



The Middler

NEWSLETTER of the SOCIETY of MIDDLETOWN FIRST SETTLERS DESCENDANTS
CONNECTICUT, U.S.A.

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Fall 2017

17th CENTURY LIFE

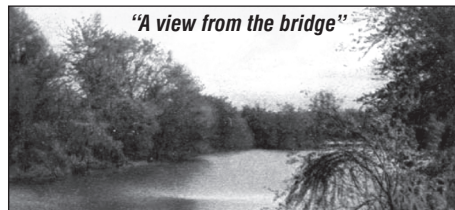
Early Middletown 'infrastructure projects' beset by conflicts over vision and financing

Roads and bridges needed public financing to serve a public good

By R.W. Bacon
Editor, *The Middler*

The first white settler presence in Middletown was in 1650, when a handful of families who had been in Hartford, Conn. began a settlement not far from the banks of the bend in Connecticut River. Within a few years the settlement was still relatively small in population, but was geographically spread out to the north (now Cromwell) and the west (now Middlefield), and even across the river into East Middletown (now Portland).

In the earliest years, what constituted the "roads" were the widened Native American footpaths that were kept clear by landowners themselves. With the growth of the settlement in the next few decades, however, the need for public financing of improved roads to serve a common public good was clear. What follows is an overview of early 'public infrastructure' projects in Middletown, based on town records compiled in *A General History of*



Middlesex County 1635-1885 by J. H. Beers (1884), and the analysis of the town records in *The Development of Local Public Services 1650-1850:*

Lessons from Middletown, Connecticut, by Hannah J. McKinney (1995).

Economist and scholar Hannah J. McKinney brings the beginnings of public financing in Middletown into clear focus, explaining that before 1700, if a public service like a highway or mill was needed, it was financed by a land grant or other asset awarded to an individual provider. The result was

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WHERE THEY WENT

While many went west to New York & Ohio, some trekked north to western Massachusetts

By R.W. Bacon
Editor, *The Middler*

Previous articles in the "Where They Went" series explored the migrations of descendants of early Middletown families to Whitestown, N.Y. (1780s-90s); Stow, Ohio (1804-1820s); Natchez, Miss. (1774-1776); and the Holland Land Co. purchase in far western New York and northwestern Pennsylvania (1800-1840).

The reason for the exodus? By the end of the 18th century, (1) the divide between mercantile and agrarian interests in Middletown was widening, (2) the port city was becoming crowded, with the attendant problems of crime and disease, (3) the farmland was worn out, and there was less of that acreage to divide for successive generations. As historian and scholar Peter D. Hall (1946-2015) noted in

Middletown: Streets, Commerce, and People (1981), by the end of the 18th century, "For many, the only hope was leaving Middletown." While many descendants of early Middletown families removed to points west, some elected to move north to western Massachusetts. What follows is a compilation of known destinations, based on information gleaned from family histories, local histories, and federal census records.

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~ DUES are DUE! ~

Annual Membership dues (\$20) are due January 1, 2018 for the 2018 calendar year. Please send payment to:

'Due' it Today !!!	Mike Campbell SMFSD Treasurer 3570 Willow Street Bonita, CA 91902-1226	Thank You !!!
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SMFSD NEWS

SMFSD Triennial Meeting set for October 11-14, 2018: Mark your calendar for a stimulating weekend of discovery

• **SMFSD Triennial set for October 11-14, 2018.** In recent months discussion has ramped up on plans for the SMFSD Triennial Meeting in Middletown. Once again, the dates were chosen to take advantage of fall in New England: October 11-14, 2018. Every three years in the ancestral hometown of Middletown, Conn., SMFSD hosts descendants of early Middletown families, members, non-members, genealogists, historians, and friends from across the U.S. for networking, research, exploration, and socializing. SMFSD secretary **Laura Hobbs** – a Middletown resident, and SMFSD historian **Don Brock** – a Middletown native now living in Maryland, are

coordinating a lively schedule of activities and research destinations. SMFSD president Marge Piersen is lining up guest speakers from her home-base in Illinois. The headquarters hotel is not confirmed at this writing, but will likely be the Marriott Residence Inn, Rocky Hill, Conn. Complete details and a registration form will be in the spring 2018 issue of *The Middler*.

• **Dues are due.** For SMFSD annual members, dues are due by January 1, 2018 for the 2018 calendar year. Please put this reminder on your “to due” list. Send dues payment to **Mike Campbell**, SMFSD Treasurer, 3570 Willow Street, Bonita, CA 91902-1226. Thank you! (And “Thank You” to all SMFSD Life Members who never have to put this reminder on their “to due” list.) ■

After a dozen years in the editor’s chair, it’s high time for a new voice for The Middler

Are you a historian, genealogist, or local history enthusiast looking for a stimulating volunteer editorship? *The Middler*, the twice-per-year publication of SMFSD, seeks a new editor, beginning in spring 2019.

I began my tenure (R.W. Bacon ... that’s me) in 2005 with a long list of topics to explore. In my remaining two issues in 2018 I will wrap up the last few topics, then move to other projects, including completion of *Early Families of Middletown - Vol. II: 1655-1700*.

As many readers know, I am still engaged professionally in the museum

and history field. I also have several book projects ahead relating to my long prior career as an acrobatic juggler, comedy tap dancer, and jazz/ragtime musician. Please understand that one must tackle such projects – especially the book on unicycle and tightwire stunts – while still physically and mentally capable.

Therefore after the fall 2018 issue I look forward to assisting the next editor in getting off to a great start. Please address inquiries to me at rwbacon@comcast.net, which will be shared with the SMFSD board. ■



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and corrections to:

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Congratulations to MCHS on awards for ‘A Vanished Port: Middletown & the Caribbean’

Congratulations to the Middlesex County Historical Society, recipients of the 2017 Michael Kammen Award and a Leadership in History Award for its year-long exhibition at the Mansfield House, “A Vanished Port: Middletown & the Caribbean 1750-1824.”

Accepting the prestigious awards at the September 2017 national conference of the American Association for State & Local History in Austin, Texas, were museum director Debby Shapiro and exhibit designer Brenda Milkofsky.

Still on display at MCHS on Main Street in Middletown, the exhibition explores the roots of the port city’s

18th-century maritime prosperity – an economy based on stolen labor, built squarely on the backs of enslaved Africans at sugar cane plantations on the Caribbean Islands.

The Michael Kammen award, named after the late Cornell University scholar, professor, and Pulitzer Prize winning author, includes a \$5,000 stipend to the museum.

“A Vanished Port” was featured in the fall 2016 issue of *The Middler*, and for the past year has been a fine template of how other Atlantic coast cities might face and interpret the real history of their “majestic age of sail.” ■



Roads & bridges in early Middletown

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that the wealthier residents – the recipients of additional land grants or other assets – were responsible for services like poor relief, and the construction and upkeep of any public properties. This form of “indirect taxation” worked adequately in the early decades of Middletown’s settlement – until the stock of common undivided land and other resources were depleted.

Public funding strategies that followed included lotteries, subscription, user fees, and tolls. For projects that would clearly benefit all citizens, a project-specific tax was levied.

Roads. In the Connecticut colony, the General Court established policies for road building and maintenance as early as 1643, and they were continually refined. Each town, served by its own chosen highway surveyors, was responsible for the roads within its borders. Roads between towns were to be cleared at least one rod wide (16.5 feet). Eligible men in town were required to work on the roads at least one day per year. Alternatively, men could pay a fine to be exempt from the labor, which in effect was a form of a highway tax.

In Middletown, early roads were both public and private. A requirement of many early land grants was that the owner provide a right-of-way through their land within one year. Roads laid out through undivided land, such as “the highway through the west field” in 1656, were public roads that were more well-traveled. Public roads between towns were often poorly maintained, overgrown, and rocky.

After the land grants of 1670, the town reserved up to 40 acres per square mile for future highways. In the 1680s, in some cases the town exchanged town land for land of private owners in order to lay out new roads that were straighter or more logical than an original road.

With growth of the port and town center in the early 18th century, some of the earliest roads no longer met

current needs. Dependable roads for wagon transport were seen as vital to economic development. Yet while there was a need for new roads in Middletown, at the same time there were fewer men in the labor pool – more landowners were paying their highway taxes with cash instead of labor. It was a no-brainer. The fine had not changed since 1643.

In 1739 the fine (or highway tax) was increased to six shillings per man, and 12 shillings for a man and a team of oxen. The labor shortage persisted, and fine/tax was increased again in 1749.

Compounding the highway labor shortage was the unwillingness of capable individuals to serve as highway surveyors. The position of highway surveyor was essentially that of a project manager and work crew foreman, and without an adequate work crew, the surveyor’s job was a headache waiting to happen. Pay for highway surveyors was increased in 1739, but retention of capable individuals remained a problem.

In 1747 the Connecticut General Court passed highway maintenance reforms that divided towns into smaller districts, with surveyors elected for each. The thought was that men within each small district would be more likely to work on nearby roads that they used instead of paying the fines. Towns could choose their own fine/tax rate, and a work requirement of one to three days. Taxes would be used within each district. In Middletown, conflict between district interests and town-wide interests arose immediately at town meetings.

Ultimately the town decided that city selectmen could choose districts within the city, while town officers

Eligible men were required to work on the roads at least one day per year. Alternatively, men could pay a fine to be exempt from labor – a form of a highway tax.

from other sections of the town could set district boundaries in the more rural sections. In 1750, men were required to work on the roads for three days each year, or pay an equivalent fine. Meanwhile, the highway surveyor’s wage was increased to 18 shillings per day.

In the late 18th century after the Revolution, Middletown instituted a wealth-based tax to fund highway repairs. While the system was imperfect and drew constant complaints from all sides, it remained in place for more than 20 years.

The Ferry River Bridge. The most notable and convoluted early public financing effort was for a bridge to connect the center of Middletown with its “North Society.” At a town meeting in 1693, Francis Whitmore (1650-1700) was granted permission to build a substantial stone bridge across the “ferry river” to the town’s “Upper Houses,” previously accessible only by ferry. When he began construction of the bridge, he also began a subscription drive to raise money for its completion. The subscription drive fizzled, construction slowed to a crawl, and Whitmore drained his own funds. In 1696 he successfully petitioned the Connecticut General Court for a slice of its general revenue tax, but Middletown’s tax collector withheld the money.

At issue was the unresolved question of whether Francis Whitmore was a government provider or a private entrepreneur. And who would own the bridge upon its completion? Years of lawsuits followed, with each successive decision reversing the previous one. In 1698 the court ordered all subscription money returned to the subscribers. Later that year, the court awarded Whitmore all rights to the bridge, including the right to charge a toll. The toll fees collected were not for the use of the bridge, but rather to pay for its construction after the fact. The town of Middletown opposed the decision at the time, but the issue did not go away.

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Curious about Mayflower connections in Middletown? A few Plymouth Colony descendants came in the 1740s

By R.W. Bacon
Editor, *The Middler*

Most serious investigators of family history come to realize that their own discoveries are fascinating enough even without proven connections to Charlemagne, Cleopatra, or Fred Flintstone himself.

Still, among those researching New England ancestors, there is a persistent curiosity about possible connections to *Mayflower* passengers and the Plymouth (Mass.) Colony of 1620.

In response to years of inquiries from SMFSD members, your editor recently completed a methodical, if not comprehensive, name-by-name search of possible connections of pre-1700 Middletown settlers to earlier arrivals to the Plymouth Colony.

While there were no findings of firm connections of pre-1700 Middletown settlers to *Mayflower* passengers, there were a few “close calls” after 1700. There were early-18th-century arrivals to central Connecticut that by marriage would add Plymouth Colony connections to Middletown’s genealogical mix. There were also earlier generations of some Middletown families that seemed to tiptoe around the Plymouth Colony in the 17th century, but were never residents or connected by marriage. What follows are (1) the “likely suspects,” by name or geography; (2) the determinations; and (3) the discovery of mid-18th-century *Mayflower* connections.

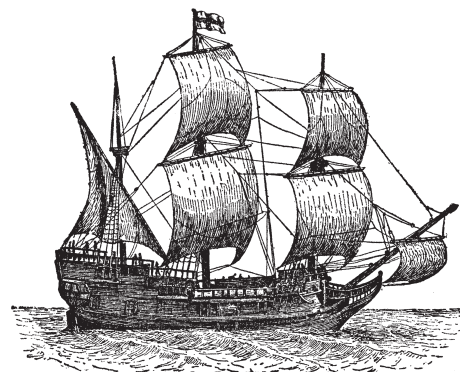
Among pre-1700 Middletown settlers, those having a possible connection to the *Mayflower* or Plymouth Colony indicated by *surname only* were William Briggs, Nathaniel Brown, Samuel Clark, Henry Cole, Edward Foster, Daniel Harris, William Harris, Thomas Hill, Anthony Martin, John Martin, Joseph Smith, Edward Turner, Nathaniel White, and James Wright. By correlating information in “English Origins of Middletown Settlers ...” (*The Middler*, Spring 2011), *Plymouth Colony*:

Its History & People 1620-1691 by Eugene Aubrey Stratton (1986), *The Pilgrim Migration: Immigrants to Plymouth Colony 1620-1633* by Robert Charles Anderson (2004), and *A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England* by James Savage (1860), all the individuals indicated as possibilities by surname only were ruled out. For some of the above families, substantial genealogical research long since completed ruled out early Plymouth Colony connections, but the investigative exercise was carried out anyway, in the interest of consistent application of method.

Among pre-1700 Middletown settlers, those having a possible connection to the *Mayflower* or Plymouth Colony indicated by *geographical proximity only* were in two categories. One category to investigate was that of early settlers known to have previously resided in Windsor, Conn., which was first settled by a small group from the Plymouth Colony. The other category was that of early settlers previously documented in or around the Plymouth Colony.

Early Middletown settlers who were previously in Windsor were Obadiah Allyn, Samuel Eggleston, Daniel Pryor, and Joseph Rockwell. None were determined to have descended from Windsor’s earliest arrivals from Plymouth Colony.

Early Middletown settlers previously documented in-or-around Plymouth Colony were Henry Cole, Thomas Lewis, and Comfort Starr.



After some study, all three were ruled out as Plymouth Colony connections.

Henry Cole (b.? -1676) drew attention as a possible connection to Plymouth Colony because he was documented in Sandwich, Mass. in 1643, in relatively close proximity to James Cole (c.1600-1678) of Plymouth and Job Cole (c.1609-bef.1698) of Plymouth, Duxbury, Yarmouth, and Eastham. But there is apparently no substantiated connection to either James or Job. Henry Cole was on the list of “Able to Bear Arms” in Sandwich, Mass. in 1643. He removed to Hartford, Conn. soon thereafter, married Sarah Rusco (1626-1688) there in 1646, removed to Middletown in 1654, and died in Wallingford in 1676. The several published genealogies of the Cole families in New England note the mention of Henry Cole in Sandwich, Mass. records, but include no further evidence of his activities or background in the region, nor his origins in England.

Thanks to the multiplication of misinformation on the World Wide Web, descendants of early Middletown settler Thomas Lewis can scoop up a Plymouth Colony ancestor ... or not.

Thomas Lewis (165?-17??) arrived in Middletown in 1687. His birthplace and prior residence are unknown. He died sometime after 1707 in East Haddam. Middletown vital records indicate that he and his wife, Sarah (Percival?) (c.1660s-1730), had nine children between 1687 and 1707. Just about the same time, another Thomas Lewis (1656 -1718) of Falmouth, Mass. and his first wife, another Sarah (Sarah Bassett, b. 1662) ... and second wife, Ruth (16?-17??), were contributing to the population explosion in their corner of the world, with nine children between 1688 and 1704. This Thomas Lewis, born in Barnstable, is buried in Eastham, Mass. with a stone marker on top of his resting place.

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Mayflower connections in Middletown?

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These two Thomas Lewis families continue to be confused and conflated. It appears from family trees posted on the Internet that family historians who have seized upon Sarah Bassett (b. 1662 in Sandwich, Mass.) as the wife of Thomas Lewis of Middletown, have also scooped up an fuzzy connection to her grandfather, William Bassett (1596-1667) of Plymouth Colony, Duxbury, and Bridgewater, Mass., and a passenger on the *Fortune* in 1621. But to assign Sarah Bassett as the wife of Thomas Lewis of Middletown without adequate evidence satisfies no proof standard.

Comfort Starr (1644-1693), son of Dr. Thomas Starr (1615-1658) who came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony with his wife Rachel on the *Hercules* in 1634/5, was born in Yarmouth, Mass., and baptized two years later in Scituate. He moved with his parents to Charlestown in 1654, and after his father's death in 1658 lived in Boston. He married Mary Weld (1646-1706) there before removing to New London, Conn., and in 1673, to Middletown. Although Comfort Starr lived in Plymouth Colony early in life, and had nine children with his wife Mary, he brought no genealogical connections from that colony to Middletown.

A few years beyond the SMFSD "first settler" cutoff date of 1700, two arrivals to Middletown brought with them multiple firm connections to the Plymouth Colony and the *Mayflower*: Nathan Harding from Eastham, and Elisha Brewster from Duxbury.

Nathan Harding (1711-1801) removed to East Hampton, Conn., then part of Middletown, from Eastham, Mass. on Cape Cod, in 1739. Led by Isaac Smith (1716-1802), the group included the families of Plymouth Colony descendants Richard Mayo, and Joshua Sears. Others from Eastham followed in later decades.

Nathan Harding was a descendant of four *Mayflower* passengers: Stephen Hopkins (1580-1644), Constance Hopkins (1607-1677), Thomas Rogers

(1572-1621), and Joseph Rogers (1610-1678). His other Plymouth Colony ancestors included Joseph Harding (1629-1685), Martha (Doane) Harding (d. 1633), Bethia Cooke (1635-1673), Josias Cooke (1610-1673), Elizabeth Ring (d. 1687), Elizabeth Snow (1640-1678), and Nicholas Snow (1599-1677).

Nathan Harding's wife, Anne Brown (c.1715-1749), born in Eastham, Mass., was a descendant of *Mayflower* passengers Peter Brown (1596-1633) and Martha (Ford) Brown (1580-1630), as well as Plymouth Colony settlers William Ford (1604-1676), William Brown (1625-1694), Mary Moorecock (1625-1694), Richard Knowles (1614-1675), Ruth Bowers (1616-1686), and Aphra Cook (1591-1638).

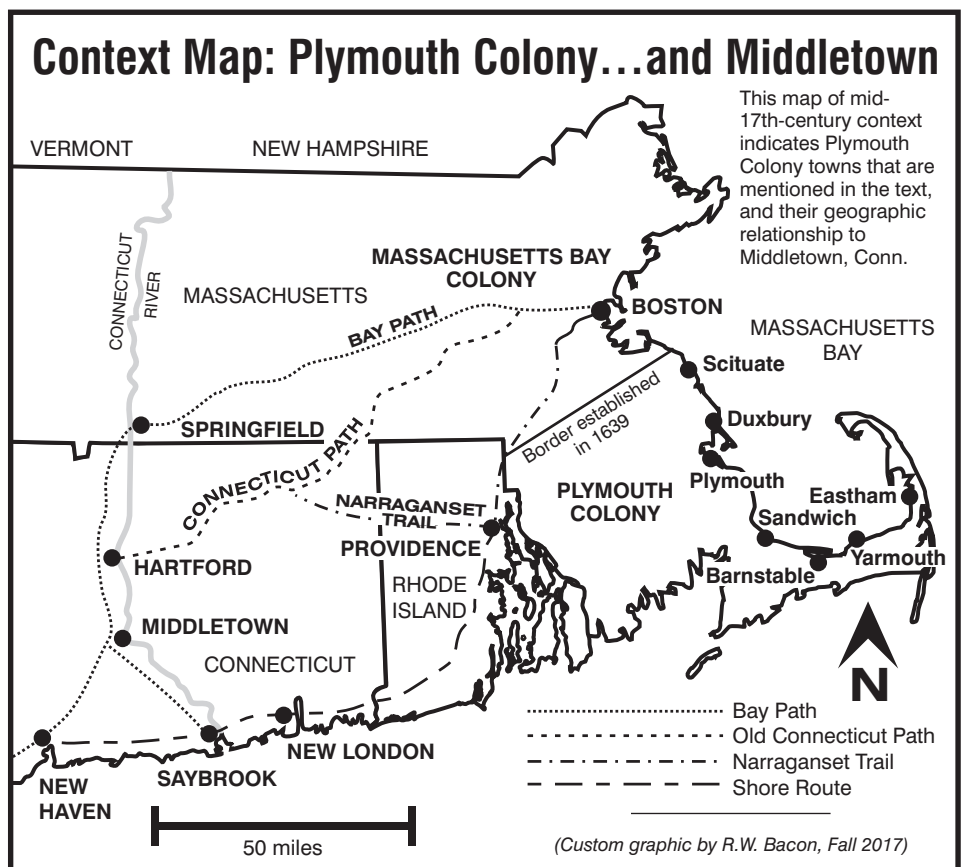
Two of Nathan and Anne Harding's four surviving children born between 1739 and 1748 married into the Clark and Tryon families of Middletown. Nathan Harding also fathered three children with his second wife, Abigail West (1716-1785). Some of Nathan's grandchildren married into early Middletown families (Brown, Clark,

Gilbert, Hubbard, and Martin), both in Connecticut and in central New York, adding Plymouth Colony connections to the Middletown descendant mix.

[Incidentally, this Nathan Harding, the multiple *Mayflower* descendant who departed Massachusetts for Connecticut, was the son of the infamous Amaziah Harding (1671-1734), executed in Barnstable, Mass. on June 5, 1734 for the murder of his wife, Hannah (Rogers) Harding (1669-1733). The brutal and/or deranged Amaziah Harding is one ancestor that some Middletown descendants – your editor included – can cite as a qualifying ancestor for the International Black Sheep Society of Genealogists.]

Elisha Brewster (1715-1789) arrived in Middletown from Duxbury, Mass. about 1740, and married Lucy Yeomans (1722-1775) in Chatham in 1742. He was a tavern-keeper and merchant, with his home and business on Main Street near Court Street. Through his father, William Brewster (1681-1768), he was a descendant of

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Where They Went: Western Massachusetts

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A major component of data collection was the use of genealogies posted to the WorldConnect Program hosted by RootsWeb/Ancestry.com. Although the billions of user-submitted records are inconsistent and riddled with misinformation, the huge database facilitated searches that enabled discovery of individuals who were born in Middletown between 1760 and 1800 – and died elsewhere.

In the course of compilation, it was apparent that some that moved from Middletown to western Massachusetts later moved west to join friends or relations in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.

Destinations in western Massachusetts (the four counties of Berkshire, Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin) during the early 19th-century period of exodus from Middletown included (in alphabetical order, with some “heads-of-household” bearing surnames of early Middletown families):

- Agawam** - George Hubbard (1730-1809).
- Ashfield** - George Ranney (1746-1822), Francis Ranney (1753-1804), Jonathan Smith (1729-1813), Joseph Smith (1748-1821), Joseph Stocking (1723-1817).
- Blandford** - David Atkins (1736-1816), Betsey Cornwell (1765-1817), Elijah Ranney (1735-1789).
- Brimfield** - James Bacon (1733-1816).
- Buckland** - Joseph Shepard (1754-1840).
- Chester** - Ebenezer Stow (1745-1824), Elisha Wilcox (1745-1826).
- Dalton** - Abner Roberts (1777-1813).
- Easthampton** - Thomas Shepard (1731-1824).
- Egremont** - Andrew Bacon (1764-1840).
- Feeding Hills** - William Roberts (1773-1845).
- Granville** - Elihu Adkins (1748-1826), Daniel Adkins (1789-1814), Jabez Atkins (1752-1818), Jonathan Clark (1758-1840), Samuel Hubbard (1723-aft.1770), Nathaniel Hubbard (1718-1762), Joseph Miller (1723-1785), Smith Miller (1730-1759), Westall Scovell (1734-1798), Eliakim Stow (1708-1789).
- Great Barrington** - John Gipson (1734-1806).
- Greenfield** - Richard Johnson (1734-1811), Solomon Sage (1737-1805), Oliver Sage (1769-1860).
- Lanesboro** - Jacob Bacon (1740-1819).
- Lee** - Amos Roberts (1757-1823).
- Lenox** - Samuel Clark (1756-1829), Nathaniel Miller (1768-1825).

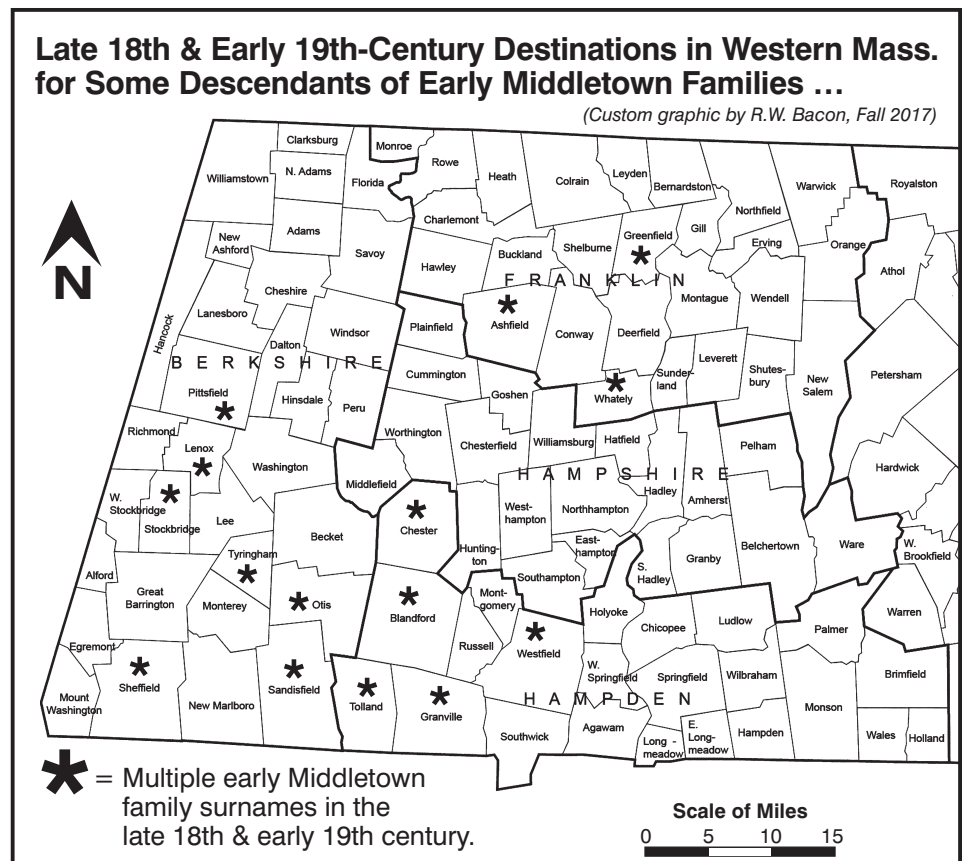
- New Marlboro** - Sarah Doolittle (1795-1873).
- Northampton** - Lewis Sage (1765-1820).
- Otis** - Comfort Clark (1764-1839), William Cotton (1750-1836), Hezekiah Sumner (1724-1802), Daniel Sumner (1759-1838).
- Pittsfield** - Hiram Clark (1797-1884), Edward Roberts (1752-1813), Edward Roberts (1775-1826).
- Richmond** - Daniel Collins (1744-1826).
- Russell** - Amos Ward (1763-1826).
- Sandisfield** - Seth Hubbard (1750-1834), Samuel Sage (1732-1803), Jedediah Sage (1734-1798), Stephen Sage (1752-1841), Abel Sage (1758-1821), Samuel Sage (1763-1828).
- Sheffield** - Richard Brown (1762-1829), Hezekiah Kirby (1761-1837), Hiram Kirby (1793-1866), Simeon Sage (1759-1840), Asahel Savage (1761-1850).
- Springfield** - George Blake (1758-1851).
- Stockbridge** - Zebulon Kirby (1766-1821), Zebulon Stow (1774-1853), Seth Wilcox (1768-1844).
- Sunderland** - Daniel Whitmore (1741-1816).
- Tolland** - Recompense Miller (1736-1811), Jesse Miller (1762-1777), Timothy Miller (1737-1810).
- Tyringham** - Stephen Johnson (1785-1860), Daniel Markham (1731-1812), Thomas Ward (1745-1814).
- Ware** - Orrin Sage (1791-1875).
- Westfield** - Ezra Hubbard (1793-1870), Allen Hubbard (1793-1885), Giles Wilcox (1750-1838).

- W. Stockbridge** - Ephraim Starr (1745-1809).
- Whately** - Solomon Adkins (1720-1804) Giles Atkins (1789-1861).

Other destinations for Middletown natives with non-pre-1700 surnames included Granby, Hinsdale, Peru, Spencertown, and Williamstown.

Many of the older individuals listed removed to Massachusetts before 1770, as indicated by marriage records or birth records of their children. The earliest families to remove from Middletown to Massachusetts went to towns across the border in the 1750s.

The survey of surnames in early 19th-century Massachusetts towns is far from comprehensive. Note that there were many that removed to the same towns who did not carry an early Middletown family surname, yet may have been related by marriage to multiple early families. Plus, for many, the Massachusetts destinations were temporary stops before a move to more distant points. The humble aim here is to provide some geographical clues for Middletown descendants of today who are still tracking the rambles of their on-the-move ancestors. ■





SMFSD Membership Information

If you descend from a pre-1700 settler, we welcome you to join us

The following are individuals (and presumably spouses & families) said to have settled in Middletown, Conn. before 1700. The list is from *The History of Middlesex County* (Henry Whittemore, Beers Co., 1884), derived in part from the *List of Householders & Proprietors*, Middletown, March 22, 1670. **Names in boldface** are the original 1650-54 settlers. **N.B.!** *This list is known to be incomplete!* If you descend from a pre-1700 settler *not* on this list, including a Native American or African-American ancestor, please contact our Registrar about submitting lineage and references. **Not a descendant? Join us in the Friends category!**

Josiah Adkins 1673	Samuel Cotton 1697	Edward Higby 1667	Daniel Pryor 1696	Samuel Stow 1651
Obadiah Allyn 1670	Samuel Doolittle . . . 1693	Thomas Hill 1678	Thomas Ranney . . . 1660	Thomas Stow 1669
Thomas Allen 1650	George Durant 1663	Thomas Hopewell . . 1662	William Roberts . . . 1680	William Sumner . . . 1687
Nathaniel Bacon . 1650	Samuel Eggleston . . 1663	George Hubbard . 1650	Joseph Rockwell . . 1693	James Tappin 1662
William Briggs 1677	John Elton 1677	John Hulbert 1669	Alexander Rollo . . . 1697	Matthias Treat . . . 1659
John Blake 1677	Thomas Ferman 1679	Isaac Johnson 1670	Noadiah Russell . . . 1696	Edward Turner 1665
William Blumfield 1650	Edward Foster 1670	Francis Jones 1672	David Sage 1662	John Ward 1664
John Boarn 1677	Jonathan Gilbert . . . 1672	John Jordan 1678	John Savage 1650	William Ward 1659
Alexander Bow 1660	John Gill 1676	John Kirby 1653	Arthur Scovill 1671	Andrew Warner 1667
Nathaniel Brown . . . 1655	Richard Goodale . . . 1671	Isaac Lane 1664	Edward Shepard . . . 1687	Robert Warner 1655
Thomas Burk 1670	George Graves 1650?	Thomas Lewis 1687	Joseph Smith 1675	Robert Webster . . 1650
William Cheney 1655	John Hall 1650	William Lucas 1667	William Smith . . . 1650	Benjamin West 1698
Samuel Clark 1676	Richard Hall 1650	Daniel Markham . . . 1677	William Southmayd. 1674	Thomas Wetmore 1650
Jasper Clements . . . 1670	Samuel Hall 1650	Anthony Martin . . . 1661	Comfort Starr 1673	Nathaniel White . 1650
Henry Cole 1650?	Giles Hamlin 1650	John Martin 1650	James Stancliff . . . 1686	Francis Whitmore . . 1674
Nathaniel Collins . . 1664	Benjamin Hands . . . 1678	Thomas Miller . . . 1650	Samuel Stocking. 1650	John Wilcox 1654
Samuel Collins 1665	Daniel Harris 1653	John Payne 1676	John Stow 1667	James Wright 1690
William Cornwell 1650	William Harris . . . 1650	George Phillips . . . 1680	Nathaniel Stow 1676	

Membership benefits . . .

When you join the Society of Middletown First Settlers Descendants, you will receive:

- Two issues per year of *The Middler*, the SMFSD newsletter full of information useful for research about Middletown's first settler families and local history.
- Access to the SMFSD web site which includes first settler profiles, genealogy resources, local history articles, a custom-prepared annotated bibliography for Middletown research, and an archive of past *Middler* issues.
- The annual membership roster enabling you to network with Middletown "cousins" and researchers across the country.
- The opportunity to attend SMFSD meetings (every three years) in Middletown that include genealogy research, cemetery tours, library/museum visits, networking, and social events.
- The opportunity to participate in the organization, suggest/plan meeting activities, and vote on SMFSD business.

Membership is a simple 1-2-3 procedure . . .

If you are a descendant of *any* pre-1700 Middletown settler, and would like to join SMFSD, here is the easy procedure:

- (1) **Contact our Registrar, Cindy Nicewarner** (cnicewarner@verizon.net), about your interest. She will email an instruction sheet and application.
- (2) **Complete the SMFSD application** and mail to the Registrar. The applicant shall do their own research. Lineage should be accompanied by copies of reference material by generation. SMFSD seeks to verify information, but does not research family lines. A \$10.00 application fee will be added to the dues payment upon verification.
- (3) **The Registrar will review the application** for approval. Documentation is required only through the line of descent from the 1650-1700 settler. Instructions are included with the application that explain guidelines for documentation of descent by generation. (SMFSD will return an application if more documentation is needed. It is the applicant's responsibility to complete any gaps in the records.)

Dues: When approved, new members can choose to pay annual or lifetime dues: (A) Annual dues (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31) are \$20.00. (B) New members may elect to pay lifetime dues based on age: Age 0-50, \$300; Age 51-70, \$200; Age 70+, \$100.

Friends of SMFSD. Are you a Middletown history enthusiast, but not a descendant of the early families? Would you still like to receive *The Middler*? That's easy! Join us at \$20 per year!

Please send membership inquiries to: Cindy Nicewarner, Registrar, Society of Middletown First Settlers Descendants, 6006 River Birch Court, Hanover, MD 21076; or via e-mail to: cnicewarner@verizon.net.

Roads & bridges in early Middletown

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In 1725 the bridge was in need of replacement or repair, but the town dismissed the proposal by William Whitmore (1689-1751), son of Francis, as too expensive. Instead the town accepted a competing low-bid estimate, and planned to levy a special town-wide tax to finance the project. Almost immediately the town of Middletown and William Whitmore were tussling in the colony's General Court.

The General Court ordered that unless the town paid Whitmore 300 pounds, no new bridge could be built. The town's feeble subscription effort failed to raise the money, and the tussle continued.

A settlement was reached in 1733 in which Whitmore would place 300 pounds of his money in the trust of a town committee. He would earn interest on that money, retain ownership of the bridge, and also collect money from non-resident tolls. Middletown residents could now use

the bridge toll-free. This public-private agreement continued until William Whitmore's death in 1751. In 1757 his widow, Abigail (Ward) Whitmore, sold the bridge to the town – for 300 pounds.

But of course the bridge once again needed repairs. For the next 15 years, until the last court case with the family was resolved in 1773, the bridge would serve as a hard lesson in the financing and management of public infrastructure projects in the growing town. ■



Plymouth Colony connections

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Mayflower passengers William Brewster (1580-1644), Mary Wentworth (1569-1627), and Sarah Collier (1616-1691). Also through his father he was a descendant of Plymouth colonists George Partridge (1617-1695), Sarah Tracy (1622-1708), Stephen Tracy (1596-1653), and Tryphosa Lee (1599-1655). Through his mother, Hopestill Wadsworth (1687-1773), Elisha Brewster was a descendant of Plymouth colonists Christopher Wadsworth (1609-1677) and Grace Cole (1607-1688). In the next two generations, some of the children (12 between 1743 and 1765) and grandchildren of Elisha Brewster and Lucy Yeomans married into several early Middletown families, including Bacon, Hubbard, Southmayd, Ward, and Wetmore. Most of the children and

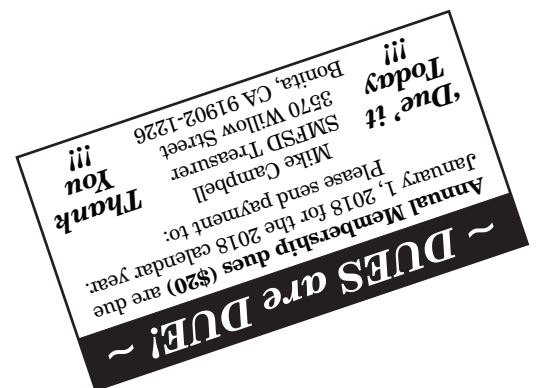
grandchildren born in Middletown, however, departed to seek fortunes elsewhere in places like New York, Philadelphia, Salem, and Bridgeport.

With increased mobility in the 19th century, connections to *Mayflower* passengers and Plymouth Colony spread throughout New England and beyond. For example, other Brewster lines moved from Massachusetts to New London and Lebanon, Conn. in the early 18th century, so Connecticut-born descendants of *Mayflower* passenger William Brewster have been commonplace for generations.

Mayflower connections ran aground on their way to Middletown for the earliest settlers, but later generations of Middletown descendants, thanks to Nathan Harding and Elisha Brewster, have *Mayflower* and Plymouth Colony connections today, in a proud but not-so-exclusive cousin club of millions. ■

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