

# MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY ASSOCIATION, INC.

*Quarterly Newsletter*

December 2013

Editor,  
Jarrelyn Lang

Volume 13, Number 1

Founding Editor,  
Dianne Middlebrooks

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From the President:

The MFA 2013 annual meeting/reunion was held in Dothan, Alabama. The main family highlights were centered around Dr. Elijah Edmund (E.E.) Middlebrook, 1823-1906. There were approximately 28 people to attend, with about 6 people that had not attended an MFA meeting.

I would like to thank each person that helped with the MFA October 2013 meeting/reunion, as

I could not attend due to the illness of our son. Many of you stepped in to fill in for the President and Secretary/ Treasurer. I would like to welcome the new officers and special thanks for the new Secretary/Treasurer Kathleen Hunter.



MFA – October 2013 in Alabama

As the holiday season has passed, I hope all of you had a Merry Christmas. The MFA officers and board members would like to wish you a Happy New Year. We hope the New Year brings you many healthy and happy times for each of you and your families.

Joyce Arnold, President.

## ‘Twas the Night Before Christmas

(Politically Correct!)

‘Twas the night before Christmas and Santa’s a wreck.

How to live in a world that’s politically correct?

His workers no longer would answer to Elves.

Vertically Challenged they were calling themselves.

And labor conditions at the North Pole

Were alleged by the union to stifle the soul.

Four reindeer had vanished without much propriety.

Released to the wild by the Humane Society.

And equal employment had made it quite clear

That Santa had better not use just reindeer.

So Dancer and Donner, Comet and Cupid

Were replaced with four pigs, and you know that looked  
stupid!

The runners had been removed from his sleigh;

The ruts were termed dangerous by the E.P.A.

And people had started to call for the cops

When they heard sled noises on their roof tops.

Second-hand smoke from his pipe had his workers quite  
Frightened.

His fur-trimmed red suit was called unenlightened,

And to show you the strangeness of life’s ebbs and  
flows,

Rudolph was over unauthorized use of his nose

and had gone Geraldo in front of the nation,

Demanding millions in overdue compensation.

So half of the reindeer were gone, and his wife,

Who suddenly said she’d had enough of this life,

Joined a self-help group, packed and left in a whiz,

Demanding from now on her title was Ms.

And as for the gifts, why he’d ne’er had a notion

That making a choice could cause so much commotion.

Nothing of leather, nothing of fur,

Which meant nothing for him and nothing for her.

Nothing that might be construed to pollute.

Nothing to aim, nothing to shoot.  
Nothing that clamored or made lots of noise.  
Nothing for just girls or just for the boys.  
Nothing that claimed to be gender-specific  
Nothing that's warlike or non-pacific.  
No candy or sweets, they were bad for the tooth.  
Nothing that seemed to embellish a truth.  
And fairy tales, while not yet forbidden,  
Were like Ken and Barbie, better off hidden.  
For they raised the hackles of those psychological,  
Who claimed the only good gift was one ecological.  
No baseball, no football, someone could get hurt;  
Besides, playing sports exposed kids to dirt.  
Dads were said to be sexist and should be passé;  
And Nintendo would rot your entire brain away.  
So Santa just stood there, disheveled, perplexed,  
He just could not figure out what to do next.  
He tried to be merry, tried to be gay,  
But you've got to be careful with that today.  
His sack was quite empty, limp to the ground,  
Something special was needed, a gift that he might  
Give to all without angering the left or the right,  
A gift that would satisfy, with no indecision,  
Each group of people, every religion,  
Every ethnicity, every hue,  
Everyone, everywhere, even you.  
So here is that gift, it's priced beyond worth.  
May you and your loved ones enjoy peace on earth.

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# THE OTHER TEN COMMANDMENTS

## Author unknown

Thou shalt not worry, for worry is the most unproductive of all human activities.

Thou shalt not be fearful, for most of the things we fear never come to pass.

Thou shalt not cross bridges before you get to them, for no one has yet to succeed in accomplishing this.

Thou shalt face each problem as it comes. You can handle only one at a time anyway.

Thou shalt not take problems to bed with you, for they make very poor bedfellows.

Thou shalt not borrow other people's problems. They can take better care of them than you can.

Thou shalt not try to relive yesterday for good or ill – it is gone. Concentrate on what is happening in your life today.

Thou shalt count thy blessings, never overlooking the small ones, for a lot of small blessings add up to a big one.

Thou shalt be a good listener, for only when you listen do you hear ideas different from your own. It's very hard to learn something new when you're talking.

Thou shalt not become bogged down by frustration, for 90 percent of it is rooted in self-pity, and it will only interfere with positive action.

## **This and That**

**From Jean Shroyer:** The Texas State Library to be open on the second Saturday in 2014:

Beginning Saturday, January 11, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission in Austin will expand its hours of operation to better accommodate researchers. The Agency's three public service areas - the Texas State Archives, Texas Family Heritage Research Center, and the Reference and Information Center - will be open from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. the second Saturday of each month throughout 2014.

### **FOUND! A Genetic Link to Laziness**

By Meghan Bogardus, *The AARP Magazine*, August/September 2013

A new University of Missouri study shows that rats with sedentary parents are less motivated to run on an exercise wheel. "After studying their brains, we found that running was less enjoyable for these rats than for those with active parents," says study author Frank Booth, PhD. If you're a lazy rat at heart, fitness expert Joan Pagano suggests marking progress with an app or working out with a buddy.

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Do you know why people in the public eye are said to be "in the limelight"?

Limelight, invented in 1825, was used in lighthouses and stage lighting by burning a cylinder of lime in an oxyhydrogen flame that produced a brilliant light. In the theater, performers on stage in the "limelight" were seen by the audience to be the center of attention.

## **The Migration of the Middlebrooks to Alabama**

### **By Kerry Middlebrooks**

1830s

The first Middlebrooks to enter Alabama was Joseph (1770). He is thought to be from the Nathaniel line of Virginia. Joseph arrived sometime before 1827, probably down the old Huntsville road, and settled in Greene County near Demopolis. Three of his children are married here. Ann/Anna married Jesse Seale on January 24, 1827, Seaborn married Jane Lyon October 4, 1827, and (Thomas) Baxter married Harriett Seale October 31, 1827. The 1830 census for Greene County lists Joseph, Ibzan (Ibsant), Sanborn, and Ann's husband, Jesse Seale. (Thomas) Baxter is listed across the county line, in Marengo County. According to the U.S Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Seaborn, Baxter, and Ibzan were listed in Hale County, which did not exist until 1867, when it was created from parts of Greene and Marengo counties. Greene County must have been a stopover (10-15 years) for the Joseph family because they start showing up in Chickasaw County, Mississippi, by 1841. This is the last we see of any Middlebrooks in Alabama until the 1850s.

1850s

The next wave of Middlebrooks to arrive in Alabama seems to come from our Georgia ancestors around the 1850s. The 1850 census lists only four Middlebrooks at this time. Two live in Wilcox County, William, a family of three, and over the age of 21. This census is a crude rendition of the 1850 census and does not list family members, maybe a holdover from the 1840 census. There are marriage records that a William Middlebrooks married Mary A. Smith on May 10, 1843, in Marengo County. William could be an undocumented son of the Joseph family. Rufus, who claims to be born in Georgia, is 21 and working as a farmer for A. Sale, who is a minister by trade. Records show Rufus marries Julia Ann Prodgen/Pridgen February 22, 1855, in Marengo County. Rufus cannot be connected to any particular family at this time. He is thought to be another undocumented descendant of the Joseph family, but more research is needed. Next there is a William (John 1755), son of Isaac 1787, living as a farmer with the Mitchell family in Montgomery County. This is where he meets his wife, Elizabeth Mitchell, daughter of Armstrong Mitchell. This seems to be only a stopping point westward for William, as he and his wife show up in Wilcox County. It is not believed that this William is the same as the one mentioned earlier. Lastly, there is James M. (Sims 1762), who is 23 years of age, married to Elizabeth (thought to be Buys), with two children, Josephine and John F. James is working as a blacksmith.

In the 1855 Alabama state census, four more Middlebrooks show up. First there is a W.S. Middlebrooks living in Autauga County. It is thought that W.S. is William Samuel, son of Isaac Roscoe (Sims 1762). W.S. probably crossed the Chattahoochee River around Columbus, Georgia. He will be discussed more in the 1860 time frame. Next, we have the two brothers of Zere Middlebrooks (John 1755), which probably had the biggest influence on the Middlebrooks in Alabama. (A)zariah, (B)urton, (E)lijah, (E)dmund, and J.C., son of Azariah Burton(?) arrive sometime after the 1850 Federal census. They probably crossed the Chattahoochee River at Fort

Gaines, Georgia, on the old “Plank” road that ran all the way to Mobile. This family will be discussed throughout the rest of the 1800s. Azariah purchased land at the Elba land office on September 15, 1854.

## 1860s

The 1860s see the biggest population growth of Middlebrooks in Alabama. The 1860 Federal Census lists twelve families. First we have Rufus living in Wilcox County near the town of Rehobeth. He is working as an overseer, which probably translates to a foreman on a plantation. He is still living with his wife Julia Ann, but she is going by Anna in this census. Rufus would serve in the Civil War in Co. D, Alabama 3<sup>rd</sup> Cavalry Regiment. Rufus will survive the war. William F. is listed in Wilcox County near Prairie Bluff, a ghost town now located on the Alabama River. William is more than likely the same one listed in the 1850 census but living with a wife named Eliza. This is the last we see of William in Alabama after the war, since Prairie Bluff rapidly declined with the introduction of the railroads after the war. He could have moved west to Arkansas. W. S. shows up in Autauga County, living near Wetumpka, with his wife Martha, working as a repair clerk of some kind. A W.S. is listed as serving with the Wetumpka Light Guard. In the Alabama state census of 1866, Martha is a widow with three boys and one girl. W.S. probably did not survive the war, but as of now there are no records of him between 1860 and 1866, except for his service record. Anderson (T)albot, the son of Isaac Roscoe (Sims 1762), is living in Chambers County near the town of Fredonia with his wife Emma and is a farmer. Anderson is also listed on the state 1866 census, but now in Tallapoosa County, maybe the start of his migration out of Alabama, and ends up in Mississippi. Next we have Azariah Burton and his son, William David Benjamin, who have made their way from Henry County to Lowndes County. Azariah is living near the town of Mount Willing and has a small plantation. William is living near Haneville, the county seat of Lowndes County. William is a farmer and must have served in the Civil War. The Alabama state census of 1866 lists him as a disabled soldier. Azariah, along with his sons Julius C. and Thaddeus Josephus, are also listed in the 1866 census for Lowndes County. Alford (Micajah 1758) is living with son William E. in Pike County, near Orion, which is a nearly-forgotten town near Troy. William is working as an overseer. Alford’s other son, Henry Alford, is living nearby in Brier Hill with his wife, Eliza E., and is also an overseer. Alford must have died between 1860 and 1866, because he is no longer listed on any census, but no burial information can be found at this time. (F)rances (M)arion is living in Talladega County with his wife Elizabeth and working as a school teacher. Frances also is listed on an 1865 IRS tax assessment as a physician. This would be the last time he shows up in Alabama. T.G. (Thomas Jefferson (Thomas 1863) is living in Tallapoosa County near DeSoto and is a wealthy farmer and also a widower. Thomas is also listed on the 1866 state census, and this is the last we see of Thomas in Alabama. James M. is living in Tallapoosa with his wife Elizabeth and is working as a blacksmith. James served with the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry as a blacksmith. It is believed that he lived until 1902, due to the fact that no other name is on the pension receipt, like a wife or some other relative, but there is no other record of him in Alabama, except for his wife Elizabeth, who is buried in north Alabama, in Jackson County. B.F. and B.T. show up on the state 1866 census in Calhoun County with no determined relationship. The state 1866 census lists an I.N. and Isaac (3 different times). It is believed that they are the same person. A military headstone was ordered for an Isaac Newton of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Georgia Regiment by a W.E.



Middlebrooks and shipped to Dadeville, Tallapoosa County, on December 3, 1931. Elijah Edmund is living in Henry County near Abbeville as a wealthy farmer, with his first wife, Martha Moat. His sister, Elizabeth C. Bellah is living nearby, as they are listed next on the census. Martha dies May 31, 1867 and is buried in Wright's Chapel Cemetery in Barbour County. Elijah marries his second wife, Louise Jane Pierce Lee on November 23, 1867. Elijah served in the 37<sup>th</sup> Infantry. Next we have the two brothers of Zere Middlebrooks (John 1755), who probably had the biggest influence on the Middlebrooks in Alabama. (A)zariah (B)urton, (E)lijah (E)dmund, and J.C. (son of Azariah Burton?) arrive sometime after the 1850 Federal census. They probably crossed the Chattahoochee River at Fort Gaines, Georgia, on the old "Plank" Road that ran all the way to Mobile. This family will be discussed throughout the rest of the 1800s. Azariah purchased land at the Elba Land Office on September 15, 1854. Thomas Jefferson (Thomas 1863) is living in Tallapoosa County near DeSoto as a wealthy farmer, and he is also a widower. Thomas is also listed on the 1866 state census, and this is the last we see of Thomas in Alabama. James M. is living in Tallapoosa with his wife Elizabeth and working as a blacksmith. James served with the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry as a blacksmith. It is believed that he lived until 1902, due to the fact that no other name is on is on the pension receipt, like a wife or some other relative, but there is no other record of him in Alabama, except for his wife Elizabeth, who is buried in north Alabama, in Jackson County. B.F. and B.T. show up on the state 1866 census in Calhoun County with no determined relationship. The state 1866 census lists an I.N. and Isaac (three different times). It is believed that they are the same person. A military headstone was ordered for an Isaac Newton of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Georgia Regiment by a W.E. Middlebrooks and shipped on December 3, 1931, to Dadeville, Tallapoosa County. Elijah Edmund is living in Henry County near Abbeville, as a wealthy farmer, with his first wife, Martha Moat. Elijah marries his second wife, Louise Jane Pierce Lee, on November 23, 1867. Elijah served in the 37<sup>th</sup> Infantry.

1870

Sons of Azariah, William, Thaddeus, and Essa (1811) are living in the same township near Greenville, Butler County. William is a farmer living with his wife Sarah, and Thaddeus is a teacher living with his wife Martha. Essa is also a farmer claiming to be born in South Carolina. Martha is a widow living in Cherokee County with her two sons, Columbus and George W., working the farm. Martha's husband cannot be determined at this time. E. is a widower living in Socapatoy, Coosa County, with seven children, with only one male teenager to work the farm. E. is believed to be Elizabeth Buys, as she makes up her way up to Jackson County. Julius, son of Azariah is living with his wife, Lucy Mastin, and is a farmer in Crenshaw County. M is a widow living in Elmore County, near Wetumpka, formerly Autauga County. M. is probably Martha, the wife of W.S., listed earlier in the 1860s. Lee County lists two widows, P. and M., living near the town of Loachapoka. They could be sisters-in-law. W.E. is living by himself in Montgomery County as a farmer. There are no other records at this time. Anderson T. has his last stop in Alabama before moving on to Mississippi. He is living in Tallapoosa County, with a small farm near the town of Daviston. Rufus is still living in Wilcox County with his wife, Julia. Julia's Confederate pension in 1910 lists Rufus's death on October 6, 1872. Julia continues to live in Wilcox County until her death in 1917. Elijah Edmund is living with his second wife, Louisa, in Henry County near Abbeville, and is now listed as a doctor.

1880s

F. and W. are living in Chambers County as farmers and it could be that Isaac Franklin and William H. are the sons of Edward and Matilda of Harris County, Georgia. Sometime after 1880, both move back to Heard County, Georgia, and are buried there as well. J.T. in Chambers County is probably the brother of F. and W. After 1880, J.T.'s wife, Nancy E., is also living in Heard County, Georgia, as a widow. Martha is now living with her son Columbus in Cherokee County, as he is now listed as the head of the household. Rufus D., living in Chilton County, has given people fits as to who he is. Some think he might be Isaac R. His wife, Doratha, first claims to be divorced from him in 1900 but in 1930, she has a change of heart and is listed as a widow, living with her son John W. At her death, on March 7, 1934, her marital status is married and lists Isaac as her spouse. John, living in Chilton County with his wife Mary A., is a farmer. John is John Wesley, who dies in Chilton County and listed as such along with his wife's name of Mary Augusta Dickerson, is a farmer. John T. is living in DeKalb County with his wife Rebecca Treece and working as a farmer. Mary is a widow living with her sons in Lee County. Julius C. is now living in Lowndes County due to lines changing Crenshaw County. Jesse is living with his wife Martha, in Marshall County, working as a farm laborer. Jesse could be the son of James M. and Elizabeth Buys. Jesse is buried in 1900. H.A., living in Montgomery County, with his wife Eliza E., is Henry Alford, a descendant of Micajah. Henry dies in 1904 and is buried across the county line in Pike. Z. and W., living in St. Clair County, are both laborers and could be brothers. There is no other information on them at the present time. Newton, living in Tallapoosa County, is Isaac Newton that was listed in the 1860s and dies in 1914. Robert M. is living with his sister, Minnie Davis and her husband, John S. Davis, is the son of Rufus of the same county. Elijah is back to being listed as a farmer in Henry County, living next to his oldest son, John Anderson. He is also listed as a farmer. Elijah dies in 1906 and is buried in the Dothan City Cemetery. Both John and his wife, Elia Villula Hawkins, are buried in Midland City, Dale County. It will later be published in a story for the *Dothan Eagle* that a Dr. Middlebrooks owned the first automobile in Dothan, in 1893. This is more than likely Elijah's youngest son with Martha B. Moat, William Thomas.

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From a New York City billboard:

If your cup runneth over, share some.

## **Sir William Middlebrook, 1<sup>st</sup> Baronet**

(February 22, 1851 – June 30, 1936)

From Wikipedia.org

Sir William was born February 22, 1851, at Birstall, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. He was the son of John Middlebrook and Eliza Priestly. His mother was a distant relation of Joseph Priestley, the philosopher, theologian, and scientist. He was educated at Huddersfield College. In 1850, William married Alma Jackson from Morley, the daughter of William Jackson, the founder of the Peel Mills in Leeds. They had one son and two daughters.

William went in for (studied) law. He served his articles at Barton-upon-Hamber and was admitted as a solicitor in 1872 or 1873. (I could not find a meaning for “served up his articles. It could possibly mean that he was given a certain number of topics to research and write about and hand in by a certain deadline.) He began his practice in Birstall but later moved to Leeds and Morley, where he lived at Thornfield House, now the Masonic Lodge. He built up a large practice in which he was later joined by his son Harold.

Sir William held liberal political views, possibly strengthened by his active and lifelong membership in the Methodist Church. In 1883, he was elected a lay member of the Wesleyan Conference, and in 1893 he became Treasurer of the Methodist General Chapel Committee. He entered Liberal politics and served as Hon. Secretary to the Spen Valley Liberal Association from 1885-1895. He was elected a member of the Morley Town Council in 1892 and was appointed an alderman in 1894. He was mayor of Morley in 1896 and in 1904, and he served as Mayor of Leeds in 1910 and 1911. He was made an Honorary Freeman of Morley in 1919. While he was mayor of Leeds, William inaugurated a scheme for extending Leeds Infirmary, under which nearly £130,000 was raised. He received the honorary freedom of Leeds in 1926.

Sir William entered the House of Commons at a by-election in 1908 for Leeds South. The seat had become vacant on the death of the sitting Liberal M(ember) of (Parliament), Sir John Lawson Walton, who held the office of Attorney General the time of his death. It may have been that one of the reasons Middlebrook was selected was his ability to give financial aid to the Leeds South Liberal Association. Walton had paid the salary of his political agent and Middlebrook undertook to pay the constituency £100 a year. This was at a time when MPs were not yet paid a salary. The by-election took place on February 13, 1908, and Middlebrook held

the seat for the Liberals with a majority of 359 over his Unionist opponent, Reginald Neville, and Labour's Party, Albert Fox, was in third place. Sir Richard held his seat until the 1922 general election, when he was defeated by Labour's Henry Charleton. He did not stand for Parliament again.

William was knighted in 1916 and created a baronet in 1930. He served on a number of Parliamentary committees. He was elected to a Select Committee to look into gas prices and dividends in the wake of damage to the industry during the First World War. In 1922 he was nominated as Chairman of an Inquiry set up by the International Labour Office of the League of Nations into the problem of disinfection of wool and hair infected with anthrax spores, especially relating to keeping flocks of sheep and related animal products free from contamination. Middlebrook acted as Chairman of the Local Legislation Committee of the House of Commons from 1913 to 1922. He was a sometime member of the Consultative Council on Local Health Administration and also served as a Justice of the Peace.

After his retirement, Sir William moved from Morley to Scarborough where he died after a long illness on June 30, 1936, at age 85. His son Harold succeeded him to the Middlebrook Baronetcy (1887-1971).

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### ***Godey's Lady's Book,***

also known as ***Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book***, was a United States magazine which was published in Philadelphia. It was the most widely circulated magazine in the period before the Civil War. Its circulation rose from 70,000 in the 1840s to 150,000 in 1860. In the 1860s, *Godey's* considered itself to be the "queen of monthlies."

The magazine was published by Louis A. Godey from Philadelphia for 48 years (1830-1878). Godey intended to take advantage of the popularity of gift books, many of which were marketed specifically to women. Each issue contained poetry, articles, and engravings created by prominent writers and artists of the time. Sara Josepha Hale, author of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," was the magazine's editor from 1837 until 1877 and only published original, American, manuscripts. Although the magazine was read and contained work by both men and women, Hale published three special issues that only included work done by women.

When she started at *Godey's*, Hale magazine had a circulation of ten thousand readers. Two years later, circulation had jumped to 40,000, and by 1860 had 150,000 subscribers.

In 1845, Louis Godey began copyrighting each issue of the magazine, in order to prevent other magazine and newspaper editors from pirating their articles. This move, a first in

America, was criticized by editors of the *Baltimore Saturday Visitor*. They called it a “narrowly selfish course” and that Godey would “rue it bitterly.”

The magazine was expensive; subscribers paid \$3 per year. (In comparison, the *Saturday Evening Post* subscribers paid only \$2 per year.) Even so, Godey’s was the most popular journal in its day. Under Hale’s editorship, the list of subscribers to Godey’s reached 150,000. Hale took advantage of her role and became influential as an arbiter of American taste. She used some of her influence to further several causes for women. For example, she created a regular section named “Employment for Women,” beginning in 1852, to discuss women in the workforce.

In general, Godey disliked discussing political issues or controversial topics in his magazine. In the 1850s, he dismissed an assistant editor for denouncing slavery, but later recanted. Even so, he forbade his journal from taking a position during the American Civil War. In fact, during the war, the magazine made no acknowledgment of it whatsoever, and readers looked elsewhere for war-related information. In the process, Godey’s lost about a third of its subscribers.

Godey sold the magazine in 1877 to John Hill Seyes Haulenbeek before his death in 1878, and publication ceased for good with the death of Haulenbeck in 1898.

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## Roads to the Old Southwest

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

Many of the first wagon roads our ancestors traveled were created for military purposes. For example, the first roads across the Appalachian Mountains, Braddock's Road and Forbes's Road, resulted from the French-Indian War of 1754-1763. These military roads opened the way for the great western migrations before and after the Revolutionary War and saw thousands of Americans moving into wilderness areas west of the Appalachian Mountains.

Before the Revolution, Daniel Boone blazed a trail through the Cumberland Gap, and the route from Virginia to the interior of Kentucky was used by over 60,000 people by 1792. After the Revolution, the destination of most migrations was to the Ohio Country. Beginning as early as 1787, great numbers of Americans moved into the area northwest of the Ohio River. By 1792, roads in Kentucky and Tennessee had been much improved, giving better access to the interior of those two new states.

Lagging behind these migrations was the development of the Old Southwest, the area of Georgia before it ceded its western lands to the United States Government. Georgia was a hold-out in ratifying the new Constitution of the United States because it would have to give up over half of its territory to the Federal Government.

In 1802, Georgia ceded its western lands, Public Domain areas that would later become the states of Alabama and Mississippi. Not long after Georgia's land cession, America doubled in size with the Louisiana Purchase, an area that was loosely defined as the river drainage of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. However, this vast area was not to become the scene of significant migrations until the War of 1812.

### **Late Development in the Old Southwest**

Unlike the large influx of western migrations to the north, the western migrations to the Old Southwest were late in developing for at least three reasons:

1. While the northern states were heavily populated and the demand for fresh lands was an incentive for migration to the West, Georgia was the last of the thirteen British colonies settled in North America (founded as a Royal Colony in 1732, some 112 years later than Massachusetts, for example.) Most of Georgia's population in 1790 was within 25 miles of the South Carolina border.
2. Western Georgia was controlled by several Indian tribes, in particular the Creek and Cherokee, for which the Federal Government had created "Indian Nations" by treaty, giving these tribes a great amount of political autonomy. Migrations to the west in Georgia were limited to areas not under control by the Indians.
3. The settlements of the Old Southwest were primarily on the Gulf Coast, easily accessible by sea. Political control of New Orleans was not transferred to the United States until 1803. Other early French/Spanish settlements, such as Mobile or Pensacola, were mainly seaports with some river traffic to the interior. American control of these areas was still contested by the U.S., France, and Spain until well after 1800. It was the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 that forced political jurisdictions to be resolved by treaty after decades of cross claims. Thus, the development of areas that were later to become the states of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana were some twenty years behind the states created from the Old Northwest, such as Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan.

For these reasons, no compelling need existed for wagon routes to the Old Southwest until the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some thirty years after the western migrations in the northwestern part of the United States had already begun.

### **The Natchez Trace**

The only overland route in the Old Southwest before 1806 was the Natchez Trace, an old Indian trail beginning at Natchez on the Mississippi River and, from there, running northeast to Nashville.

Most river traffic from the Ohio River to New Orleans was downstream on flatboats or floating rafts. After completing their two-month journey from Pittsburgh to New Orleans, the boatmen returned north on foot or horseback by way of the Natchez Trace. Steamboats did not begin running on the Ohio or Mississippi Rivers until after 1812, and not in any great numbers until about 1816. Before that, negotiating the Mississippi River upstream was a laborious undertaking, using long poles to propel the rafts along the shallow sides of the rivers.

By 1796, the Natchez Trace from New Orleans to Nashville, Tennessee, was extended to Lexington, Kentucky, connecting with an existing route to Limestone, Kentucky (now Maysville), on the Ohio River, and then into the Northwest Territory via Zane's Trace to Wheeling, and finally, on to Philadelphia via Forbes' Road. This was the return route of the boatmen who had floated down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.

Other travelers, however, could take the Nashville Road completed in 1788. It linked Nashville to Knoxville, Tennessee, and from there to the Great Valley Road through Virginia and connecting to Philadelphia.

### **Historical Events Leading to the Opening of the Old Southwest**

The United States declared its independence in 1776, fought a war, and at the end of that war, signed a treaty with England, Spain, and France. The Treaty of Paris of 1783 is when the United States first became a legally recognized republic in the eyes of the rest of the world. However, the United States of 1783 had some areas not yet under its control or in dispute with other countries.

For example, as a result of the original Royal Charter of Georgia in 1732, the United States laid claim to Georgia's western lands to the Mississippi River. However, an area of the Georgia Charter (from latitude 31 degrees to latitude 32 degrees, 28 minutes) was also claimed by Spain. The U.S. claimed the area, but Spain actually possessed it. This area was left out of the Treaty of Paris, and the

two parties entered into negotiations over the ownership of the disputed area. The dispute ended when the U.S. purchased that portion of land in 1797.

Soon after, the U.S. Congress created within that area a new Mississippi Territory, a new addition to the Public Domain of the United States. The existing trading towns of New Orleans, Natchez, and Mobile became entry points to the new American Territory, but American traders had been moving into these areas well before 1797. The United States had free use of the Mississippi River to float goods and produce to New Orleans under conditions of the 1763 Treaty of Paris.

In the first decade of the 1800s, Napoleon Bonaparte was waging war in Europe. In 1802, his victory over Spain gave him Louisiana as spoils of war, a vast area of North America that had been solely in the hands of the Spanish for centuries. Napoleon gave the Spanish a couple of small areas in northern Italy in exchange for Louisiana. In early 1803, being short of cash, Napoleon let the American ambassador in Paris know that he might be interested in selling Louisiana to the Americans.

In 1803, the United States purchased Louisiana from France, acquiring New Orleans. In November 1803, Robert Livingston and James Monroe represented the United States in Paris and concluded a treaty with France to take ownership of Louisiana – for about three cents per acre.

Immediately, the U.S. created two new territories in the Louisiana Purchase: Orleans Territory (which followed the modern bounds of the state of Louisiana); and Louisiana Territory, which later was named Missouri Territory. Soon thereafter, President Thomas Jefferson launched the famous Lewis and Clark expedition to explore the new Louisiana Territory. Again, the new territory was added to the Public Domain.

Georgia finally ceded its western lands to the United States Government in 1802. Georgia's ceded area was then officially added to Mississippi Territory by an 1803 act of Congress, more than doubling its size. The enlarged Mississippi Territory was an area the size of the modern states of Alabama and Mississippi, less a portion of West Florida not yet in the hands of the U.S.

By acquiring Louisiana, the United States also thought it had obtained title to West Florida, but the Spanish differed with that opinion. This panhandle area of Florida did not become part of the United States until 1812, when the U.S. and Spain signed a treaty and the U.S. paid cash for the areas west of the Perdido River. As a result, Pensacola, Mobile, and Biloxi became part of the United States. To finish off the land acquisitions in the area, in 1819 the United States purchased



the Florida Peninsula from Spain, fixing the boundaries of the Old Southwest to the way they are today.

The United States was selling land to settlers in its Public Domain areas of the territory northwest of the Ohio River as early as 1787 and had established the Rectangular Survey System for laying out the land for sale. Well before 1800, several land offices were established in the Ohio River areas to provide close access for settlers wishing to buy land in the newly opened areas.

The opening of the Old Southwest to public land sales did not begin in earnest until after 1800, however. The first land sales in the public domain areas of the Mississippi Territory were at federal land offices established at the frontier towns of St. Stephens (now in Alabama) and Washington (now in Mississippi). Land sales were limited to areas ceded by the Indians. Because of this, the first land sales in Mississippi Territory were limited to areas within a radius of 25 miles of Natchez and a small region north of Mobile. The location of the first land sold in Mississippi Territory was not far from water-borne access, since there were virtually no overland roads to the area.

The new Rectangular Survey System was used in the Public Domain of Mississippi Territory. However, since there had been numerous Spanish land grants to private individuals in that area, the United States established a method of honoring these early land grants, proving them in local court proceedings. A holder of a Spanish Land Grant would be required to provide documentation of his land holdings. The United States then recognized the title to the land and issued another patent to the land holder.

Thus, around the communities of Natchez, Pensacola, Biloxi, and Mobile, the irregular metes and bounds surveys of the colonial land grants can still be observed on land ownership maps. The U.S. established a method of dealing with prior claims of land in Mississippi Territory that was to be followed in most subsequent land acquisitions in Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

### **The Federal Horse Path**

When Ohio became a state in 1803, the enabling act included a provision that a portion of sales of public lands would be set aside for the purpose of constructing roads in the public lands. Two federally financed roads were to result from this legislation: 1) The National Road, from Maryland to Illinois, and 2) The Federal Road from Georgia to Louisiana.

Both of these roads were slow to be built, but by 1830, they had become America's primary highways. While the barrier to construction of the National

Road was the Appalachian Mountains, development of the Federal Road was challenged by the lowland swamps of the Old Southwest. The Federal Road began as a "Horse Path."

In 1825, mail from New Orleans to the new capital at Washington by way of the Natchez Trace took at least two months. The first resident of the newly constructed White House in Washington was not happy with the time delay for communicating with his new territories in the southwestern part of the United States.

In 1806, President Thomas Jefferson signed a law authorizing the construction of a "Horse Path" from the Ocmulgee River of Georgia to New Orleans, in Orleans Territory. The road from Augusta, Georgia, to the Creek Indian Agency west of the Ocmulgee River was the southernmost road one could travel on by wagon, reached by traveling on either the Upper Road or Fall Line Road from Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

The law specified that a riding path was to be built for regular mail service and that the trail and subsequent mail service were to be constructed and operated by the same contractor. The contract required that the road construction should take six months, and thereafter mail was to be delivered between New Orleans and Washington in no more than 14 days. A year after construction began, mail was still taking about three weeks. The riding trail had several alternative routes that mail carriers discovered were easier to travel than the "improved route."

The Federal Horse Path crossed many lowland areas that required the building of raised causeways through wetlands. In 1806, the entire route from the Ocmulgee River of Georgia to the Mobile River passed through the treaty lands of the Creek Indians. In five years' time, this route was to become the Federal Road, the most important wagon road of the Old Southwest.

Between 1815 and 1840, over 300,000 people used this road to migrate to new settlements in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas. Most of the migrants left their homes in the Carolinas and Georgia and traveled from as far north as Virginia and Maryland. Plantation owners of the Old South moved their entire slave populations, wagons, cattle, equipment, and extended family members along the Federal Road to reach richer cotton fields.

The Federal Road was also the prime route for Americans moving to the Mexican province of Texas during the empresario era of the early 1820s. Whole communities of families had the means of travel to Texas via the Federal Road. They would leave homes and farms in large groups. It is said that someone might

leave a note on the cabin door or a local tax collector might write "GTT" (Gone to Texas) on the ledger for the missing taxpayer.

### **The Creek Indians and the War of 1812**

In 1805, the United States Government signed a treaty with the Creek Indians that redefined their boundaries and, incidentally, gave the U.S. the right to build and maintain a "horse path" through the Creek lands. The treaty recognized the tribe's authority and provided for "passports" to be issued by any of the governors of U.S. states, which would allow whites to travel through this "foreign nation." (*Passports of Southeastern Pioneers*, a book by Dorothy Williams Potter, can be found at Amazon.com.)

The Creeks were asked to operate inns and way-stations along the route of the Federal Post Road, for the convenience of the riders. Since the road passed almost exclusively through Creek treaty lands, no whites were permitted to settle or engage in business along the route.

However, a war was to change forever this relationship between the Creeks and the Federal Government. The Creek (or Muscogee) Indians were governed by a loose confederation with several chiefs, some more effective than others. The most prominent of these chiefs was William McIntosh, who sided with the Americans during the War of 1812. Other factions within the Creeks were influenced heavily by the great Shawnee Chief, Tecumseh, who sought a separate nation for all Indians in North America.

In any case, the Creeks were casualties of the War of 1812, defeated by Andrew Jackson's troops. They lost not only their stature, but also their lands, leading to their eventual removal to Indian Territory in 1838. The fate of the Creeks was similar to the other "civilized" tribes of the Old Southwest: the Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles. All of these tribes could be said to be victims of the War of 1812. Having sided with the losing parties of that war, they lost forever to the American whites an area which was at one time the total area of the United States.

Land ceded by the five civilized tribes occurred over a period of forty years. By identifying the parcels of land relinquished by treaty with these tribes, the land areas opened to white settlement can be determined. Although there were many cases of white "squatters" settling in Indian Territory, they had no legal right to be there until the Indians ceded the land to the U.S. Government.

### **The Ways South After 1815**

In 1811, the United States realized its southern under-belly was vulnerable to British invasion. The U.S. now had new seaports on the Gulf of Mexico in New

Orleans, Mobile, Biloxi, and Pensacola. All were exposed to domination by the British Navy should they decide to blockade those ports. For these reasons, the government saw a need for overland access to the Southwest. In 1811, Congress authorized funds to improve existing trails and build new roads to the Old Southwest.

Virtually all of the wagon roads used by migrating families into the Old Southwest were a result of the War of 1812 and the improvement of old Indian trading paths to roads suitable for supporting wagons, cannons, and troops. The roads improved or constructed during the War of 1812 became major migration routes after that war. The wagon roads of the Old Southwest are identified below:

**The Federal Road.** Its eastern approach began at the old Creek Indian Agency on the Ocmulgee River, now Macon, Georgia, and proceeded through the Creek Indian Lands en route to New Orleans. The start of the Federal Road became the southern end of the Fall Line Road, which approached the Federal Road via Augusta, Georgia. The route to New Orleans followed nearly the same trace as the Federal Horse Path.

**Natchez Trace.** This trail was improved by American troops and after the War of 1812 was commonly known as the Natchez-Nashville Road. It led from Natchez, on the Mississippi River, passing diagonally across the present state of Mississippi, reaching the Tennessee River near the point where the Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee lines come together. This road continued in a northerly direction to Nashville.

**General Jackson's Military Road.**

During the War of 1812, Andrew Jackson's troops were also responsible for constructing a new road from New Orleans north to the Tombigbee River, providing a more direct route to Nashville, Tennessee. After the war, this road became an important migration route into the Mississippi Valley from Tennessee and Kentucky.

**General Carroll's Military Road.** This road was constructed by American troops during the War of 1812 and became an extension of the Federal Road on an east-west line from St. Stephens to Natchez, Mississippi.

## **Labor of Love, by Andrew Peterson**

It was not a silent night  
There was blood on the ground  
You could hear a woman cry  
In the alleyways that night  
On the streets of David's town

And the stable was not clean  
And the cobblestones were cold  
And little Mary full of grace  
With the tears upon her face  
Had no mother's hand to hold

It was a labor of pain  
It was a cold sky above  
But for the girl on the ground in the dark  
With every beat of her beautiful heart  
It was a labor of love

Noble Joseph at her side  
Callused hands and weary eyes  
There were no midwives to be found  
In the streets of David's town  
In the middle of the night

So he held her and he prayed  
Shafts of moonlight on his face  
But the baby in her womb  
He was the maker of the moon  
He was the Author of the faith  
That could make the mountains move

It was a labor of pain  
It was a cold sky above  
But for the girl on the ground in the dark  
With every beat of her beautiful heart  
It was a labor of love  
For little Mary full of grace  
With the tears upon her face  
It was a labor of love

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### 2013-2014 OFFICERS

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#### ANCESTOR TEAM LEADERS

**Isaac b. 1753** –

Leonard Middlebrooks [gambol@juno.com](mailto:gambol@juno.com)  
and Jean Shroyer [TXJean@aol.com](mailto:TXJean@aol.com)

**John b. 1755** –

Bob Middlebrooks [mid293@earthlink.net](mailto:mid293@earthlink.net)

**Micajah b. 1758** –

Sharon Bartlett [sharonbartlett@att.net](mailto:sharonbartlett@att.net)  
and Mary Baker [mmmbaker65@hotmail.com](mailto:mmmbaker65@hotmail.com)

**Sims b. 1762** –

Neal Middlebrook [nealmidbroo1@frontier.com](mailto:nealmidbroo1@frontier.com)

**Thomas b. 1763** –

Jarrelyn Lang [thelangs@hotmail.com](mailto:thelangs@hotmail.com)

**Robert b. 1766** –

J.A. Middlebrooks [middle3jam2012@gmail.com](mailto:middle3jam2012@gmail.com)

**Joseph b. 1610** –

Leonard Middlebrooks [gambol@juno.com](mailto:gambol@juno.com)

**Joseph b. 1770** –

Dave Clark [cdave1000@gmail.com](mailto:cdave1000@gmail.com)

**Virginia Middlebrooks** –

Neal Middlebrook [nealmidbroo1@frontier.com](mailto:nealmidbroo1@frontier.com)  
Phyllis Coleman [philly5030@gmail.com](mailto:philly5030@gmail.com)

**Unknown Ancestor** –

Leonard Middlebrooks [gambol@juno.com](mailto:gambol@juno.com)

**England Research** – Ian Middlebrook and

Neal Middlebrook

**MFA Quarterly Newsletter Editor** –

Jarrelyn Lang [MFAeditor@gmail.com](mailto:MFAeditor@gmail.com)

MAZE by Team Leaders and published by Joyce Arnold

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#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President ----- -Joyce Arnold, 2011-2014

[joycenjim@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joycenjim@sbcglobal.net)

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[gambol@juno.com](mailto:gambol@juno.com)

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[mbrooks@gci.net](mailto:mbrooks@gci.net)

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[jmill1912@hotmail.com](mailto:jmill1912@hotmail.com)

Bob Middlebrooks, 2011 – 2014

[mid293@earthlink.net](mailto:mid293@earthlink.net)

Joyce Luck, 2011 – 2014

[jm.luck50@yahoo.com](mailto:jm.luck50@yahoo.com)

Dale Kidwell, 2013 – 2016

[Dalekidwell07@gmail.com](mailto:Dalekidwell07@gmail.com)

#### ON-GOING PROJECTS

Cemetery..... J. A. Middlebrooks

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

DNA.....Bob Middlebrooks, Dave Clark

and Henry Middlebrook, [henrym@hmmx.com](mailto:henrym@hmmx.com)

MFA Website.....Dave Clark

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