



Thomas Whittlesey

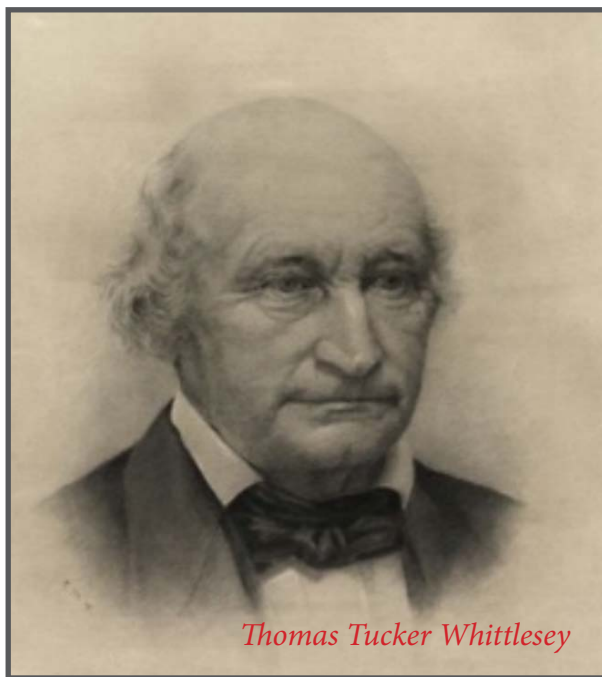
-Notable Middleton Citizen

Everyone is familiar with one of Middleton's busiest streets. University Avenue is a bustling thoroughfare that connects Middleton with Madison and turns into Highway 14 heading toward Cross Plains. But, before it was called University Avenue, this road was named Whittlesey Street after one of Middleton's most distinguished residents.

Thomas Tucker Whittlesey was born on December 8, 1798, in Danbury, Connecticut. His father was a member of the state convention which ratified the United States Constitution in 1788. He was also a first cousin of Elisha Whittlesey, prominent U.S. Congressman from Ohio who was the first Comptroller of the United States Treasury.

Thomas Whittlesey attended Yale College graduating in 1817 and went on to Litchfield Law School. He was admitted to the bar in 1818 and began his law practice in Danbury, Connecticut where he served as probate judge.

He was elected to the United States House of Representatives Twenty-fourth Congress from Connecticut's 4th district as a Jacksonian and reelected to a second term when he ran as a Democrat.



Thomas Tucker Whittlesey

After an unsuccessful bid for a third term, he moved to Pheasant Branch, possibly lured by the promise of cheap land, in 1849. Today Pheasant Branch is part of Middleton. He then began to practice law in Pheasant Branch and engaged in agricultural pursuits.

He served as member of the Wisconsin Senate from 1853 to 1854.

Thomas Whittlesey died on August 20, 1868, at age 69, in Pheasant Branch. He is buried at Forest Hill Cemetery in Madison, Wisconsin.

Don't Forget.....

Middleton Area Historical Society's annual **Pie and Ice Cream Social** is coming up on June 15th.



The Middleton Area Historical Society **Pie and Ice Cream Social**

Wednesday, June 15
5 - 8 pm
Lakeview Park, Middleton

New Horizons Band 6:30 - 7:30

The annual **Pie and Ice Cream Social** is coming up soon! Please plan on joining us for an evening of desserts, camaraderie and music.

Someone will be at the Lakeview shelter to accept donated pies and desserts starting at 3:00, June 15th. Due to lack of refrigeration space we are requesting no cream pies. A donation of a dessert is very much appreciated.

Dear Friend of the Middleton Area Historical Society

The Middleton Area Historical Society invites you to become a "Partner in Preservation" to help us keep the rich history of Middleton alive. With limited revenues to support operations, we are appealing to all friends of local history and historic collections to help us with our preservation efforts by donating to our current fund drive. Your donation in any amount would be greatly appreciated and immediately put to good use.

The major goals of the Middleton Area Historical Society are to collect, display, and, importantly, to preserve artifacts, clothing, photographs and documents that reflect the early history of Middleton. Items are displayed at the Rowley House Museum, the adjacent Carriage House, the Middleton Depot and the Middleton Senior Center. Over the years we have been fortunate to receive a very large number of historical items; however, not all can be displayed at the same time, yet they all need proper conditions for their safe preservation.

Our plan, for 2016, is to enhance the Carriage House environment by insulating the building and adding heating and air conditioning to control humidity and thereby provide proper conditions for preserving our valuable collections. By doing so, we can continue to operate within the constraints of our current facilities.. We can do the proper job with your help.

We have analyzed our need for preservation space and have received estimates for the cost of making our existing Carriage House facility appropriate for archiving and displaying the many historical items in our collection. We have therefore set our fund-raising target at \$25,000.

Our main sources of revenue are membership dues and the annual Pie and Ice Cream Social held at Lakeview Community Park. However, current revenues are mostly exhausted for expenses such as monthly utility bills and minor repair and maintenance projects.

We would greatly appreciate having you as a "Partner in Preservation" to help provide the necessary financial support to keep Middleton's history alive. Your "Partner in Preservation" donation is fully tax-deductible. Contributions may be sent to:

Middleton Area Historical Society
7410 Hubbard Avenue
Middleton, WI 53562

Thank you for your consideration and support!

Jeff Martin, President

The Middleton Post Office

The following contains excerpts from a presentation given by retired postmaster Edward Murphy in 1981.

In ancient times, as early as 3000 B.C., fast couriers or runners, memorized messages and carried them for their rulers. Only rulers used this message system because few people then could read or write. Later, letters began to be carved on clay or bronze, then in wood or bone and then still later, painted on the skins of animals called parchment or vegetable matter made into papyrus, the forerunner of paper.

The writings of Marco Polo describe a postal system of horses and messengers in China under Kublai Kahn, about 1250 A.D., with 10,000 postal stations.

As early as 1639, the first semblance of an American postal system appeared in the Massachusetts colony which gave Richard Fairbanks permission to receive and dispatch mail at his home in Boston. He was paid one cent for every letter mailed.

In 1692, King William III gave Thomas Neale the monopoly on all postal services in the American colonies. The American colonists distrusted and disliked this system because the King's authorities could open mail to try to find evidence of disloyalty to the British monarch. The rate was high and to the colonists it represented another hated tax adding to the growing resentment to taxes imposed by the British.

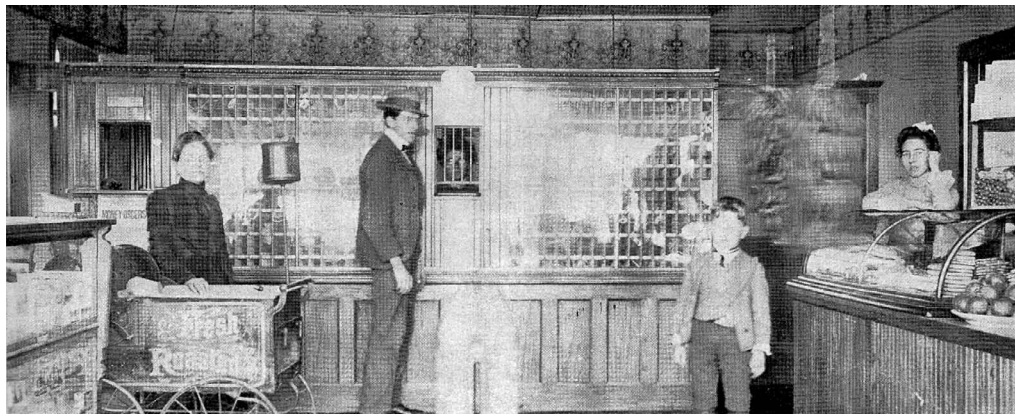
In 1782, the Continental Congress guaranteed the mail service as a symbol of freedom by decreeing that private (sealed) letters could not be opened or delayed by authorities in or out of the postal service. This was a milestone in the advance of human liberty. Before 1782 the mail service had been primarily for the use of the government and private citizens who ran the risk of having their mail opened and read.

By an Act passed on February 11, 1847 by the Territorial Legislature, Township 7N, Range 8E was established, removing the now township called Middleton from the territory included in Madison Township. This was done for the convenience of the electors allowing them to vote at a polling place established and a settlement called 'Junction', where in 1847, Harry Barnes was appointed Postmaster. Mr. Barnes had erected a frame hotel at the Junction where the post office was kept. Being on the Mineral Point Road, an important route to the west, Junction was the metropolis of the township and was later called 'East Middleton'. Later, another area farther west was designated 'West Middleton' with a post office named 'Barwig' in the vicinity of today's West Middleton School.

*"Neither snow nor rain
nor heat nor gloom of
night stays these
couriers from the swift
completion of their
appointed rounds."*

*This United States Postal
Service quote is inscribed
on the front of the James
Farley Post Office in New
York City.*

A post office was located in a store at Pheasant Branch, another established in 1844 in Springfield Corners and another at Ashton.



Post Office located in DuFrenne Building

Mail was carried on horseback from Madison to Sauk City once weekly with stops at the intermediate post offices in route. By 1880, it was increased to four times a week.

With the coming of the railroad located between Middleton Junction and Pheasant Branch, a new settlement was established named 'Middleton Station'. As this area grew, the post office became important.

The first post office at Middleton Station was located in the

building used as the first depot, in a warehouse where the first Green Elevator stood facing west at Aurora Street and the railroad tracks, one block west of the current depot. W.C. Slaughter became the first postmaster there.



Post card sent to mail patrons from Postmaster Larry G. Clark

The post office remained in the old depot and warehouse for a short time and was later moved into a store and saloon on Parmenter Street. After that building burned, A.B. Parmenter became postmaster with an appointment from President Andrew Johnson and the office moved to the corner of Terrace and Parmenter after a year in a location near the old Pet Milk Plant on Elmwood Avenue. He was later succeeded by William Pierstorff.

In 1910, the Postal Savings System was started. It gave citizens in isolated places the opportunity to safely deposit money for saving and receiving the modest 2% interest offered. Middleton had many frugal citizens, numbering approximately 100 accounts. After World War II, Postal Savings was discontinued as the deposits in financial institution were guaranteed by the government and because of the coming of higher interest rates.



From 1888 to 1919, the post office was located in the Du-Frenne Building at the southwest corner of Hubbard and Parmenter. First Mrs. Salome Schroeder was commissioned to

Postmaster Ed Murphy pitches in to help meter parcels

be Postmaster and later her daughter, Emma DuFrenne became Postmaster.

In 1919, the post office was moved for a brief period to a brick building west of City Hall. This was the first time the Middleton Post Office was quartered independently of another business.

Rural Free Delivery was inaugurated nationwide in 1896, and the first rural route from the Middleton post office began in 1897. Eugene Williams became the first carrier and his son was his substitute.

In 1902, Dane County had 80 rural routes, three of them from the Middleton Post Office. Rural carriers delivered the mail to farms and sold stamps and money orders.

By the 1940s the population of Middleton began to grow. The Middleton Post Office which had 200 boxes for its patrons increased to 600 boxes in 1949 and room was needed to accommodate them.

In 1950, the post office was moved to a remodeled building at 7443 Elmwood Avenue where it remained until July, 1959. A new structure built to Postal Department design and specifications was constructed and housed the Post Office.

On January 2, 1951, in 30 degree below weather, two hardy Middleton youths, Harvey Tesch and Harry Groth, became Middleton's first city mail carriers on one full-time foot route and one half-time foot route, then one of them would deliver parcels with a newly acquired postal truck for the other half day.

In 1957, the Middleton Post Office exceeded \$40,000 in annual postal receipts and became a first Class Post Office.



The current Middleton Post Office located at 7613 Elmwood Avenue.

From the President ...

I am delighted to report that all of the vacancies on the MAHS Board of Directors have now been filled. In January we welcomed Donna Parks to the Board and recently Teresa Andrews and Anna Biermeier have volunteered to fill the two remaining un-expired terms. We are fortunate to have these dedicated and hard-working volunteers on the MAHS Board! A short bio for each new Board member follows:

Donna Parks ... "I have lived in Middleton for more than 35 years, and was born and raised in Madison. My husband Steve and I have 3 adult boys and four grandchildren. We also own Parks Electrical Service Inc. in Middleton. For several years, I have been an active member of the Middleton Chamber of Commerce where I have served on the Board of Directors and as an Ambassador. I have been interested in Middleton, Madison and Iowa County history for many years and enjoy antiques."

Teresa Andrews ... "I am excited to be a part of the MAHS Board of directors. I have lived in Middleton for the past 17 years. I am married to Mark and we have two daughters, Megan who is 15 and Olivia who is 13. I work part time at Northside Elementary School as a Para Educator. The girls and I have been volunteering at Rowley House for the past 3 summers giving tours to people who come to visit the museum."

Anna Biermeier ... "My husband, Roger Hanson, and I moved to a house on Old Sauk Road adjacent to the First Lutheran Church cemetery, 45 years ago, and then to Stonefield when the Lemcke Barn was still standing. We love Middleton and have really appreciated being able to raise our children here. I served on the Middleton Area Historical Society board in the mid-1990s and again in 2007. In the 1990s, our son, Ben, was one of the first 4th-grade docents, working alongside John Skinner, and especially enjoying the stories of the WWII. I also served on the Boards of the Friends of Middleton Public Library, Bethel Horizons Camp, the Local Chapter of AFS, and I'm a member of the City of Middleton, Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission."

On April 9, MAHS Board Members conducted a workshop at Rowley House for potential volunteer docents to help greet museum visitors during the 2016 season. Through this effort we added several enthusiastic new volunteers to our group, and each promptly signed up for several dates during the April- October open period. Thanks to them (and our other dedicated docent volunteers) we should be able to adequately staff the Rowley House in 2016. Many thanks to all who serve this very important role. In case

you haven't heard, we also have a new online method for signing up to serve as a Rowley House docent. The link to this new interactive web site is:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c054ba9a92ca1fb6-rowley>

By logging in and creating an account you will be able see which dates are still open and then sign up for a date(s) that fits your schedule. Donna Parks is our "webmaster" for this effort and her contact information is posted on the MAHS web site under the "Volunteering – Rowley Docent" tab.

Spring School tours at Rowley House were a great success



again this year. Several MAHS volunteers (including Molly McDermott in period costume) greeted around 80 third graders from Sunset Ridge Elementary School. Each room in Rowley House was staffed by a MAHS volunteer who told the students a bit about the many artifacts therein and

answered a host of questions from the young historians.

We now have two new Middleton Historic Fact sheets available: "Middleton City Schools" and "The Skinner Depression-Era Glass Collection." Both are available at the Rowley House and Depot Museums as well as PDF files on the MAHS web site.

The Carriage House renovation and upgrade is a major effort currently in the planning phase. We plan to add insulation, drywall, heating and cooling to all of this facility so that our growing collection of artifacts can be better safeguarded in a climate-controlled environment. Our goal is to get the project underway this fall after we close Rowley House in October.

If you haven't visited your Rowley House or Depot Museums in a while, I hope you can do so soon. We also have created new displays at the Middleton Senior Center that I'm sure you will find interesting. I look forward to seeing you in person (or your name on our visitor's registry) in the coming months.

Jeff Martin, President

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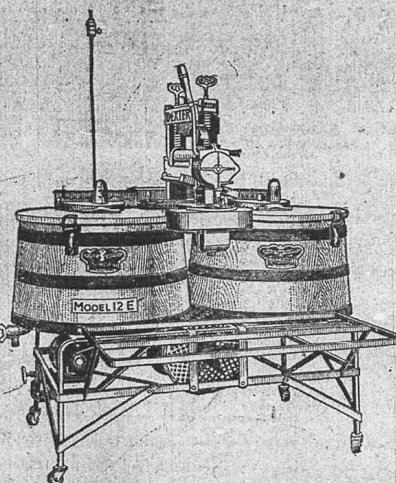
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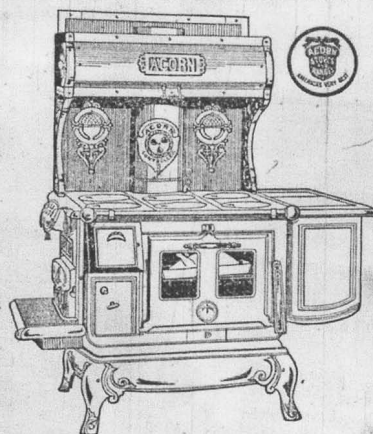
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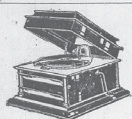
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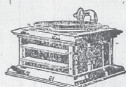


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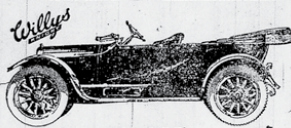
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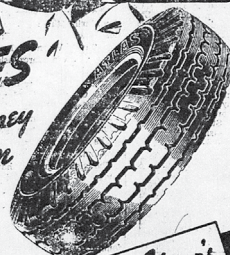
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The Middleton Area Historical Society is a
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To update your contact information or to receive this newsletter
via email, please contact Mary at 836-6776.