

MIDDLEBURY CEMETERY MIDDLEBURY, CONNECTICUT

By Carlos E. Hill

The first record of a cemetery in Middlebury, Connecticut is recorded in The Centennial of Congregational Church on page 39 "The first cemetery stood right north of William Tylers, beyond the little barn from 1703 to 1793." The graves were sacredly guarded until a stranger from out of town bought the land some 25 years ago (1880) and pulled up the stones and plowed it. They (old stones) were cared for and transferred to the new yard."

In Bronson's History of Waterbury, by Henry Bronson, on page 369, mention is made to a petition of Mr. Eli Bronson to the Selectmen Of Waterbury praying for a burying ground for the Society of Middlebury in 1794. The Selectmen were authorized to purchase ground for that purpose, and on Nov. 21, 1794 purchased 84 rods of land of Seth Bronson for ten pounds lawful money.

In October 1807 Middlebury became a Town.

On April 6, 1829, the Town of Middlebury surveyed and bought land for a highway leading to the burying ground From Abner Munson and Marcus Bronson paying Mr. Munson \$8.77 and Mr. Bronson \$9.73.

On June 23, 1842 another half acre was secured from Marcus Bronson on the west side of the cemetery, being 6 rods wide by 12 rods long. The north and south lines to run parallel with the north and south lines of the old burying ground and the west line parallel with the west line of the old burying ground, also a strip of land 4 rods long and 2 rods wide to be used and occupied as a highway leading from present highway to old said burying ground, said Town to build and maintain the whole of the fence necessary to enclose the whole of said burying ground.

On August 5, 1871, Julius Bronson conveyed to the town one acre and 15 rods for \$175.00, bounded south on old cemetery and all other sides by my own land. Said town to build a substantial fence around the land and forever maintain same, said piece to be used as an extension of old cemetery.

On Sept. 6, 1871 Julius Bronson conveyed to the town a certain piece of land situated at the north-west corner of a piece of land deeded by me to said town containing 10 rods, more or less, running N 12 deg. west 1 chain 47 links; thence N 72 1/2 Deg E, 1 chain 65 links to intersect the original line; thence same direction to NE corner of the cemetery.

On Oct 6, 1902 the Selectmen were empowered to drain the cemetery from the hearse house across the highway to land of S.S. Fenn and also to improve the present entrance to the cemetery.

On March 28, 1903, Samuel S. Fenn, Robert M. Fenn and Addie Fens conveyed 5900 square feet of the land to the Town, bounded North by cemetery and highway; Easterly by highway, Southerly and Westerly by grantors. Said Town to build and maintain fence.

At a town meeting of Middlebury held on Oct. 3, 1927, it was voted: "That the Board of Selectmen are hereby authorized as agents of the Town to convey to a corporation to be organized pursuant to law for the purpose of maintaining a cemetery. The land now owned by the Town and used for cemetery purposes. Together with all rights, moneys and privileges connected there with and subject to all of the encumbrances to which it is properly subject".

Albert G. Clark, chairman; H. E. Clark, clerk

On July 27, 1928 the Certificate of Incorporation of the Middlebury Cemetery Association, Inc. was filed. "Be it known, that we, the subscribers, hereby associate ourselves as a Body Politic and Corporate pursuant to the Statutes Laws of the State of Connecticut regulating the formation and organization of Corporations without Capitol Stock and the following are our Articles of Association:

Article 1. The name of said Corporation shall be The Middlebury Cemetery Association, Incorporated.

Article 2. The purpose for which said Corporation is formed are the following:
To Wit: To organize a cemetery association pursuant to the terms of the Statutes of this State as provided sections 3032 and 3033 of the General Statutes, and for the purposes providing land from the Town of Middlebury and holding land so acquired and other land for burial ground and for other purposes connected with the maintenance and operation of a cemetery.

Article 3. Said corporation to be located in the Town of Middlebury, County of New Haven and State of Connecticut. Dated at Middlebury this 27 day of July 1928.

Robert M. Fenn
Harry E. Clark
William Fromm
G. Fred Abbott
H. E. Bronson

On Sept. 22, 1928 Robert M. Fenn and the Cemetery Association defined the boundary of the Cemetery "Because ancient boundaries and descriptions have become indefinite and uncertain". A map for the purpose made by William B. Reynolds, Surveyor for the purpose more accurate location, ascertainment and delineation of location of said Cemetery land and my own land which entirely surrounds the same and in no way affects Fenn's rights land included within the Cemetery as presently used and for many years passed in use by members of my family for the purpose of sepulture and my future rights to the same and members of my family.

By a recording on July 13, 1929 land was conveyed by the Town of Middlebury to The Middlebury Cemetery Association Inc. pursuant to instructions of above mentioned Town Meeting. To wit Beginning at the southwesterly corner of the old cemetery, thence running N 7 deg., W257.05 ft; thence N 8 deg. 46 min., W 244.21 ft., thence N 82 deg.30' E 103.50 ft thence easterly by arc of a circle with a radius of 90 ft. 125.45 ft. , thence S 8 deg. E 496.09 ft . thence S 81 deg 09'W 216.48 ft to point of beginning.

On Sept. 22. 1928 Robert M. Fenn conveyed a triangular shaped piece with a Right of Way reserved to grantor his heirs and assigns.

On Nov. 24. 1953 Robert M. Fenn Conveyed 1.03 acres, more or less, to the Association, Bounded Northerly, Westerly Southerly on remaining land of Grantor and Easterly on land Grantee.

On April 1, 1981 the Cemetery Association Conveyed to Robert C. Fenn a triangular shaped piece.

Mention should be made of the helpful suggestions made by Mr. Bradford Smith in the above history of the Cemetery.

References:

Bronson's History of Waterbury.
The Centennial of the Congregational Church-Middlebury History and Interesting Stories of Middlebury by Delia S. Bronson

Waterbury, Conn. Town Records Vol. 3 page 110 and 139.

Waterbury, Conn. Land Records Vol. 24 page 139.

Middlebury, Conn. Town Records Vol. 1 page 84, Vol. 4 page 255.

Middlebury, Conn. Land Records Vol. 2 page 313, Vol. 5 page 493, Vol. 10 page 108, and 172; Vol. 13 page 450; Vol. 23 page 362 and 323; Vol. 24 page 230 and 236; Vol. 25 page 63; Vol. 58 page 390; Vol. 50 page 169 and Vol. 86 page 1006.