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THE MIDDLEBROOK SISTERS: MOTHER AND MOTHER-IN-LAW OF MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH

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Rev. Michael Wigglesworth is well known as the author of the Puritan epic poem, *The Day of Doom*¹ the minister to the First Congregational Church of Malden, Massachusetts, 1655-1705, and Malden's physician.² It is well established that he grew up in New Haven, Connecticut, having arrived there in 1638, with his parents, Edward¹ and Esther Wigglesworth, after a brief stopover in Charlestown, Massachusetts. Michael Wigglesworth's first wife was also his first cousin, a fact that evidently troubled him, at least briefly. This article will show that Esther Wigglesworth and Mary Reyner, mother of Michael Wigglesworth's first wife, were the daughters of Michael and Grace Middlebrook of the parish of Batley, Yorkshire.

¹ Originally published in 1662, *The Day of Doom* was "for more than a century the mosi popular poem in New England" (Thomas William Herringshaw, *Herringshaw 's Encyclopedia of American Biography of the Nineteenth Century* [Chicago: American Publishers' Association. 1902], 1007). It has been called second only to the Bible in terms of the respect and authority il enjoyed in the lives of colonial New Englanders (Mark Ludwig, in the Introduction to *The Day of Doom* [Tucson, Ariz.: American Eagle Publications, 1991], 1).

² Biographical treatments of Michael Wigglesworth include Richard Crowder, *No Featherbed to Heaven*: A Biography of Michael Wigglesworth, 1631-1705 (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 1962) and John Ward Dean, Memoir of the Reverend Michael Wigglesworth (Albany, NY: Joel Munsell, 1871). This edition of Dean's Memoir "was limited to fifty copies, all of which were subscribed for before the book was issued" (Register 25 [1871]:398-99). An earlier version appeared in the Register in 1863 as "Rev. Michael Wigglesworth: His Memoir, Autobiography, Letters & Library," Register 17 (1863):130-39 Biographical sketches within larger works include Deloraine P. Corey, The History of Maiden, Massachusetts, 1633-1785 (Maiden: University Press, 1899), 188-203; Clifford K. Shipton. Sibley's Harvard Graduates, 18 vols. (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1873-1999). 1:259-86; Frederick Lewis Weis, The Colonial Clergy and the Colonial Churches of New England (Lancaster, Mass.: Society of Descendants of Colonial Clergy, 1936; reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1977), 226; and James Savage, Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England, 4 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1862; reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1969), 4:540-41. The issue of Michael Wigglesworth's sexual orientation (see New England Ancestors 3:3 [Summer 2002]:12) is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that one should be cautious about using a late twentieth or early twenty-first century lens to interpret seventeenth-century language and theology.

³ Crowder, *No Featherbed* [note 2], 3-8. According to Michael Wigglesworth's autobiography (*Register* 17 [1863]:137; see note 2), he and his parents immigrated to New England when he was "not full seven years old," landing at Charlestown, Massachusetts, and then sailing for New Haven, Connecticut, in October of the same year. Based on his known date oi birth, this would have happened in 1638. This appears to be correct; see note 43 in the Genealogical Summary below. The autobiography is the only basis for the mention of the family in Thomas B. Wyman, *The Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown, in the County of Middlesex and Commonwealth of Massachusetts.* 1629-1818 (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1879), 1029.

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Michael Wigglesworth was born England on 18 October 1631.⁴ All biographical treatments have identified Yorkshire as his birthplace, but it now seems virtually certain that he was baptized, at least, in Wrawby, Lincolnshire, about thirteen miles south of the border between Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. The Bishops' Transcripts for Wrawby include an entry for the baptism of "Michaell Wigglesworth," son of Edward, on 21 October 1631, just three days after Michael's known birth date. The same Bishops' Transcripts also show the marriage, on 27 October 1629, of "[]] Wiglesworth" to "Ester Middlebrooke.⁵

Information on the Middlebrook family may be found in John Edward Todd's 1920 genealogy of the family of Christopher Todd of New Haven. Under the heading "Extracts From An Old Family Record," Todd wrote that Christopher Todd and Edward Wigglesworth had married sisters Grace and Hester Middlebrook, respectively, in England, and with "their wives came to this country together and settled in New Haven Colony" by 1638.⁶ According to Todd, Grace and Hester were daughters of Michael Middlebrook, whose other children were Michael, Matthew, and Mary, ⁷ and who lived at a place supposedly called "Hold

⁴ Corey, *History of Maiden* [note 2], 188; Crowder, *No Featherbed* [note 2], 3. Wigglesworth made note of his October 18 birthdate in a journal he kept while composing *Meat Out of the Eater* in 1669 (Crowder, *No Featherbed*, 133). That date in the Julian ("Old Style") calendar, in use during Wigglesworth's lifetime, corresponds to October 28, 1631, in the Gregorian ("New Style") calendar, adopted in England and the colonies in the middle of the eighteenth century. The Gregorian date is used in the memoir in *Register* 17 (1863): 130, citing a memoir in the *Bi-Centennial Book of Maiden* (Boston: G.C. Rand & Co., 1850), 144-56, as well as in Savage

[note 2], 4:540.

⁵ Wrawby, Lincolnshire, Parish Registers, Bishops' Transcripts, 1561-1812 (FHL 508,099). Also in North Lincolnshire, about thirteen miles southeast of Wrawby, is Section where "Edwardus Wigglesworth," son of "Willi," was baptized on 3 August 1603 (Brace's Transcripts of the Scotton Parish Registers, 1560-1812, FHL 436,002). Assuming his baptism occurred within a few days of his birth, Edwardus of Scotton would have been 49 on 18 July 1653, the date on which Edward¹ Wigglesworth wrote a letter to physician John Winthrop, Jr. giving his age as 49 (Crowder, *No Featherbed* [note 2], 61, 275, citing *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*,

3rd series, 9 [1846]:296-97).

⁶ John Edward Todd, *The Todd Family in America, or The Descendants of Christopher Todd,* 1637-1919 (Northampton, Mass.: Gazette Printing Co., 1920), 16-18.

⁷ *Ibid*,, 16. Other works identifying Christopher Todd's wife as the daughter of Michael Middlebrook include S.F. Hall Coe, *Memoranda Relating to the Ancestry and Family of Sophia Fidelia Hall* (Meriden, Conn.: Curtiss-Way Co., 1902), 76; Ralph D. Smyth and Bernard C. Steiner in "Christopher Todd of New Haven, Corm., and His Descendants," *Register* 62 (1908):203; Alvan Talcott, *Families of Early Guilford, Connecticut* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1984), 1174 [claims Michael's wife was named *Deborah*]; and William Richard Cutter, comp., *New England Families Genealogical and Memorial*, 4 vols. (New York: Lewis Historical, 1913; reprint Baltimore: Clearfield Co., 1997), 1:3200; 4:2029-30 [claims to identify Michael, his father and mother, and her parents, but the information provided is actually true of Christopher Todd's parents and grandparents, according to Todd, *Todd Family* [note 6], 13-17, and Thomas B. Willis, *The Parish Register of Pontefract, 1585-1641*, vol. 122, *Publications of the Yorkshire Parish Register Society* (Wakefield, Yorkshire: West Yorkshire Printing Co., 1958), 23, 26,192, 252, 264].

Mills" in Yorkshire.⁸ Todd never mentions the name "Michael Wigglesworth" explicitly, but he clearly had him in mind when he noted that "[t]he somewhat famous poet was one of [Edward Wigglesworth's] descendants."

Both a letter to Michael Wigglesworth from a Middlebrook uncle and the parish registers of Batley, Yorkshire, confirm that the Middlebrooks lived in Yorkshire and that Michael Wigglesworth's mother was a member of this family.

The Letter from Uncle Middlebrook

The letter, dated 6 April 1657, was from "M. Middlebrooke" in England, who gave instructions that the letter be delivered to "Mr. Wigglesworth, Minister at Malden in Massachusetts.⁹ Consistent with the thesis that Wigglesworth's mother is the letter-writer's sister, it begins, "Loueing and most affectionate Nephew" and is signed, after a blessing, "your truly loving & well-wishing vncle." One might be confused by the fact that M. Middlebrooke calls Wigglesworth "Cousin" near the end of the letter, but it was common practice to use "cousin" for nephew or niece (or almost any other relation), such as when the writer mentions a message he previously sent to Michael Wigglesworth by "yo^r father our Cousin Rayner."

There, of course, he was referring in the seventeenth century manner to Wigglesworth's father-inlaw, Humphrey Reyner.¹⁰ Similarly, outside the body of the letter is the note: "I suppose you have heard .from Gildersome of y^e death of your Grandmother Reyner and Aunt Smith." These women were the paternal grandmother and a paternal aunt of Michael Wigglesworth's wife, Mary Reyner, daughter of Humphrey Reyner. The Batley parish register shows that on 29 November 1656, "Jane wife of John Smith of Gildersome" was buried and "Ellen Reynor [was] buried the same day.¹¹ The latter is the only Reynor/Reyner burial

⁸ "Hold Mills" has not been located, nor has any variant place name.

⁹ The letter was published in its entirety as a footnote to "Lane Family Papers," *Register* 11 (1857):110-11. The original is in the NEHGS Manuscript Collection.

¹⁰ The identity of Wigglesworth's first wife and her parents is widely accepted. See Crowder, *No Featherbed* [note 2], 87, 99; *Register* 17 (1863):135; Savage [note 2], 3:513; 4:541. One proof of the marriage of Michael Wigglesworth to Mary Reyner, daughter of Humphrey, is the reference in Humphrey Reyner's 1660 will to "son Wigglesworth," who received a bequest for the use of Reyner's "grandchild Mercy Wigglesworth" (*Essex Antiquarian* 8 [1904]:105). Mercy's birth in February 1655/6 as daughter of Michael appears in Deloraine P. Corey, *Births, Marriages and Deaths in the Town of Maiden, Massachusetts, 1649-1850* (Cambridge, Mass.: University Press, 1903), 103, and *Register* 10 (1856): 161. That Mercy was born on 21 February is apparent from Edmund S. Morgan, ed., *The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth 1653—1657: The Conscience of a Puritan,* [Vol. 35, *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*] (Boston: The Society, 1951; reprinted Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1970), 96.
¹¹ Batley, Yorkshire, Parish Registers (FHL 1,524,093). That Jane, wife of John Smith, was a sister of Humphrey Reyner, is also apparent from Reyner wills abstracted by John Insley Coddington in "The Rayner Family of Batley, Co. York, England, and of New England" *Register* 109(1955):5-11.

in the Batley parish register in 1656 or in 1657 prior to the date of the M. Middlebrooke letter, and so Ellen must be Humphrey Reyner's mother.¹²

The letter contains three references to Matthew Boyes who had delivered letters from Wigglesworth to his uncle. Matthew Boyes had lived in Rowley, Massachusetts (where Wiggles worth's father-in-law, Humphrey Reyner, lived), but evidently returned to his birthplace, Leeds, Yorkshire, in or before 1657.¹³

The Middlebrook family, however, is the one discussed in detail in the body of the letter. The references to family members appear in M. Middlebrooke's description of "how our great Creator deales towards us":

It hath pleased him to call to her bed of rest and long-home his poore wearied yet patient-waitingservant yo^r aged grandmother, her tryalls great her sickenes lingering, her life a dying life for many monthes yet at last peace come, shee was buryed at Batley about 14th of December last past, 1656, yo^r Aunt Mary mournes much and refuseth comfort, since my mother's death in this last month of March, it pleased y^e lord to lay his hand vpon my bro: yo^r Vncle Matthew in a Violent sicknes¹⁴

Matthew, here, corresponds to one of the brothers of Hester/Esther named by John Edward Todd in 1920. The letter writer, "M. Middlebrooke," must be Michael, the other brother identified by Todd, unless the record he cited omitted a brother. Michael Middlebrook's residence in Yorkshire is revealed when he encourages Wigglesworth to relocate to "these parts of Yorkshire about Leeds" where "our climate would better agree with your constitution than New England doth" and Wigglesworth could have "a comfortable maintenance.¹⁵

M. Middlebrooke's failure to punctuate creates an unfortunate ambiguity as to one identification. One might interpret the letter to mean that the woman identified as "yo^r aged grandmother" (buried about December 14) is different from the woman M. Middlebrooke identifies as "my mother," and further take the clause "yo^r Aunt Mary mournes much and refuseth comfort, since my mother's

¹² As discussed in "More on the Reyners," which follows this article, her husband was John Reyner, whose will, dated 24 August 1638, proved 2 October 1639, appears in Coddington, "The Rayner Family" [note 11]. He was buried in Batley on 31'August 1638 (Batley Parish Registers [note 11]).
¹³ "Savage [note 2], 1:225; "Lane Family Papers" [note 9], 231-33; "Mr. Joseph Boyse," *Register* 12 (1858): 65-67; "Genealogical Research in England," *Register* 61 (1907):385. [In *Ancestry of Elizabeth Barrett Gittespie* (New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1976), Paul W. Prindle analyzes the 1657 letter at pages 345-47. He proposes a series of possible relationships making Matthew Boyes a close relative, probably based on W. H. Whitmore's analysis of the letter making the unwarranted suggestion that M. Middlebrook married the sister of Matthew Boyes (*Register* 11 [1857]: 102). All the relationships Prindle proposes are unlikely, at best, and most are disproved by the present article.. Regrettably, Prindle identifies Hester Middlebrook as having married "Edward Wigglesworth, Jr." who was a brother [sic] of the Rev. Michael Wigglesworth, even though the letter's autobiography says he was his father's only son and the will of Edward¹ Wigglesworth mentions only one son Michael.- ED.]

¹⁴ "Lane Family Papers" [note 9], 110-11.

¹⁵ Leeds is almost sixty miles from Wrawby, but only five miles northeast of Gildersome, where the Revners lived, and about the same from the town of Batlev.

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death in this last month of March" to mean that Middlebrook's mother died *in* March. The Batley parish register, however, reflects no Middlebrook burials in March 1657. Instead, the phrase "in this last month of March" was probably the beginning of a new thought, intended to refer to the beginning of Uncle Matthew's illness. That is, what M. Middlebrooke probably meant was that Aunt Mary had mourned much since the aged grandmother's death, and that Uncle Matthew's illness followed in March. While some additional punctuation or conjunctions would have been preferable, the writer's failure to follow modern punctuation rules is apparent throughout the letter.

In any event, the Batley parish register makes it clear it was in December that M. Middlebrooke's mother died. The next entry in the Batley parish register after that for the burial of Ellen Reynor is one for the burial of Grace Middlebrook on 5 December 1656. There are no other burials in December 1656 in the Batley parish register. The nine-day difference between the date M. Middlebrooke gives for his mother's burial and that given in the register for her burial must reflect a minor memory lapse, either on his part or by the person responsible for the register.

The letter, while including a quite detailed description of Uncle Matthew's health, lacks any reference to the letter-writer's father, suggesting that he had died some time before. In fact, the burials in the Batley parish register include one for "Michael Middlebrooke" on 31 December 1616, perhaps the father identified by John Edward Todd.

We cannot identify the "Aunt Mary" of the 1657 letter with certainty. She might have been Mary Cookson, who had married Matthew Middlebrook in Batley on 24 May 1637.¹⁶ In that case, Aunt Mary's grief may have been partly due to the very recent death of Matthew's "father Cookson," which M. Middlebrooke also reports.¹⁷ "Aunt Mary" could also have been the wife of Uncle Middlebrooke the letter-writer, since he mentions a wife, but we do not know her name.¹⁸ It is remotely possible that the "Aunt Mary" was Mary (Middlebrook) Reyner. Humphrey Reyner's widow Mary was buried in Rowley, Massachusetts, on 7 May 1672, ¹⁹ but it is possible that at some point she

¹⁶ Batley Parish Registers [note 11].

¹⁷ M. Middlebrooke's letter mentions that during Matthew's illness, his "father Cookson came to visit him dyvers times from Bruntcliffe, yet he died before my Brother could walke abroade of 2 or 3 daies sickness." ("Lane Family Papers" [note 9], 111; the original letter says "Cookeson"). The Batley parish register reflects the death of Christopher Cookson, who must have been Matthew's father-in-law, on 21 March 1656[/7]. While rather late to allow them to be the parents of Mary (Cookson) Middlebrook, Christopher Cookson and Agnes Sharpe were married at Batley 6 June 1619. Thirteen years later, Christopher "Cockson" and Paul Sharpe witnessed the will of Humphrey Reyner of Gildersome (Coddington, The Rayner Family" [note 11], 9).

¹⁸ They may have married during one of the several gaps in the Batley parish registers: 1595-1605, 1605-08, 1609-14, 1632-34, 1635-36, 1639-42, 1645-52. The Bishops' Transcripts for Batley are even less comprehensive.

¹⁹ George Brainard Blodgette (comp.) and Amos Everett Jewett (ed.), *Early Settlers of Rowley, Massachusetts* (Rowley, Mass.: the editor, 1933), 321; *Vital Records of Rowley, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849, 2* vols. (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1928-31),

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returned to England for a period to care for her ailing mother. We know from Michael Wigglesworth's diary that Humphrey Reyner had made at least one trip from Massachusetts back

to England, returning to Massachusetts one week after Michael Wigglesworth's May 1655 marriage to his daughter. Wigglesworth mentions meeting "my father in Law" upon Reyner's return from England, but makes no mention of his mother-in-law.²⁰

M. Middlebrooke closed his letter to Michael Wigglesworth by paying his respects to Wigglesworth and to his "bedfellow, mother, aunte, sister, daughter." Why "aunte" singular, if both Grace Todd and Mary Revner were Wigglesworth's aunts? Perhaps Grace Todd in New Haven was considered too far from Malden to expect Wigglesworth to deliver the message.

Humphrey and Mary (Middlebrook) Reyner, and Their Daughter Mary

Humphrey Revner came to Massachusetts by 1642 with his wife, Mary, and three daughters, Mary (who married Michael Wigglesworth), Martha (who married John Whipple, Jr.), and Ann (who married William Hobson).²¹ The marriage of Humphrey Revner and Mary Middlebrook occurred probably no later than July 1631, since daughters Mary and Martha are named in the 8 December 1632 will of their great-grandfather, Humphrey Reyner of Gildersome.²²

The principal evidence that Michael Wigglesworth's mother-in-law was also his maternal aunt consists of two genealogically significant diary entries that he made in 1655. In an entry made in May 1655, while contemplating marriage to Mary Reyner, Wigglesworth mentions being "somewhat perplexed ... concerning the lawfulness of marrying with a Kinswoman, because the mothers sister is forbidden." Mary Reyner was not, of course, his mother's sister, but, Wigglesworth noted, "sister in scripture language is put for a Kinswoman sometimes.²³ Wigglesworth decided that his "scruple was Invalid," and the marriage proceeded on 18 May 1655.²⁴ However, it is clear from this that his wife was a "kinswoman" in some sense to his mother. Crowder indeed states flatly that Wigglesworth's first wife was a niece to his mother, although he

²⁰ Morgan, *Diary of Michael Wigglesworth* [note 10], 87-88.

²¹ Blodgette and Jewett, Early Settlers of Rowley [note 19], 321. Humphrey Reyner's will of 10 September 1660, written four days before his burial, mentions his wife Mary, his two daughters then living, "daughter Whipple" and "daughter Hobson," and "son Wigglesworth" (Essex Antiquarian 8 [1904]:105). Mary (Reyner) Wigglesworth had died on 21 December 1659 (Crowder, No Featherbed [note 2], 98; Savage [note 2], 3:513; 4:541). A document respecting maintenance of Mary Revner, widow to Humphrey. identifies her as mother to Martha Whipple and Ann Hobson (John H. Boutelle, A Brief Genealogy of the Whipple Family [Lowell, Mass.: E.D. Oreen & Co., 1857], 31). It is clear from the 1632 will of Humphrey Reyner, that his grandson Humphrey [the Rowley settler] had a wife named Mary (Coddington, "The Rayner Family" [note 11], 9). See "More on the Reyners" following this article. ²² Coddington, "The Rayner Family" [note 11], 9.

²³ Morgan, *Diary of Michael Wigglesworth* [note 10], 87.

²⁴ Crowder, No Featherbed [note 2], 87; Morgan, Diary of Michael Wigglesworth [note 10],

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neglects to disclose his source for that statement.²⁵ Because it is clear from other evidence that Esther Wigglesworth was a Middlebrook, rather than a Reyner, the likeliest explanation is that Wigglesworth was concerned about the lawfulness of marrying the daughter of his mother's sister. A more distant relationship between his intended wife and himself seems unlikely to have troubled Wigglesworth, even briefly, since marriage between cousins was not unusual at the time. In the later relevant diary entry in August 1655, Wigglesworth refers to getting advice from his "Uncle Reyner" on whether to accept a position as minister to the Malden church. His "Uncle Reyner" was of "the same mind" as "Mr. Alcock" who encouraged him to take the position as minister in Malden ²⁶ Wigglesworth diary editor Morgan states that the reference to "Uncle Reyner" was "[p]robably [to] the Reverend John Reyner,²⁷ but does not explain his basis for saying so. John Reyner served as minister in Plymouth 1636—1654 and in Dover, New Hampshire 1655-1669.²⁸ Corey apparently believed that "Uncle Reyner" was a reference to Humphrey, not John.²⁹ If there was any correspondence or conversation between Wigglesworth and John Reyner, it was not significant enough for John Reyner to rate even a mention in Crowder's biography of Wigglesworth. While it might seem strange that Wigglesworth should call his father-in-law "Uncle," Wigglesworth would have thought of him as uncle (by marriage) for many years before he married Mary Reyner.

Genealogical Summary

1. MICHAEL MIDDLEBROOK, of Batley, Yorkshire, possibly the man of that name who was buried in Batley 31 December 1616. He married GRACE_____, who was buried there 5 December 1656.

²⁵ Crowder, *No Featherbed* [note 2], 78, 83. Similarly, Maiden historian Deloraine Corey, calls Mary Reyner a cousin to Wigglesworth, but does not explain the relationship further, although he separately discusses Wigglesworth's concern about marrying his mother's "kinswoman" (Corey, *History of Malden* [note 2], 195, 200).

²⁶ Morgan, *Diary of Michael Wigglesworth* [note 10], 90.

²⁷ Morgan, *Diary of Michael Wigglesworth* [note 10], 90 n. 45. Savage suggested that Esther Wigglesworth was "perhaps" the sister of Rev. John Reyner (Savage [note 2], 4:450), possibly based on these diary entries. Some family historians have stated as a fact that Esther's maiden name was Reyner or Raynor, e.g., Edward Augustas Bowen, *Lineage of the Bowens of Woodstock, Connecticut* (Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1897), 203; D.W. Morris and H.A. Feldmann, *The Wells Family* (Milwaukee: The Cramer-Krasselt Co., 1942), 292, 375.

²⁸ Weis, *Colonial Clergy* [note 2], 172, 247, 266; *Register* 26 (1872):332. Based on abstracts of Reyner wills from Batley, John Insley Coddington thought that Rev. John Reyner and Humphrey Reyner were more likely first cousins than brothers (Coddington, "The Rayner Family" [note 11], 10); however, the evidence is overwhelming that they were brothers. See "More on the Reyners" following this article.
²⁹ Corey's index to his history of Malden lists page 195 as a reference to Humphrey Reyner. but the only possible reference to him on that page is a quote from Wigglesworth's August 1655 diarv reference to "Uncle Revner" (Corey, *History of Malden* [note 2], 195, 861).

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Children of Michael and Grace I) Middlebrook, order uncertain.³⁰

- 2 i. MARY MIDDLEBROOK, m. Humphrey Reyner.
- 3 ii. **HESTER MIDDLEBROOK**, m. Edward Wigglesworth.

iii. MATTHEW MIDDLEBROOK, d. after 6 April 1657; m. Batley 24 May 1637, MARY COOKSON, daughter of Christopher Cookson.
iv. GRACE MIDDLEBOOK, bp. Batley 11 April 1609, as daughter of Michael Middlebrook. She [or a younger sister of the same name] m. CHRISTOPHER¹ TODD, bp. Pontefract, Yorkshire, 12 Jan. 1616[/7]^{[31} son of William and Katherine (Ward) Todd.³² They settled in New Haven, Conn., in or before 1641.³³ Christopher Todd left a will in New Haven dated 25 March 1686, and an inventory of his estate was taken 23 April 1686.³⁴
v. MICHAEL MIDDLEBROOK, writer of the letter to Michael Wigglesworth dated 6 April 1657, m. an unknown wife.
vi. MERCY MIDDLEBROOK, bp. Batley 21 Dec. 1616, as daughter of Michael

Middlebrook; bur. there 5 Jan. 1616/7.

2. MARY MIDDLEBROOK, married before July 1631 **HUMPHREY¹ REYNER,** son of John and Ellen (_____) Reyner of Gildersome, Batley.³⁵ By 1642 they had settled in Rowley, Massachusetts, where he was a ruling elder of the church. He was buried in Rowley 14 September 1660,³⁶ having left a will there dated 10 September 1660, mentioning wife Mary; daughter Whipple; daughter Hobson; son Wigglesworth; son John Whipple Junior of Ipswich; grandchild Mercy Wigglesworth; grandchildren Humphrey Hobson, John Hobson, and William Hobson; and his "dear brother mr John Reynor pastor of Dover." Mary was buried in Rowley 7 May 1672.

Children of Humphrey and Mary (Middlebrook) Reyner:

i. MARY REYNER, b. by 8 Dec. 1632 (the date of her great-grandfather's will); d. Maiden, Mass., 21 Dec. 1659; m. Rowley 18 May 1655, her first cousin, REV. MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH (no. 4 below).

³⁰ See note 18 regarding gaps in the Batley parish registers.

³¹ Willis, Parish Register of Pontefract [note 7], 71.

³² Prindle, Ancestry of Elizabeth Barrett Gillespie [note 13], 455.

³³ Christopher Todd was first mentioned in New Haven in a record dated 17 1st month 1641 (Charles J, Hoadly, *Records of the Colony and Plantation of New Haven, from 1638 to 1649* [Hartford: Case, Tiffany & Co., 1857], 50). He was not on the list of New Haven planters made between 7 April 1639 and 22 November 1640 (Hoadly, 91-93; *Great Migration Newsletter* 6:1 [January-March 1997]:4-5). According to Robert Charles Anderson, FASG, it is clear that several of the signers of the Fundamental Agreement of New Haven, dated 4 June 1639 (Hoadly, 11-18), arrived in New Haven after that date.

³⁴ Prindle, Ancestry of Elizabeth Barrett Gillespie [note 13], 461, citing Register 81 (1927): 133.

³⁵ See "More on the Reyners" following this article.

³⁶ Vital R, ecords of Rowley note 19, 1:514.

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ii. MARTHA REYNER, b. by 8 Dec. 1632; d. Ipswich, Mass., 24 Feb. 1679[/80?];^{37]}m. ca. 1656 JOHN WHIPPLE, b. 21 Dec. 1625, bp. Becking, Essex, 25 Dec. 1625, d. Ipswich 10 Aug. 1683, son of John¹ and Susanna (Stacy?) Whipple.³⁸
iii. ANN REYNER, b. after 8 Dec. 1632; d. Rowley 22 Dec. 1693; m. there 12 Nov. 1652, WILLIAM¹ HOBSON, bur. there 17 July 1659.³⁹

3. ESTHER MIDDLEBROOK, died after 10 September 1655,⁴⁰ m. Wrawby, Lincolnshire, 29 October 1629, **EDWARD¹ WIGGLESWORTH**, presumably the child of that name baptized at Scotton, Lincolnshire, 6 August 1603, son of William. They settled in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1638.^[41] Edward Wigglesworth died in New Haven 1 October 1653,⁴² leaving a will dated 5 May 1653, mentioning wife Hester, son Michael, and daughter Abigail.⁴³

Children of Edward and Esther (Middlebrook) Wigglesworth:

i. **MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH**, b. 18 Oct. 1631; m. his first cousin Mary Reyner (see above).

ii. ABIGAIL WIGGLESWORTH, bp. New Haven 1 Dec. 1640;⁴⁴ d. by 22 May 1722 (when her second husband remarried); m. (1) by 1663 **BENJAMIN SWEETSER**, b. ca. 1632, d. 22 July 1718 aged 86, bur. Charlestown, Mass., son of Seth¹

³⁷ Vital Records of Ipswich, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849, 3 vols. (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1910-19), 2:709

³⁸ Mary Lovering Holman, *Ancestry of Charles Stinson Pillsbury and John Sargent Pittsbury*, 2 vols. (Concord, N.H.: privately printed, 1938), 1:46-48. Their daughter Susanna married her second cousin John Lane, son of Job and Anna (Reyner) Lane. The chart in the Lane Family Papers" [note 1], at 238, is incorrect as to these relationships, and the evidence cited to support the chart actually supports the real relationships. See also Blodgette and Jewett, *Early Settlers oj Rowley* [note 19], 321; Boutelle, *Whipple Family* [note 21], 29-31; and Henry Burdette Whipple, *A Partial List of the Descendants of Matthew Whipple, the Elder, of Backing, Essex County, England, 2* vols. (High Point, N.C.: n.p., 1965-69), 1:9, 23; 2:13.

The will of John Whipple was dated 2 August 1683 and an inventory of his estate was taken 10 September 1683 (Essex County, Massachusetts, Probate, 304:10-11), thus supporting 10 August 1683 as his date of death, as given in Blodgette and Jewett, *Early Settlers of Rowley*, 321, but not in *Vital Records of Ipswich* [note 37].

³⁹ Blodgette and Jewett, *Early Settlers of Rowley* [note 19], 153, 321; *Vital Records of Rowley* [note 19], 1:473 (her death), 1:315 (marriage), 1:474 (his burial). The Yorkshire ancestry oi William Hobson is shown in "Lane Family Papers" [note 9], at 237; however, as it was furnished by Horatio Gates Somerby, its accuracy is suspect.

⁴⁰ Morgan, *Diary of Michael Wigglesworth* [note 10], 91-92.

⁴¹ Michael Wigglesworth's autobiographical statement that he and his parents arrived in New Haven in October 1638 appears to be accurate. Edward Wigglesworth was on the list of New Haven planters made between 7 April 1639 and 22 November 1640 (see note 33). He was an earl) freeman of the court of New Haven (Hoadly [note 33], 9, 17), but was not mentioned in the New Haven records (which start 4 June 1639) as being admitted to the court. His name was on the Fundamental Agreement dated 4 June 1639 (see note 33). See also Isabel McBeath Calder, *Tht New Haven Colony* (New Have: Yale University Press, 1934), 68-70.

⁴² Morgan, Diary of Michael Wigglesworth [note 10], 50.

⁴³ Winifred S. Alcorn, "Abstracts of the Early Probate Records of New Haven, Book I, Part I 1647-1687," *Register* 81 (1927):134.

⁴⁴ Henry White, "List of Baptisms in the Church in New Haven, Conn. *"Register 9* (1855):363.

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Sweetser ⁴⁵ She m. (2) Boston 17 Nov. 1719, **ELLIS¹ CALLENDER**, b. ca. 1640, d. Boston 18 May 1728, aged 87.⁴⁶

4. REV. MICHAFL WIGGLESWORTH, born 18 October 1631, baptized in Wrawby, Lincolnshire, 21 October 1631. He died in Maiden, Massachusetts, 10 June 1705, aged 73 years, 8 months, and was buried in Bell Rock Cemetery there.¹⁴⁷¹ He graduated from Harvard College in 1651,⁴⁸ and was minister at Maiden from 1655 until his death. He married first in Rowley 18 May 1655, **MARY REYNER,** his first cousin (see above). She was born before 8 December 1632 and died in

Maiden 21 December 1659. He married second in late spring 1679 (but after 8 May), his housekeeper,^[49] MARTHA MUDGE, born about 1662, died in Maiden 4 September 1690,^aged about 28,⁵⁰ daughter of Thomas' and Mary (_____) Mudge of Malden.⁵¹ He married at the First Church Braintree, Massachusetts, 23 June, 1691, ⁵² SYBIL (SPARHAWK) AVERY, of Dedham, Massachusetts, bom about 1655, died 6 August 1708, aged 53, buried in the Old Burying Ground, Cambridge, Massachusetts, ⁵³ daughter of Nathaniel² and Patience (Newman) Sparhawk, and widow of Dr. Jonathan Avery.⁵⁴

Rev. Michael Wigglesworth left an interesting will dated 12 April 1705,⁵⁵ in which he leaves his wife Sybil various real and personal property and names her as executrix. Sons Samuel and Edward were to receive £60 each "towards bringing them up at the colledg" as well as real estate and all his books when of full age, "giving their mother a choice of half a dozen English Books." Married daughters Mercy, Abigail, and Martha were to receive ten shillings each "for they have rec'd their portions already." The unmarried daughters Mary, Esther, and Dorothy were to receive £10 each "put for them Severally in 3 Boxes marked wth their three Several! names and 40 shillings in Bills in Every Box w^{ch} fell to them as their own mothers portion from their Grandfather Mudges estate."

His widow, Sybil (Sparhawk) (Avery) Wigglesworth, left an equally interesting will, suggesting she was a loving stepmother. It was dated 31 March

⁴⁵ "Sweetser and Wigglesworth," *Register* 18 (1864):290; Wyman, *Charlestown* [note 3], 921.

⁴⁶ Esther Littleford Woodworth-Bames, "Descendants of Ellis Callender of Boston," *Register* 144 (1990): 196.

⁴⁷ Crowder, *No Featherbed* [note 2], 265; Corey, *Births ... in Maiden* [note 10], 392; *Register* 17(1863): 134.

⁴⁸ Shipton, Sibley's Harvard Graduates, [note 2], 1:259-86.

⁴⁹ Crowder, *No Featherbed* [note 2], 212, 215.

⁵⁰ Corey, Births ... in Maiden [note 10], 392.

⁵¹ Alfred Mudge, *Memorials: Being a Genealogical, Biographical and Historical Account of the Name of Mudge in America, from 1638 to 1868* (Boston: Alfred Mudge & Son, 1868), 180-81, 194-95.

^K Register 59 (1905):\53.

⁵³ Thomas W. Baldwin, ed., Vital Records of Cambridge, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850, 1 mis. (Boston: NEHGS, 1914-15), 2:792.

⁵⁴ Wm. S. Appleton, "The Family of Nathaniel Sparhawk," Register 19 (1865):126.

⁵³ Middlesex County, Massachusetts, Probate 12:68-69, and Probate File #24860; Mudge, *Memorials* [note •*' 195; *Register* 17 (1863):135

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1708, proved 17 August 1708.^{'561} After saying she had already distributed most oi her part of the household goods in the "estate left by Mr. Wigglesworth" to "his Daughters" Mary, Esther, and Dorothy, she then proceeds to refer to all of the children as if they were her own. To "my son" Samuel Wigglesworth and "my son" Edward Wigglesworth she left £20 each and various items. She mentioned daughter Mary Belcher and her son William Brackenbury and her granddaughter Mary Brackenbury; daughter Abigail Tappan and her sons Samuel and Wigglesworth Tappan; daughter Martha Wheeler and her son [unnamed]; daughters Mary, Esther, and Dorothy Wigglesworth. Daughters Sybill and Dorothy Avery were to get clothes, linens, and medicines. Daughters Martha Wheeler, Mary, Esther, and Dorothy were to be "Executrisses" for her "Physick Debts" and daughter Sibyll was to be executrix for all other debts.

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i. MERCY WIGGLESWORTH, b. Maiden 21 Feb. 1655/6; d. Ipswich, Mass., 14 Nov. 1728;⁵⁸ m. (1) by 3 Feb. 1672/3 (birth of first child/ ⁵⁹ REV. SAMUEL BRACKENBURY, b. Charlestown, Mass., 10 Feb. 1645/6, d. 11 or 16 Jan. 1678, probably in Boston, son of William¹ and Alice (____) Brackenbury.⁶⁰ She m. (2) REV. SAMUEL BELCHER, b. ca. 1639, d. Ipswich 10 March 1713/4, bur. Old Burying Hill there, son of Jeremiah¹ Belcher.⁶¹

Children of Rev. Michael and Martha (Mudge) Wigglesworth (all born in Malden):⁶²

ii. ABIGAIL WIGGLESWORTH, b. 20 March 1681; d. Newbury, Mass., 28 Jan. or June 1771, aged 90;⁶³ m. by her father at Malden 23 Dec. 1700,⁶⁴ SAMUEL

⁵⁶ Middlesex County, Massachusetts, Probate File #24861.

⁵⁷ Prior accounts of his children are in "Brief Memoirs and Notices of Prince's Subscribers," *Register* 15 (1861):334-36, and Alicia Crane Williams, *Chase-Wigglesworth Genealogy*. . . . (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1990), 37-39.

⁵⁸ Vital Records of Ipswich [note 37], 2:481; Shipton, Sibley's Harvard Graduates [note 2], 2:44.
 ⁵⁹ Aaron Sargent, Jr., "Early Records of Maiden," Register 10 (1856):235; not in Corey, Births ... in Maiden [note 10], under Brackenbury.

⁶⁰ Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England, 1620-1633, 3 vols.* (Boston: NEHGS, 1995), 1:202; "Samuel Brackenbury," *Register* 19 (1865):108 [death]; Shipton, *Sibley 's Harvard Graduates* [note 2], 2:155.

⁶¹ Robert Charles Anderson, George F. Sanborn Jr., and Melinde Lutz Sanbom, *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England 1634-1635, Volume IA-B* (Boston: NEHGS, 1999), 234-35; Shipton, *Sibley's Harvard Graduates* [note 2], 2:42-45; *Vital Records of Ipswich* [note 37], 2:489; William Henry Belcher and Joseph Warren Belcher, *The Belcher Family in England and America* (Detroit: n.p., 1941), 370-71.
⁶² Corey, *Births ... in Maiden* [note 10], 103; Mudge, *Memorials* [note 52], 195.

⁶³ Vital Records of Newbury, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849, 2 vols. (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1911), 2:742.

⁶⁴ Corey, *Births ... in Maiden* [note 10], 322; however, 3 June 1701 is the marriage date given in David W. Hoyt, *The Old Families of Salisbury and Amesbury, Massachusetts*, 3 vols. (Providence: Snow & Farnham. 1897-1916: reprint Camden. Me.: P ? Press 1981) 1:331

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TOPPAN, b. Newbury 5 June 1670, d. there 30 Oct. 1750, aged 80, son of Peter² and Jane (Batt) Toppan.⁶⁵

iii. MARY WIGGLESWORTH, b. 21 Sept. 1682; m. Newbury, Mass., 26 Oct. 1709,⁶⁶ **BENAIAH TITCOMB**, b. there 24 Oct. 1679, d. between 17 Oct. 1740 and 1 July 1745, son of Benaiah² and Sarah (Brown) Titcomb.⁶⁷ Mary left a will dated 25 March 1759, proved 3 Oct. 1760, mentioning her two sisters, Abigail Tappan, widow of Samuel Tappan, and Esther Tappan, widow of Abraham Tappan.⁶⁸

iv. MARTHA WIGGLESWORTH, b. 21 Dec. 1683; d. Stonington, Conn., 4 Dec. 1719; m.
(1) Salem, Mass., 2 Nov. 1704, DR. JOSEPH WHEELER, b. Concord, Mass., 11 Jan.
1680/1, d. Salem 1705, son of Thomas² and Sarah (Beers) Wheeler.⁶⁹ She m. (2) Concord

15 Dec. 1708,⁷⁰ **DR. SAMUEL LAW**, b. there 28 May 1680, d. Groton, Conn., 29 or 30 April 1727, son of John¹ and Lydia (Draper) Law.⁷¹

v. **ESTHER WIGGLESWORTH**, b. 16 April 1685; d. after 25 March 1759 (date of her sister Mary's will); m. (1) Newbury, Mass., 8 June 1708, **JOHN SEWALL**, b. there 10 April 1680,⁷² d. there 25 Feb. 1711/2,⁷³ son of John³ and Hannah (Fessenden) Sewall.⁷⁴ She m. (2) Newbury 21 Oct. 1713, **ABRAHAM TOPPAN**,⁷⁵ b. 29 June 1684, d. ca. 1756, son of Jacob² and Hannah (Sewall) Toppan.⁷⁶

vi. **DOROTHY WIGGLESWORTH**, b. 22 Feb. 1686/7; m. Maiden 2 June 1709, JAMES UPHAM, b. Maiden 8 Aug. 1687, son of Phineas³ and Mary (Mellin) Upham.⁷⁷

Vital Records of Newbury [note 63], 2:490, 512, says the marriage intentions were dated 15 1701.

⁶⁵ Daniel Langdon Tappan, *Tappan-Toppan Genealogy: Ancestors and Descendants of Abraham Toppan of Newbury, Massachusetts, 1606-1672* (Arlington, Mass.: the author, 1915), 7, 22; Hoyt, *Salisbury and Amesbury* [note 64], 1:330-31.

⁶⁶ Vital Records of Newbury [note 63], 2:512.

⁶⁷ Gilbert M. Titcomb, *Descendants of William Titcomb of Newbury, Massachusetts, 1635* (Ann Arbor, Mich: Edwards Brothers, 1969), 13.

⁶⁸ Essex County, Massachusetts, Probate, 337:373.

⁶⁹ Raymond David Wheeler, *The Wheeler Genealogy*. . . . , 4 vols. (Dolgeville, N.Y.: Kin-systems, 1993), 1:7, 15.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 15.

⁷¹ J.W. Dean, "Dr. Samuel Law and His Wife," *Register* 23 (1869):212; Savage [note 2], 3:60; *Concord, Massachusetts, Births, Marriages, and Deaths, 1635-1850* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1891), 24 (birth); 9 (parents' marriage).

⁷² Vital Records of Newbury [note 63], 1:471 (his birth); 2:512 (marriage).

⁷³ M. Halsey Thomas, ed., *The Diary of Samuel Sewall, 1674-1729,* 2 vols. (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux), 2:681. *Vital Records of Newbury* [note 63], 2:719, says only 1711.

⁷⁴ Vital Records of Newbury [note 63], 2:446 (marriage); *Tappan-Toppan Genealogy* [note 65], 79; Hoyt, Salisbury and Amesbury [note 64], 1:331.

⁷⁵ Vital Records of Newbury [note 63], 2:224, 490.

⁷⁶ Tappan-Toppan Genealgy [note 65], 79, 80; Hoyt, Salisbury and Amesbury [note 64], 1:330-31.

Abraham and Esther (Wigglesworth) Toppan were ancestors of John Ward Dean, for whom see note 2. ⁷⁷ Corey, *Births* ... *in Malden* [note 10], 90 (his birth), 322 (marriage); Janet Ireland Delorey, "The English Orismond? Descendants to the Fourth Generation of Edward Wood of Charlestown,

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vii. **(REV.) SAMUEL WIGGLESWORTH**, b. 4 Feb. 1688/9; d. Hamilton, Mass., 3 Sept. 1768;'⁷⁸¹ Harvard College 1707;⁷⁹ m. (1) Boston 30 June 1715, **MARY BRINTNALL**,⁸⁰ b. ca. 1695, d. 6 June 1723, aged 28, bur. Hamilton,^{tsil} daughter of John² and Phoebe (Smith) Brintnall, of Chelsea, Mass.⁸² He m. (2) Ipswich 12 March 1730, **MARTHA BROWN**,⁸³ b. Newbury, Mass., 19 Feb. 1703/4,⁸⁴ d. Newburyport, Mass., 1784,⁸⁵ daughter of Rev. Richard³ and Martha (Whipple) Brown.⁸⁶

Child of Rev. Michael and Sybil (Sparhawk) Wigglesworth:

viii. **(REV.) EDWARD WIGGLESWORTH**, b. 1692 or 1693; d. Cambridge, Mass., 16 or 17 Jan. 1765, in his 73rd year;⁸⁷ Harvard College 1710; ⁸⁸ m. (1) Cambridge 15 June 1726, **SARAH LEVERETT**, b. there 12 Nov. 1700, d. there 9 Nov. 1727, in her 27th year, bur. Old Burying Ground, Cambridge,⁸⁹ daughter of John⁴ Leverett, President of Harvard

College, and his first wife, Margaret Rogers.⁹⁰ He m. (2) Cambridge 10 Sept. 1729, **REBECCA COOLIDGE**, bp. there 4 June 1699, d. 5 June 1754, bur. Old Burying Ground, Cambridge,⁹¹ daughter of Joseph³ and Rebecca (Frost) Coolidge.⁹²

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Massachusetts," *The Genealogist* 9 (1988):98-99; "Upham Genealogy," *Register* 23 (1869):34-35. James and Dorothy (Wigglesworth) Upham are ancestors of the author.

⁷⁸ Vital Records of Hamilton, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849 (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1908), 109.

⁷⁹ Shipton, *Sibley 's Harvard Graduates* [note 2], 5:406-12.

⁸⁰ [Twenty-Eighth] Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston, Containing the Boston Marriages from 1700 to 1751 (Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1898), 61.

⁸¹ Vital Records of Hamilton [note 78], 109.

⁸² Savage [note 2], 1:255; 4:542; Annie Haven Thwing, *Inhabitants and Estates of the Town of Boston* 1630-1800 and The Crooked and Narrow Streets of Boston 1630-1822, CD-ROM (Boston: NEHGS and Massachusetts Historical Society, 2001), under "Brentnall/Brintnall, John."

⁸³ Vital Records of Ipswich [note 37], 2:457.

⁸⁴ Vital Records of Newbury [note 63], 1:70.

⁸⁵ Vital Records of Hamilton [note 78], 109, says she died aged 89, but this is overstated.

⁸⁶ Essex Antiquarian 13 (1909): 170; Savage [note 2], 1:275; 4:542.

⁸⁷ Crowder, *No Featherbed* [note 2], 248; John W. Dean, "Avery and Wigglesworth," *Register*^(1891):168; *Vital Records of Cambridge* [note 53], 2:79.

⁸⁸ Shipton, Sibley's Harvard Graduates [note 2], 5:546; "Prince's Subscriber's" [note 61], 15:335-36.

⁸⁹ *Vital Records of Cambridge* [note 53], 2:422 (marriage); 1:436 (birth); 2:792 (death and burial).

⁹⁰ Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, "Family of Elder Thomas Leverett," Register 4 (1850): 135.

⁹¹ Vital Records of Cambridge [note 53], 2:422 (marriage); 1:159 (birth); 2:791 (death and burial).

⁹² George Walter Chamberlain, "The Early New England Coolidges and Some of Their Descendants," *Register* 77 (1923):279.