CT, Litchfield Co, Watertown, Dist 283: Indexed as *William D* and *Shack S Wasbrook*; census image is clearly William D and Phebe B. Living with them is a granddaughter, Justine Mk, age 16 [b~1894CT], married 43 years, two children born, two children living. No mention of Florence's parents.

We have quite a bit of information on William D and his father, Sidney, but no connection beyond Sidney's birth. They may be from Canada or have Tory leanings and not claimed by the family. If you have any information on these two inventors please contact Leonard Middlebrooks, Team Leader of the Unknown Middlebrooks gambol@juno.com or Kevin Lane paddybeer@aol.com.



MFA 2011 Meeting

The MFA will be returning to Virginia after a five year absence. Our hostesses will be Lana Shelton, Joyce Luck and Stephanie Harris and the meeting will focus on John Middlebrooks (b. 1754) of Caroline County, Virginia. This is the first time for the MFA to feature this Middlebrooks line. Based on DNA results we know John and his descendants are connected to the Caswell County, North Carolina brothers. If you have suggestions or would like to help, contact:

Neal nealmidbrook1@frontier.com or Joyce joycenjim@sbcglobal.net.

One of the appealing things about this area is the proximity to New Kent, Hanover, Louisa, and Orange Counties where our Isaac Middlebrooks (b. 1727) and Thomas Middlebrooks (b. 1700) ancestors lived. For our research day we will go to the Library of Virginia in Richmond. We should also have an exciting field trip with stops at historical and ancestor homesteads and cemeteries etc. We are looking at having the meeting near the end of August and are currently working with the Virginia DAR for the placement of a Revolutionary War gravestone on John Middlebrooks' Caroline County grave site.

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

Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc. 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 the Secretary at joycenjim@sbcglobal.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 is free to paid members of MFA only. Articles for inclusion in the Quarterly, or suggestions for topics, may be sent to Jarrelyn Lang, Editor, at thelangs@hotmail.com. All submissions are subject to editing.

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