

CLAY COUNTY ARCHIVES
MIDDLEBURG, BY MYRTICE R. TRUETT, 1980

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The little town of Middleburg, in Clay County, Florida is 22 miles southwest of Jacksonville and is reached today by way of Orange Park over good hard-surfaced roads.

No volume or connected history has ever been written about Middleburg or that immediate vicinity. Therefore, when the President of the Jacksonville Historical Society assigned to me the task of trying to write this history, I had the kind of chill and thrill known only to the Jig Saw Puzzle addict. Valuable, but disconnected fragments, could be unearthed from old documents, including the Minutes of the Florida Land Commissioners published over a hundred years ago; the American State Papers of Public Lands and the Army and Navy Chronicles. Also I found passages rich in adventure centering around Middleburg, in a number of secondary sources, among them "Red Patriots or the story of the Seminoles" by Charles Coe; "Dickinson and his Men" by Mary Elizabeth Dickinson, "The War in Florida" by Woodburns Potter; "here and There in our Country" by Louise Houghton; and "The Debatable Land" by Herbert Bolton.

Long hours were spent in the Library of the Florida Historical Society where Mr. A. T. Williams, the President, patiently helped me lift enormous tomes of crumbling leather containing early deeds to Florida lands.

Mr. Williams' recent death was a great loss to the Community, and I wish to pay tribute at this time and express my thanks to a courtly scholar and gentleman.

Over in the Historical Library at St. Augustine, I found the Crown Collection of American Maps which were studied diligently for traces of any Sixteenth Century Settlements in Clay County.

Even more fascinating was Catesby's Folio History of the Carolinas and Florida printed in 1743, which is filled with gorgeous illuminations and pictures and well worth a trip over there just to see.

But most stimulating of all was the quest for first-hand information which led me to roam Duval, Clay and St. Johns Counties in the trail of descendants of Middleburgh's old families. Mrs. Martha A. Chalker, the oldest citizen of Middleburg, gave me the main thread of what I sought. At Green Cove Springs, Mr. Will Hendricks, descendant of the Brannings, who were pioneers in Middleburg, added more threads. Here in Jacksonville. Miss. Doris Averitt and Mr. R. T. Richard, Spokesman for the Buddington Clan in Clay County contributed still more, and as they spoke a fair web seemed to be woven before my eyes, and for the first time the pieces of the puzzle fitted together into a clear pattern, making for us the long lost story of Middleburg our little neighbor, once famed as a large shipping port.

The village of Middleburg, (situated on a narrow tongue of land between the North and South forks of Black Creek in Clay County,) has been the center of much picturesque history and legend. Of course the task of the would-be chronicler is to separate the one from the other, to weave together the colorful fragments verified by actual record and to reject as unauthentic the many intriguing stories for which there is no apparent proof.

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Among the most persistent of the legends is that ten years after the settlement of St. Augustine, a number of Spanish families, seeking higher and better soil for farming, pushed back along the shores of Black Creek and founded Middleburg, which thus became the second oldest settlement in Florida, and consequently of the whole United States.

Sustaining evidence for this oft-repeated claim seems to be based entirely on the fact that certain Spanish names, supposedly from St. Augustine, are recorded in the Methodist churchyard in Middleburg and in the older cemetery at Whitesville nearby; and that descendants of these families, the Tarratus, Alvarez, Falanas, Richards, and Adreus, are still living in the neighborhood.

An intensive study of nearby maps from the founding of St. Augustine to the English occupation in 1763, has failed to show any indication of a settlement here at the fork of the creek. Nor do we find these Middleburg families among those receiving grants from the Spanish crown during the period.

There were only eighteen of these original Florida grants, we will remember, and all of them very large, twenty-five miles or so in extent. By studying the Crown collection of maps in St. Augustine Historical Library, we find that Captain Dr. Francisco Ligarra held lands to the South of the mouth of Black Creek on the St. Johns, while Captain Don Arturo Felipe de Bustos held a tract to the North. Just West of Ligarra's holding stretched the great haciendas of Tomas and Dr. Francisco Henendez, nephews of the Spanish conqueror who founded St. Augustine. These were described on the maps as Tierros de la Chua, which is our Alachua, meaning sink-hole in Spanish. Reaching West and North of de Busto's tract and following Black Creek to its fork, were Crown lands marked Tierros de Hamacas, or hammock (wooded) country.

In his map of 1778 Joseph Purcell, who was Supervisor of Indian affairs, describes these tierros de hamacas surrounding the present Middleburg as "oaklands in general bearing oak, hickories, and mulberries. The soil, he says, is richer than the coast and bears walnut trees, small canes; appears to be fit for the culture of indigo, corn and beans and peas of all kinds."

Just as a study of the grants fails to show this section as the property of any individual Spaniard, so a map of the early missions contained in Catesby's beautiful old folio "History of the Carolinas and Florida," and Bolton's map in his book – "The Debatable Land" fails to show any mission located at the fork of Black Creek. However, one of the two missions of A la Chua was fairly near, just a little North. Any early settlers there would have been under the rather remote protection of the Spanish fort at Pupa Point, South of the creek mouth, on the West Bank of the St. Johns.

We must remember too that much of the surrounding territory was referred to rather loosely by early writers as St. Augustine, the official seat of justice, baptism and birth records. It would then have been possible for a family farming on Black Creek to be called residents of St. Augustine. It is probable that a few travelers and adventures navigated Black Creek, that men went in to bring out logs and wood, and that a number of squatters may have been attracted to this fertile spot for farming.

Let us imagine ourselves travelers in the year of grace 1525, setting out by coach or cart from St. Augustine to the present site of Middleburg. The Old Spanish Trail ran from the city through sand, swamp and woods to a landing on Six Mile Creek. Thence we must fare by boat down the creek to its

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mouth at the St. Johns, bringing up at the Spanish Fort at Picolata, directly opposite St. Augustine and about eighteen miles inland. Incidentally the fort captured by Oglethorpe at Picolata was the old wooden block house, the stone fort not having been built till 1755. Vignoles in his book entitled Observations on Florida said in 1824, "nothing remains of Picolata Fort except two shattered walls, through which loop-holes are pierced. It stands on a low bluff, half concealed by luxuriant branches of surrounding tree; it reminds the visitor who views it from the river of the deserted castellated residence of some ancient feudal lord." Just across the river from Picolata was Fort Pupa or Poopa, named for St. Francis da Pupa, where we might stop for refreshments or a night's rest. Resuming our journey from Pupa Point we might go overland, but probably would prefer the river boat North a few miles to the mouth of Black Creek. Pushing around the heavily wooded shores of that Creek, we would doubtless have been struck at once by the jet black color of the water in a land of crustal streams. Skirting the properties of da Bustos on one side and Ligarra on the other, our boat is soon bordered by the hammock lands until about fifteen miles up we strike the forks of the creek where Middleburg now stands.

In the St. Augustine Historical Library is a census of all Florida families at the time of the Spanish re-occupation in 1784. This includes two Andreu families listed as farmers, but no Tarratus or Alvarez, the latter family having come in sometime later. I have been so anxious to pursue every possible clue to the antiquity of Middleburg that I have interviewed descendants of these families wherever possible. But the Andreus here in Jacksonville came direct from St. Augustine, and disclaim connection with Middleburg. At one time I felt a thrill of triumph when I thought the claim to antiquity was established when I found that a Richard family known in Middleburg and holding grants all over Duval County, had an early christening recorded around 1600 in St. Augustine. This early family was another Richard apparently, as the French family we know came in or returned from Hayto as late as 1789. So my triumph was short-lived.

Records show that Alvarez married in the Menedez family, so there may be some obscure connection between the alleged early settlement of the Alvarez clan at Middleburg and the large adjoining estates of the Menendez, that only a tireless genealogist might untangle.

So far – I have been able to unearth no family records back of the early 1820's. However, if Middleburg cannot yet establish her claim to a 16th century antiquity, the authentic story of the brief glory of the little town is interesting enough.

We will remember that the English occupation of 1783 resulted in most of the old Spanish families fleeing the country as emigres to Havana, Spain and the islands. The English governor refused to allow the sale of the Spanish grants to Gordon and Fish, two local dealers, claiming that they were the confidential agents of Spain and that the estates were part of the English crown. A long law suite followed and Gordon and Fish were finally compensated cash.

In 1883 when the Spanish Government again took possession the recent English owners sold their grants or they went to the Spanish crown. The grants made by the English were much smaller than the original Spanish ones. These few Spanish families that returned either purchased lands or secured new grants

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from the Spanish Governor. One can readily understand how difficult this shifting ownership has made it to trace any early land grants.

When Spain was finally persuaded of the high costs of maintaining Florida against the Indians, and was prevailed upon to cede it in 1831 to the United states, Andrew Jackson had already occupied Pensacola in pursuit of the first Creek and Seminole war.

In 1834 the Board of Florida Land Commissioners met in St. Augustine to settle the problems of land ownership grown more and more knotty. Francis P. Fatio of St. Augustine served as Secretary and the younger Alexander Hamilton was a member.

Under this distribution, we find in the American papers that the following families were granted small tracts around the present site of Middleburg: Gabriel Priest, George Branning, Tarratus, Dillaberry, George Falana, Levey and Buddington. The Frisbee map hanging in the Green Cove Springs court house shows the same allotment.

The minutes of the Land Commissioners show that the 500 acres for which Gabriel Priest applied had previously been granted to John M. Fontane by the Spanish Governor Estrada in 1816. This is absolutely the earliest Black Creek land record I find, and the very earliest trace of any settlement in Middleburg.

Next Saturday evening I hope to be able to outline the development at Middleburg from the little village of Black Creek which was a garrison during the Seminole wars and to trace its rise as a shipping port, also to give glimpses of the social life in that part of Florida during the ante-bellum days.

(Part 2)

Last Saturday evening, we pursued the tradition that Middleburg, Florida was the second oldest town in the United States, second only to St. Augustine in fact; however, a thorough examination of old maps and records failed to substantiate this claim, and we found that the oldest grant to land at the forks of Black Creek in Clay County, the site of Middleburg, was that from the Spanish Governor, Estrada, in 1816, made to George [sic, should be John Fontane] Fontane just prior to the cession of Florida to the United States in 1821.

It is evident from the records. Maps, and recollections of old residents that there then was a considerable influx of American families from Georgia, Virginia and the Carolinas to celebrate the relative security of land claims after our acquisition by the United States. The town that sprang up then was the first recorded settlement and was known as the town of Black Creek. It was then a part of Duval county, and remained so until Clay was separated from Duval County in 1857. [sic, should be 1859] As an up and coming village, Black Creek rather looked down for a brief time on Cowford, as Jacksonville, its neighbor, was then called.

In the days when water travel was practically the only travel, Black Creek, navigable to the mouth from Middleburg, established the new town as a shipping point, East and West. The strategic position of the settlement was quickly utilized during the second Seminole War, '36 to '45. The Army and Navy

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chronicles for 1836 teem with references to Garey's Ferry, a supply depot established at the Creek juncture early in the year. In justifying his failure in the Florida campaign, General Winfield Scott quoted Congress from his journal as follows: "I have just set out for Fort Drane via Garey's Ferry on Black Creek with two companies of regulars." Again on March 29 – "I am now delayed in pushing on against the Indians by the necessity for unloading and reloading at the mouth of Black Creek. I hope to put the troops in march from Garey's Ferry early tomorrow." Later, he refers to the "last train of wagons to return from Garey's Ferry with subsistence." We can easily visualize side wheelers arriving from Savannah and the newly christened Jacksonville, loaded with ammunition, food and clothing for the United States troops encamped there and farther South.

A second fort was built on the creek bank in May, 1836, according to Woodbourne Potter's book, the "War in Florida." This fort was used strictly as a garrison, was named for brace Major J. F. Heilman, who died at Fort Drane the next month from over exertion at the battle of Micanopy.

The following year, gallant General Thomas Jesup who had arrived with regulars from Georgia to pursue the campaign, wrote trying to resign from the Florida command, because of public misunderstanding of the Indian chief's failure to emigrate after giving him pledges. His letter is sent from "Headquarters, Army of the South, Fort Heilman at Garey's Ferry." His frequent references to "the unhealthy season" indicate a war in summer against mosquitoes as well as Seminoles.

The town was apparently known both as Garey's Ferry or Black Creek until the conclusion of the wars in 1853 when the Seminoles were finally driven South.

There is a tradition in the neighborhood that before and during the Indian campaigns there was a large Indian camp on the shores of Black Creek five or six miles from the present town. These savages foraged as far off as South Georgia. During the same lawless era, a band of pirates are said to have made a camp on the creek bank nearby and to have built up a settlement, deep in the woods which they used as a cache for the treasure looted out in the Atlantic. The story goes that the Indians resented this usurpation and that Billy Bowlegs and his red followers fell on the pirate band and exterminated them. In her recollections, Mrs. Minnie Prevatt says, "on the Rideout Road about five miles from Green Cove Springs, was an Indian village as late as 1855. Huts built mostly of palmettos stood for several years after the Indians left. They used to go down Black Creek and the St. Johns River to St. Johns' bar where they got oysters.

In view of our present keen interest in the possibility of a cross state ship canal in the near future, it is interesting to read that when General Jackson was Secretary of War, Congress was memorialized on the subject of such a canal, \$20,000 being appropriated for a survey. In 1826, General Barnard and his corps of engineers reported among other possibilities, a plan for a canal from the St. Johns River up Black Creek "cutting through Kingsley's, Sampson's and Santa Fe ponds to the Suwanee River." Needless to say any ship canal was deemed too costly at the time. But attention was fastened on Middleburg.

Side wheelers began plying between Charleston, Savannah, Jacksonville, Palatka, Sanford and up Black Creek to Middleburg. Wagons rolled into town with cotton, crossties and lumber to be loaded and

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shipped North. The pioneer boats in this trade were the Ocmulgee, St. Mathews and William Gaston. In 1851 two new steamers, the Welaka, and Magnolia were built, Captain McNelty losing his life when the latter exploded its boiler. The Welaka was wrecked on St. John's bar in 1852. The Seminole and the St. Johns took their places, and each of them met its fate by burning at the Jacksonville dock. The hull of the St. Johns was later raised and re-built and ran until the war between the States. The last of the antebellum packets was the iron steamship St. Marys under Captain James Freeborn, built in 1857. At Middleburg the port was on the South creek and as it was too narrow to permit a full turn, all vessels backed to the fork and turned there.

As we approach Middleburg today from Jacksonville, a distance of 28 miles, we turn West from Orange Park passing through woods and high rather rolling farmlands. The road curves in by the North fork past the old Branning ferry and we turn at right angles near the Methodist church into Main Street. There are but two streets, as in the old days, one running the length of town and the other bisecting it from creek to creek.

Through the courtesy of Dr. F. A. Copp of Jacksonville, I recently had the pleasure of hearing about earlier days in Middleburg from its oldest resident, his grandmother, Mrs. Martha A. Chalker, whose quick mind and clear memory hark back to the Indians wars. Here in the same picturesque old Clark House built about 1835 for Captain Clark and his staff, Mrs. Chalker has lived a life rich in adventure and keen in observation. On January 18 she celebrated her eighty-eighth birthday.

The house, it is said, was used as a boarding house by the officers under General Jackson. More certainly it sheltered those of General Scott and Jesup in later campaigns. Built of hand-hewn timbers and pegs, two galleries run across the front. The old door with its hand carved panels in the design of a cross is of colonial Adam design, with side glass and no fanlight above. There are old brass door handles and eighteen-inch window sills. The house is so strongly built that it has no supporting framework where a modern room would demand it.

Mrs. Chalker's grandfather, after service in the Mexican campaign, was rewarded with a grant on Doctor's Lake just across from Fleming Island. Her father, Mr. Bardin, moved first to little Black Creek where his wife was buried. He moved later to Middleburg when Martha was nine, and they lived at the Clark House. Mrs. Chalker first remembers Middleburg as a barracks, the streets dotted with tents and filled with officers and soldiers in the last Indian campaign. She recalls her father telling of an epidemic of measles in which many of our troops died from exposure during the second Indian war and were buried in shallow trenches at the end of Main Street. There were few wells and a water famine threatened so that the army had to take charge of these.

The children walked three miles to a private school where the principal from Mandarin employed two assistants to help with approximately one hundred pupils.

There was a steamer every day bringing mail. At the comfortable hotel, tourists arrived in good numbers in the Fall and spent the winter. There were about ten stores and small shops, and two

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barrooms. "The liquor was good in those days," Mrs. Chalker observed, "and it didn't kill so many folks." Teams arrived daily from points overland, as far as Quincy and many from Lake City.

Mrs. Chalker says that her husband remembered distinctly a certain Mrs. Snowden who insisted on leaving the fort where all the settlers had taken refuge during a raid. Although everyone tried to dissuade her, she left with her six children, and was waylaid on her way home by a band of Indians just routed at a place called Seven Mile House. The Indians lined up and shot all six children, scalping Mrs. Snowden and leaving her for dead. Scouts took her back to the fort where she recovered. She always wore a cap. Later she acquired a wig and a second husband who brought her to Jacksonville to live. All of which reaffirms the endurance of women.

Jacksonville was, by the way, so small during Mrs. Chalker's childhood that she could, in her own words, "walk all over it in no time." Middleburg was much larger, she asserts. Incidentally, I find that Mrs. Muhlbacker of Jacksonville, a descendant of the Brannings, has in her possession a pass written in Spanish permitting her grandfather at Middleburg to travel by boat to Cowford.

The Catholic Church, built during the last Indian wars, is no longer standing at Middleburg, but the Methodist Church, built eighty-five years ago, is in excellent repair and in use today. Its simple, white-painted outline recalls early New England churches. Timber was donated by George Branning and the work done mostly by his slaves. Outside there were wide clapboards and inside a wide aisle to keep male and female at a safe distance. The fenced churchyard is well tended and its headstones mark the resting places of many old settlers.

Two weeks ago we pursued the tradition that Middleburg, Florida was the second oldest settlement in America – next to St. Augustine, in fact. However, a careful study of old maps, particularly the Crown collection in the St. Augustine Historical Library and the land records of the American State papers failed to establish this claim – and we found that the oldest grant to property at the forks of Black Creek in Clay County, the site of Middleburg, was that from the Spanish Governor Estrada in 1816. After the cession of Florida to the United States in 1821, many American families from Georgia, Virginia and the Carolinas received grants at Middleburg, then located in Duval County, newly carved out of St. Johns.

We watched the town, then called Black Creek or Garey's Ferry, develop into a garrison with two forts during the long drawn out Seminole wars which ended only in 1853 when the Indians were finally driven South.

We listened to the reminiscences of Mrs. Martha A. Chalker whose quick mind harks back to the Indian wars. She has lived at Middleburg in a picturesque old house built in 1835 and at 88 can recall the time when Jacksonville was so small she could, in her own words, "walk all over it in no time."

Mrs. Chalker, who left school, as was customary for girls in that day, at sixteen gives an amusing account of the social life of the early fifties. There were frequent square dances at the hotel. Many of the ladies dipped snuff or smoked a pipe, but none played cards – that was simply "not done" by women;

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“marooning” or camping by moonlight, with outdoor cooking and singing by young people under very efficient chaperonage was a popular diversion. The “chivari” was usual aftermath of a wedding and serenading of a bride-to-be, or any outstanding citizen, was a very common rite.

Women made their own dresses as there were no seamstresses. Cloth came in by steamer until the Civil War when they were forced to card, spin, weave and sew for dear life. They also made beef tallow and bees’ wax candles from moulds, their own soap and dyes of Black Jack or potash.

Mrs. Chalker recalls that her father sold a slave named Moses to George Branning, who later resold the negro in New Orleans. Picture Mr. Branning’s surprise when Moses was the first in Middleburg to greet him on his return with “Howdy, Marse George.” The slave, who had instantly escaped and pursued his master back to his beloved Middleburg, was later freed.

Mrs. Chalker had a close call during the Civil War. Two thousand colored troops were quartered in Middleburg, the Federal officers dining at the Clark House. As the troops marched by, Mrs. Chalker ran out on the gallery to see them, narrowly missed being hit by a bullet which a negro private claimed he fired at a goose running in the yard. “Since I was so reckless he came near getting one anyhow,” Mrs. Chalker chuckled.

The Battle of Tiger Head was fought on the road between Green Cove Springs and Middleburg, October 24, 1864. Paraphrasing Mary E. Dickinson’s account, we read of her husband’s victory. “General Dickinson with ninety men advanced to meet the Federals who had crossed five miles above the Creek and were on the road to Middleburg. He placed a detachment to guard both roads. Soon he saw the Federals driving a large herd of fine cattle, “rebel beef” for their commissary. On they came with drawn sabres, polished blades flashing in the sunlight. As they drew near they were met with a telling volley. They halted quickly, formed their line and charged, our men meeting them with heavy fire. Our artillery then opened upon them and they fell back in great confusion, our intrepid men, charging, killing and capturing the entire command as they retreated. The fight lasted an hour through an open woodland of nearly two miles in extend. Only three Federals made their escape by leaving their horses and taking the swamp. Not a man among the Confederates was hurt. Mrs. Chalker recalls the terrific din of this battle and that her colored maid hid under the bed for the whole day.

The Civil War, however, crippled Middleburg badly. Federals burned the chief stores and many homes. The Chalkers and other families fled to the little town of Sanderson near Lake City and when they returned they found all their old furniture had been stolen by army or other marauders. Today only one brass candle-stick remains of Mrs. Chalker’s ante-bellum silver and furniture.

In Green Cove Springs, Mr. William Hendricks, grandson of George Branning, the Daniel Boone and largest planter in Middleburg, added some picturesque recollections. His grandfather who had supplied the United States Government with beef during the war of 1812 moved from North Carolina to Middleburg after the cession of Florida and became wealthy raising sugar cane and cotton. Mr. Hendricks insisted that Middleburg derived its name because it was half-way between the forks of the creek and Whitesville. He remembers South Jacksonville as a cornfield when Middleburg was the head

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of the transportation for Marion, Alachua and cotton-raising counties. His grandfather swam cattle across at Cow Ford and at Garey's Ferry. His great uncle Sam Branning was killed by Indians one night as he sat at supper, eating by light wood torches in company with his two brothers. George, who was an interpreter between the whites and the Indians, was spared then and many other times because of his good offices to the redskins. As a small boy, Mr. Hendricks says his grandfather taught him to say in Seminole "White-man-dam-rascal-no-good," which mouthful was supposed to be a single word. It was in revenge for some of the white stealing their ponies that Sam Branning was killed.

When the Federals entered Middleburg with their 2000 negro troops, Mr. Hendrick's uncle, Washington Branning the mail carrier, was a particular object of the invading General Burney's wrath. Calling him a "damned spy" he ordered Washington to "say his prayers." The latter did not stand on ceremony but vaulted a six-foot fence and starting running for his life across a field. The Federals fired thirty times or more, but Washington, even after stumping his toe and falling, reached a creek and escaped by swimming under water. "That was Sunday eleven o'clock in the morning, and he stayed in that swamp until late Tuesday night when he escaped to the Dillaberry's house," Mr. Hendricks declared. I have read this story in print but prefer Mr. Hendrick's account because as a young boy he was an eye-witness.

There are also stirring chronicles of the Buddingtons who moved to Whitesville from Connecticut. Soon after Florida was ceded. Whitesville, the home of this family and one or two other plantation owners, was originally part of Middleburg and is located on the South Creek. It is now accessible only by a sand road. A thicket almost encloses the old burying ground where an iron fence shelters about twenty graves. Seven are young Buddingtons, all of whom died before they were a year old, martyrs to an unscientific age.

Osias, the patriarch, ship-owner and sea captain, was born in 1796, and buried at Old Whitesville cemetery in 1886 at the age of 90. He married Susan Gary [Garey], whose family came from Baltimore, and with her cruised all over the world in his own vessels. One of their children was appropriately named Seaborn. Although he was a Union man, the Federals looted his store and did over \$5,000 worth of damage to it and his beautiful old colonial home which occupied two years in building and is described in detail by Louise Seymour Houghton in "Here and There in Our Country." Judge Buddington, as he was called, was Middleburg's first postmaster. His brother, who owned whalers in New London, Connecticut, and often came to Florida, was the brace captain who rescued the derelict British ship Resolute, in 1855, given up as lost for three years in the ice flows. Refitted and restored, Congress sent her as a gift to Queen Victoria. In 1877, when it was broken up, the Queen made a graceful return by having a desk made of selected timbers and presenting this to Rutherford B. Hayes, then President of the United States.

While the war dealt a crushing blow to Middleburg, the glory of the town was really quenched by the citizens themselves. In the late fifties they bitterly fought the railroad. They not only allowed but insisted that progress pass them by. The railroad was forced to detour to Starke and there half the population eventually followed, including the Richards, Paces, Alvarez and others.

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A few large sawmills and turpentine stills kept some industry alive until the last one burned sixteen years ago [1964]. Recently, experiment in scientific gum production has been started by Mr. Budd, a Harvard graduate who has five or six miles of trees with French faces, under beautiful cultivation. He and his partner plan a small park at the old port on the curving shore where wild azaleas and purple hyacinths almost touch overhanging moss.

The Middleburg Inn, kept by Mrs. Pearl Lee, a connection of the Buddingtons, is a delightful retreat for writers and other tourists.

Otherwise Middleburg today recalls Goldsmith's Deserted Village, and the once busy South Creek is choked with hyacinths as the memories of Middleburg's hey-day grew dim.