



In-Depth First Settler Profile: *John Hall, Sr. (1650)*

Name: John Hall, Sr.

Birth: June 15, 1584, Kent County, England. (The Halls of New England/Hall, 1883)

Emigration: To Boston/Roxbury before 1635; to Hartford 1636; to Middletown in 1652.(FFS)

Death: May 26, 1673, Middletown, Conn.(MVR, BCVR)

Occupation & Public Service: House-builder, ship-builder (GFSC); townsman, constable, grand levy man.(FFS) "A town meeting was held at his house in February 1652, when it was voted to build a meeting house."(FFS)

Marriage: m.(1) Esther (unknown surname)(possibly Willicke), before 1618, Kent County, England (b. 1590, Sussex, England; d. before 1633, Sussex, England).(The Halls of New England/Hall, 1883)

Parents: Unknown (*The Halls of New England*/Hall, 1883); possibly Richard Hall (1553-1620) & Agnes Atwood (1556-1620) of Bridgegate Abson, Gloucestershire, England.

Children (*The Halls of New England*/Hall, 1883; MVR, BCVR):

(1) John Hall, Jr., b. about 1619, Kent, England; d. January 22, 1693, Middletown, Conn.; m.(1) Ann Wilcox, June 24, 1651, Middletown, Conn., (1 child); m.(2) Mary (unknown surname)(Hubbard), Oct. 1, 1674 (no children).

(2) Richard Hall, b. about 1620, Kent, England; d. March 27, 1691, Middletown, Conn.; m. Mary Anthony about 1646 in Hartford, Conn. (7 children).

(3) Sarah Hall, b. about 1622 in Kent, England; d. December 7, 1664, Middletown, Conn.; m. Thomas Whitmore, December 11, 1645, Hartford, Conn. (13 children).

(4) Samuel Hall, b. about 1626, Kent, England; d. March 14, 1689, Middletown, Conn.; m. Elizabeth Cook(e), February 3, 1663, Middletown, Conn. (3 children).

Residence/Property: "He and his sons and son-in-law, Thomas Wetmore, and Thomas Allen, from the same Hartford outfit, took up practically the whole north and south strip, a half mile long, lying between Main street and the deep-water shore of the river, suited to shipping and shipbuilding." (GFHC) "This home lot containing five acres was located on the north-east corner of Main street and Washington street of Middletown, running to the 'Great River' and adjoined the home lot of his son-in-law, Thomas Wetmore on the north." (*The Halls of New England, Genealogical and Biographical*, by Rev. David B. Hall, (Albany, N.Y.: Joel Munsell's & Sons, 1883).

Will: Vol. 1, p. 205 (MAN). (Estate inventory, June 1673: 54-13-07, i.e. 54 pounds)

Burial Location: Unknown, but most likely in Riverside Cemetery, Middletown, Conn. Some of the earliest graves in this cemetery were moved during mid-19th century railroad right-of-way construction, and gravestones do not survive.

Notes:

(CAF): "John Hall had been in a family state, many years before he left England, and was an early settler both in Hartford and Middletown. His three sons, Richard, Samuel and John Hall, Jr., probably came to Middletown when he did. He died May 26, 1673, in the 80th year of his age. John Hall, Jr., was the good deacon mentioned in the Address." (Field, pg. 145)

(SAV): "JOHN, Roxbury, wh. in the ch. rec. has prefix of respect, I presume, was the freem. of 6 May 1635, unless he may rather be reckoned of 13 May 1640; but as no further ment. of him occurs here, perhaps he rem. with the gr. migra. to Conn. and was at Hartford 1644, where he m. as sec.[?] w. Ann, d. of John Wilcox, and at Middletown 1654, where he d. 26 May 1673, aged 89. His will of few days bef. ment. s. Richard, John, and Samuel, d. Sarah, w. of Thomas Whitmore, m. 11 Dec. 1645, and (1. 7 Dec. 1661.[?]) He says it was the 40th yr. of liv. in N. E."

(MUH): "John Hall,, born in Co. Kent, England, had married Esther ____, who died in England. He was described in the Roxbury church records, 1638, as 'Mr.' and when he reached Hartford he was known as 'John Hall, Senior,' because the John Hall who had accompanied Mr. Oldham in his 1633 excursion to Windsor, was younger. This John Hall removed from Hartford to New Haven and then to Wallingford. Mr. James Shepard of New Britain, in his pamphlet, has clearly distinguished between the two Johns who resided at the same time, though only for a few years, in Hartford. ... He was surveyor of highways in Hartford in 1650, in which year he removed with his children to Middletown. He died May 26, 1673, in the 89th year of his age. In his will, dated May 14, 1672, he says he is 89 years old and that it was the fortieth year of his being in New England. In 1659 he was appointed by the General Court for 'the entry and recording of such goods as may be subject to custom.' His sons were John, Samuel and Richard. John m. (1) Ann Wilcox, dau of John Wilcox, who d. July 20, 1673, in her fiftieth year; m. (2) Mary (Curtice) Hubbard, widow of Thomas Hubbard, of Upper Houses, who d. June 29, 1709. He was one of the first three deacons elected in 1670, town recorder from 1659 to 1691. He d. Jan. 22, 1695. His gravestone bears only capital letters and the inscription reads:

'Here Lies ovr Deacon Hall
Who Studied Peace With All
Void of Malignant Strife
Vpight and Jvst His Life
Gone to His Rest Left vs in Sorrow
Dovbtless His Good Name Will Follow.'



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(CBRMC): “John Hall, born in the county of Kent, England, in 1584, came to this country and settled in Roxbury, Mass. in 1633. In September of the same year, he, with John Oldham and two others, explored the region bordering the Connecticut River, and their report, dated January 20, 1634, led to the migrations from Dorchester to Wethersfield, and from Cambridge to Hartford. In the year 1635, it is recorded, he was made ‘freeman’ in Boston. In 1636 he joined the Hooker and Stone colony, and went to Hartford, removing his family thither in 1639. He owned and occupied as his place of residence a tract of six acres west of the New York, New Haven, & Hartford railroad, and now known as Sigourney Place. In 1650 he moved to Middletown (then called Mettabesick), being one of the original purchasers of lands from the Indians. ... John Hall was made surveyor of highways in 1650. In 1659 he was appointed by the General Court of Connecticut for ‘the entry and recording of such goods as may be subject to custom.’”

(GFHC): “John Hall, immigrant ancestor of this branch of the family, was born in county Kent, England, in 1584, died in Middletown, Connecticut, May 26, 1673. His will was dated May 14, 1673. He came from the west of England to Boston in 1633 and settled first in Cambridge, soon afterward removing to Roxbury, where he was a member of John Eliot’s church. He was admitted a freeman in Boston in 1635. In September, 1633, he and two others made a trip to the Connecticut river and returned with a favorable report of the land. He removed to Hartford soon after he was admitted a freeman, but did not remove his family until 1639. He was a carpenter by trade. He had home lot No. 77 of six acres on Lord’s Hill in 1639, and also bought land. He was surveyor of highways in Hartford in 1640. In 1650 he sold his house and home lot and removed to Middletown, and in 1659 was appointed to have charge of the customs. He held various positions of honor and trust. He married Esther —, who probably died in England. Children, born in England: John, born 1619; Richard, 1620; Sarah, 1622; Samuel, 1626.”

(GFHC): “It was by sailors and ship-builders, dropping down from Hartford, that Middletown was settled in 1650. Wherever these settlers’ names have been found, John Hall heads the list. He and his sons and son-in-law, Thomas Wetmore, and Thomas Allen, from the same Hartford outfit, took up practically the whole north and south strip, a half mile long, lying between Main street and the deep-water shore of the river, suited to shipping and shipbuilding. They continued in touch with Hartford, the capital of Connecticut, and with men of state influence. In Hartford, in 1644, John Hall was made surveyor of highways. This would now be street commissioner. By the general court, with sessions at Hartford, March 9, 1658-59, he was made collector of customs at Middletown, and May 17, 1660, he was made by the same

court, grand juror for Middletown, that is, that town's state attorney, to enter complaints in the state court, while, at the same session, Robert Chapman was made grand juror for ‘Sea Brook.’”

(GFHC): “Second, the entries on the Middletown book show that John Hall and family were shipbuilders and church-builders. Also that John Hall reached Boston in 1633 – spring being the usual time of landing in a new country – most probably April, and that he was a widower of 49 years, with four children, the oldest of them a boy of 14 years, with two more boys, the next to the youngest, a girl of 11. With wages made by law 2s. per day at Boston, with wheat meal 14s. per bushel, thus taking, with bad weather, a month's work to buy a barrel of flour, it is certain that the public demand for his work and his family’s need for his wages would keep John Hall in one place till some special reason called him elsewhere. We must not expect to find many records of him unless where he built an occasional house from his spare hours and part rainy days as house-builders do. The trades of ship-building and house-building (like sea warfare and land warfare) were not kept distinct in early times, neither that of mill-builder or wheelwright; the same kit of tools, hard enough to get, built all three.”

(The Halls of New England, Genealogical and Biographical, by Rev. David B. Hall, (Albany, N.Y.: Joel Munsell’s & Sons, 1883): “Mr. JOHN HALL, the emigrant ancestor of the Halls of Middletown, was born in the county of Kent, Eng., 1584. His will was dated May 14, 1673, in which he stated that he was then nearly 89 years old and that it was the 40th year of his living in New England. He died in Middletown, Conn., May 26, 1673, in the 89th year of his age. He married Esther (???). It is probable that she died before the family emigrated. John Hall came from the west of England to Boston in 1633, settled first in Cambridge and soon after removed to Roxbury where the prefix of respect Mr. was accorded to him on the records of Mr. Elliot’s church. In those days the prefix of Mr. was given to only a very few persons; and generally indicated that such persons were entitled to a coat of arms. John Hall’s name is found in a rate bill on the records of Roxbury for 1634, in which his family is recorded as consisting of four persons. Sept. 4, 1633, John Hall, John Oldham and two other men started for the Connecticut river, where they were reported to be in October. They returned to the Bay towns on the 20th of January, 1634. It was their favorable report of the rich bottom lands on the Connecticut, which led to the migrations from Dorchester to Wethersfield and Windsor, and from Cambridge to Hartford in 1635-6. Mr. Hall was made freeman in Boston, 1635. He probably joined the Hooker and Stone colony and went to Hartford soon after, but did not remove his family until 1639. He was a carpenter by trade and was no doubt an efficient aid in constructing the first buildings in Hartford. Mr. Hall drew the home lot No. 77 of six acres on the brow of Lord's hill, in 1639. He also bought



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lands the same year of Wm. Hooker and Wm. Bloomfield. The Hall lot No. 77 is the same as the Sigourney place, and since occupied by Gov. Catlin. John Hall was a surveyor of highways in Hartford, in 1640. In 1650, having sold his house and home lot to Wm. Spencer, he removed with his family to Middletown, then called Matabesick, which had been lately purchased of the great Sachem or Sequin Saweheag, being one of the original proprietors. This home lot containing five acres was located on the north-east corner of Main street and Washington street of Middletown, running to the 'Great River' and adjoined the home lot of his son-in-law, Thomas Wetmore on the north. He was appointed March 19, 1659, by General Court held at Hartford 'for the entry and recording such goods as are subject to customs for Middletown.' Before as well as after this time Mr. Hall held divers offices of honor

and trust, indeed he seemed to be the patriarch and leader of the new settlement. Mr. Hall was born during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, 1584, and lived through a most eventful period of English History. And he no doubt rejoiced in his old age to see his children settled in a broad and fertile land, and destined to be henceforth in their generations free from the grinding oppression of those upper and lower millstones – the nobility and the hierarchy. His posterity are very numerous and respectable, but we have been able to collect only a small portion of their names in this genealogy. The names of his children were: 1. JOHN, b. in England, 1619.; 2. RICHARD, b. in England, 1620; 3. SARAH, b. in England, 1622; 4. SAMUEL, b. in England, 1626.”

For Further Reading:

The Halls of New England, Genealogical and Biographical, by Rev. David B. Hall, (Albany, N.Y.: Joel Munsell's & Sons, 1883).

VERIFY - VERIFY - VERIFY

**Abbreviation code used in SMFSD
biographical sketches and in-depth profiles:**

(MVR) Middletown Vital Records (originals at Middletown City Hall, Middletown, Conn.; also available on microfilm at Russell Library, Middletown, Conn.)

(BCVR) *The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Vital Records* (original index at Connecticut State Library, Hartford, Conn.; printed index available from Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, Md.; digitized index available on CD-Rom as part of *The Ricker Compilation of Vital Records of Early Connecticut*, Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, Md.)

(MLR) *Middletown Land Records* (originals at Middletown City Hall, Middletown, Conn.; also available on microfilm at Russell Library, Middletown, Conn.)

(MAN) *Digest of Connecticut Probate Records*, Hartford District (Manwaring, Charles William. *A Digest of the Early Connecticut Probate Records*. Originally published 1904-1906; reprinted 1995. Baltimore, Md.: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1995.)

(CBRMC) *Commemorative Biographical Record of Middlesex County, Connecticut, Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens, and Many of the Early Settled Families*. Chicago, Ill.: J.H. Beers & Co., 1903.

(MUH) *Middletown Upper Houses* (Adams, Charles C. *Middletown Upper Houses, A History of the North Society of Middletown, Connecticut from 1650 to 1800 with Genealogical and Biographical Chapters on Early Families*. New York, N.Y.: The Grafton Press, 1908.)

(FFS) Frank Farnsworth Starr ("The Settlers of Matabesick 1650-1660," *Middletown Penny Press*, Oct. 11, 1900; also published in the *Middletown Tribune* 250th Anniversary supplement.)

(CAF) *Centennial Address of Rev. David Field*. (Field, David D. *Centennial Address: With Historical Sketches of Cromwell, Portland, Chatham, Middle Haddam, Middletown, and its Parishes*. Middletown, Conn.: W.B. Casey, 1853.)

(GMB) *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620-1633* (Anderson, Robert Charles, FASG. *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England, 1620-1633, Vol. I-III*. Boston, Mass.: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1996.)

(SAV) *Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England* (Savage, James. *A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England, Showing Three Generations of Those Who Came Before May, 1692, on the Basis of Farmer's Register*. Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown & Co., 1860-1862.)

(GFHC) *Genealogical & Family History of the State of Connecticut* (Cutter, William Richard. *Genealogical and Family History of the State of Connecticut: A Record of the Achievements of Her People in the Making of a Commonwealth and the Founding of a Nation*. New York, N.Y.: Lewis Publishing Co., 1911.)

(HMC) *The History of Middlesex County* (Henry Whittemore, ed. *The History of Middlesex County 1635-1885*. New York, N.Y.: J.H. Beers & Co., 1884)

(RPCC) *Records of the Particular Court of Connecticut, 1639-1663* (Adams, Arthur W., ed. *Records of the Particular Court of Connecticut 1639-1663*. Hartford, Conn.: Connecticut Historical Society, 1928.)

(HCCM) *Hartford County Court Minutes, 1663-1687* (Ullmann, Helen Schatvet, CG, FASG., ed. *Hartford County, Conn., County Court Minutes, Vol. 3 & 4, 1663-1687, 1697*. Boston, Mass.: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2005.)

(NEHGSR) *NEHGS Register (New England Historical and Genealogical Register)*. Boston, Mass.: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1847-2007. (Online database available at NewEnglandAncestors.org)

(TAG) *The American Genealogist* (articles by Donald Lines Jacobus, ed., 1922-1971) (*The American Genealogist*. New Haven, Conn.: D.L. Jacobus, 1922-1971)