

# Middle Names Are a Recent Fashion

### Few Men in Country's Early History Had Them— A Sort of Hero Worship.

In a little company of young men a few nights ago the question of middle names came up, and inquiry showed that five out of six of those present had middle names. One said he once dropped his, but took it up again at the request of his father. Another said he never told anybody what his middle name was, and three admitted that they regarded theirs as a nuisance. Then they wondered when middle names originated and what good they were anyhow.

Every person must have remarked the current fad of writing out the middle name in full. This fashion sprang up only a few years ago, and has been much affected by some people. Until it became the vogue, a person with a middle name would have been laughed at for writing it out in full, but fashion justifies everything. Some people, desirous to be differentiated from the common herd even divide their names in the middle—as G. Washington Sykes, W. Shakespeare Boggs or T. Jefferson Jones. This shows that the owner knows how to wear a middle name without being tripped up by it, as a militia officer sometimes is by his sword.

### Middle Names More Common Now.

But the question recurs when did middle names become so popular and what good are they? There is reason to believe they are far more common now than they were a few generations ago. In a list published in *The News* a few days ago of pensioners of the Revolutionary War who died in Indiana, out of 810, there were only twelve with a middle name or initial. Any one company that served in the War of the Rebellion would show more double names than this, and any page in the city directory would show two or three times as many.

Benjamin Harrison had no middle name, but the company which he raised and commanded as captain before he became colonel contained fifty-five officers and privates with middle names—nearly five times as many as there were among the 810 Revolutionary pensioners who once lived in Indiana.

History seems to show that middle names were not common during the Revolutionary period nor for some time after. Few of the prominent soldiers or statesmen of that period had double names. Of generals there were George Washington, Anthony Wayne, Henry Knox, Arthur St. Clair, Francis Marion, John Sullivan, Nathaniel Greene, Rufus Ward, Israel Putnam, Arthus Putnam—each having but one name. The same was true of nearly all the commissioned officers in the Revolutionary army.

### Presidents Without Middle Names.

Of the thirteen presidents of the Continental Congress, between 1775 and 1788, not one had a middle name.

Of the fifty-five signers of the Declaration of Independence only three had middle names. The bold signature of John Hancock would not be as effective if he had had a middle initial, and that of Benjamin Franklin appears more dignified without one.

Among the 250 delegates to the Continental Congress, from 1774 to 1788, only twenty-five had middle names.

In the first Congress under the constitution, held in 1789, out of fifty-nine Representatives only five had middle names. One of these, a member from South Carolina, bore the singular name of John Baptist Ashe. Another, elected first Speaker of the House, was Frederick Augustus Conrad Muhlenberg, of Pennsylvania. A third was John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg, also from Pennsylvania. Both of these men, by the way, were preachers, both quit the pulpit to enter the Revolutionary army, and both achieved distinction as soldiers and statesmen. Their father, also a clergyman, was of German birth, and they got their middle names from the prevailing custom in Germany.

### Few Among Early Statesmen.

Of our eight Presidents from 1789 to 1840, only one had a middle name, and of the fifty-three persons who served as Cabinet officers under the five administrations of Washington,

Adams and Jefferson, only two had middle names. John Quincy Adams, elected in 1824, was the first President with a middle name, and William Henry Harrison, elected in 1840, was the second. The names of early statesmen like Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, Edmund Randolph, Albert Gallatin and others of that period, sound better without a middle name. Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt belong to a later period, but they, too, were fortunate in not having been loaded down with a middle name that might have proved an incumbrance.

So it seems quite clear that middle names were far less common in this country during the Revolutionary period and for many years afterward than they are now. So they were in England. Up to comparatively recent times few of the great names in English literature or history were double, and it is fair to assume that they were no more common among common people than they were among the celebrated. Such names as William Shakespeare, Oliver Cromwell, John Milton, Isaac Newton, Francis Bacon, William Wordsworth, Charles Dickens, Robert Browning, John Bunyan, Thomas Carlyle, Daniel Defoe, William Pitt and many others of renown, would be handicapped in history by a middle name or initial.

### What Does the Change Signify?

Abraham Lincoln has been dead a little over forty years, and some of his namesakes are in evidence, as witness Abraham Lincoln Brick, of this State. We have also George Washington Cromer, and the present Congress contains George Washington Taylor, of Alabama; George Washington Prince and George Washington Smith, of Illinois; James Monroe Miller, of Kansas; Benjamin Franklin Howell, of New Jersey, and Andrew Jackson Barchfield, of Pennsylvania.

There has not been a Congress in the last fifty years that did not contain one or more members, sometimes several, named after soldiers or statesmen of the Revolutionary period. Both armies during the Civil War contained hundreds of soldiers bearing names of the Revolutionary period.

There is nothing discreditible in the kind of hero worship that leads parents to name a child after a great man whom they greatly admire, though it sometimes happens that the son, when he grows up, would prefer a different name. Napoleon Bonaparte Taylor, formerly an honored lawyer and judge of this city, and a very modest man, used to regret the name his parents had given him, and Andrew Jackson Barchfield, a member of the present Congress from Pennsylvania, is a red-hot Republican.

But a large majority of middle names are given as a sort of annex or make-weight to the first name to preserve family names and traditions. This also is a commendable motive, but why have middle names at all? From a practical point of view they are superfluous, and that makes it all the stranger why they should have come into such general use in this practical, utilitarian and commercial age when the tendency is to shorten words and eliminate superfluities.

Many a man who has had to write his name several hundred times a day has regretted the necessity of lifting his pen to write and dot the initial letter of a middle name. Probably one reason why middle names have become so much more common in modern times than they once were, is that for centuries the common law assumed that the full legal name of a person consisted of one Christian name and surname. No legal importance attached to a middle name, and if a person had one it was not a misnomer, in legal parlance, to omit it in an indictment or pleading.

This is no longer the rule of the law, but it was for a long time, and during that period middle names were almost unknown. Their general use in this country is of comparatively modern growth.—*Indianapolis News.*

### Money in Frogs' Legs.

Thanks to the perseverance of a number of prospecting youngsters, residents of Haddington and Overbrook may now have daily suppers of choice frogs' legs. A veritable mine of frogs was discovered a week ago by members of a juvenile baseball team who were playing near Sixty-third and Market streets. A fly ball was knocked into a ditch, and the keepers who chased it found fully two dozen frogs holding a convention on the shore of the little stream. The game was stopped and the boys got busy in the ditch with their bats. More than half a hundred frogs were captured in the first raid. They were made ready for the market by the youngsters, who had little trouble in selling them at fifty cents a dozen. Since the discovery the boys have been prospecting daily, and hundreds of frogs have been gathered in during the last few days. Unfortunately for the discoverers, the news has spread, and now the frog fields have been invaded by so many youngsters that the price has been cut down.—*Philadelphia Record.*

The fewest deaths occur in the hour following meridian and midnight.

### THE WAYS OF FOXES.

#### Their Habits and Life—Annoying a Herd of Cows.

A letter, from Will W. Christman, of Dolans, N. Y., sent to Forest and Stream by John Burroughs, says: "My occupation as farmer has tended to familiarize me with many things of which you write. This is especially true of the fox. I have fought them with gun, trap and poison, and have had some interesting and amusing experiences. Every summer, usually in early morning, they lurk in a piece of woodland, near the barn, and whenever hen or chicken ventures too far from the buildings, it is pounced upon and carried away. Such a long procession of Plymouth Rocks has gone in that direction, year after year, that I make no trace with ryeard, but take his life in season or out, whenever opportunity offers.

"Have you ever heard a fox bark in the daytime? One wintry morning I saw one, a quarter of a mile away, sounding his 'wood-notes wild.' Again, while plowing last November, I heard one barking about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. One night I heard one barking in the pasture lot. I took my gun and hurried out to interview him. They had been in the habit of crossing the creek about a hundred yards from the barn, and I selected this place for our meeting. While getting in position I could hear him barking at intervals, each time a little nearer. There were a few inches of light snow, but no moon, so that it was rather hard to pick out his foxship from the few small evergreens that grew near the ford. I stood behind a large elm, steadying my gun against the trunk and covering the road I felt sure he would take, perhaps seventy-five yards away. I did not have to wait. He came out of the protecting evergreens almost as soon as I was ready. It was too dark to take aim, but when I felt sure I had him covered I let go. It was such an unusual time for an ambush that he was undoubtedly the most surprised fox recorded in the annals. He paused just long enough to locate his enemy and disappeared in the neighboring woods. I took a lantern and followed. I had wounded him, for I found an occasional bloodstain on the snow. He led nearly straight away for half a mile, then circled back within a hundred yards of his adventure before making a final plunge into the wilderness. I think he must have gone daff with his wound and fright and did not know exactly where he was going. If he still survives, he must be regarded among his wild associates as a most worthy veteran, after having run the gauntlet of such a midnight ambuscade.

"Hardly a season passes here without someone locating a den and making captive the whole litter. Two years ago I accidentally discovered one, and with a neighbor's help dug them out and made them secure in the corn crib. At times they were as playful as kittens, but they often fought like dogs over their food. The first morning after their capture I saw the old fox nosing around their prison. One of the young died in a day or two, and my boy carried it to the woods. The next afternoon when he returned from the pasture with the cows, he informed me that he had found a young fox dead near the scene of the capture. I thought at first that it might be one that had died in the nest, and we had overlooked it when we destroyed their roof tree; but after investigating we found it to be the one that had died in captivity, as the one could not be found that my youngster had disposed of. We concluded that the mother had carried it back to the old home, a quarter of a mile or more. How unconquerable this mother love! I must confess that I felt something like remorse at finding such a human trait in my enemy.

"I have a neighbor who has trapped skunks for twenty years. I think he knows every woodchuck hole within three or four miles. I conferred with him, and when April came again we kept a sharp lookout for another den. We spent the greater part of one forenoon in visiting the most likely holes in the neighborhood. On our way back, and when only a quarter of a mile from home, we crossed a farm that had been abandoned by its owner. Every summer some one cuts the 'hay on shares' and picks the apples. Except for the commotion on these occasions it is desolate and alone. As we entered the dooryard I found a muskrat hide, freshly skinned, on the grass; a little further on some bunches of rabbit's fur. 'Have we a fox den here?' I thought. 'Here are the usual ear-marks, but it seemed a most unlikely spot.' At the corner of the house we found a hole, probably opened by a woodchuck, leading directly into the foundation. Scattered about were hen's feathers, and a small pig had been poked into a crevice in the crumbling foundation. The pig was one that a neighbor had lost a few days before, and had been consigned to the manure heap. Now it was evidently held in reserve as a choice morsel for some wild gourmand. After a careful examination of the hole, and of the cellar—for the doors were unlocked—we plugged the opening with stones promising the tenants a call later in the day.

"That afternoon I was called away, and my neighbor, after waiting some time for me, started alone for the prize. A large strawstack stood near the house, sloping gradually down to where the machine had stood in threshing time. As he neared the place he saw the old fox on the top

of the stack. From this 'coln of vantage' she could overlook the surrounding fields for half a mile. This was undoubtedly her 'crow's nest.' No friend or enemy could approach unseen. She took to her heels as my friend approached. The cellar had been lathed and plastered, and far down in a remote corner behind the plastering he found them, three lively little fellows, about half as large as a fair-sized cat, and two very small ones dead. Probably some hound had given her chase shortly before their birth. This would account for the mortality among them. (Since then another neighbor informs me that he found two of the young dead in a hole.) We kept them in the corn crib as we had kept those of the year before. I think the old fox came nightly and prowled around the buildings. One of my hens had hidden her nest in some berry bushes between the corn crib and wagon house. One morning I found her limping around the barnyard minus her tail. Every tall-feather was pulled out and scattered in a bee line from her nest to the yard. Her eggs were cold and she seemed to have lost all interest in them. I looked again next day and several of the eggs had disappeared. I took them all away and at night took a fresh egg, and after putting a little strychnine inside I placed it in the nest. That, too, disappeared, but it was several days before I knew that my experiment had been successful. Then my boy found the female fox dead in the edge of woods, less than a hundred yards away.

"A few days after this event my boy and I were witnesses of a most remarkable fox play. My youngster was starting out to get the cows late one afternoon when I saw what I thought at first was a shepherd dog among them, and the cattle seemed to be taking turns at charging him. They were perhaps 250 or 300 yards away. As I looked, the dog made an unusually nimble leap to avoid being gored, and I grew suspicious. I called the youngster back and told him to go cautiously along the ridge and take a look at them without being seen. In a few minutes he returned excited and out of breath. It was a fox, as I suspected. I took out my gun and we hurried along the ridge to witness the sport and incidentally to have a little fun ourselves at reynard's expense. We crept up within fifty or sixty yards of them. The fox behaved exactly like a strange dog among the herd. When one of the cows would charge him he would run a little way and 'side-reep,' then another would lower her head and take after him. The fox apparently enjoyed the excitement, but there were seven cows in the herd and they kept him busy dodging them. His conduct was extremely aggravating. He would sometimes stand till one almost caught him, then he would run and turn and provoke another to the chase. I tried several minutes to get a bead on him, but the cows pressed him close. Finally they separated far enough for me to take aim without endangering my Jerseys. I must have fired too soon, for he turned and gave us what I thought was a very reproachful look before he disappeared in the neighboring hard-back."

### IT BLEW SHOES.

#### But Only One of Each Variety Freightened the Air.

Fenton H. Pierce, a shoe drummer for a Chicago house, recently returned from an interrupted Southern trip. When he arrived in this city he was incumbered with nothing but the clothes on his back—and a story. His suit case and sample trunks were whirled into the upper air with the other contents of Heaslip's Hotel when the tornado struck MacGrew's Ferry in its disastrous course through Southwest Arkansas a few weeks ago.

The personal property distributed over a wide area was enriched by Mr. Pierce's sample shoes, and in the days following the storm the entire colored population was busy probing for bluchers, patent leathers and congress gaiters in the piles of debris, sifting vicid kid oxfords and Turkish slippers from the drifted sand, and picking moosehide moccasins, arctice and Mackinaw leggins like fruit from the higher branches of trees.

One shoe of a pair, right or left, fulfills the purposes of a sample in a shoe drummer's trunk. Thus it was that the harvest of shoes industriously gathered by the colored folk was entirely made up of odd ones.

The local printer, whose press and type has escaped the general flight of things, saw an opportunity to profit by the general disadvantage. He began the publication of a twice a week sheet of shoes exchange advertisements. In the eager way the odd shoe finders paid for space in its columns his resourcefulness was rewarded. Advertisements like the following describe the situation in and about MacGrew's Ferry:

"Homer Peabody has a left fur trimmed lady's Juliet size 3. Will exchange for right tan oxford size 11." Or: "Aunt Giordana Turner will exchange a setting of turkey eggs and a 'possum hide for left lady's blucher size 8 or over."

Although the advertisements were inserted in the twice a week sheet at a low figure, the printer made quite a little bit of money, while at the same time performing a public service.—*Chicago Record-Herald.*

It's a deplorable fact that the average man spends too much time trying to acquire money and too little trying to acquire happiness.—From "Pointed Paragraphs," in the *Chicago News.*

### John Ruskin's Sacrifice.

By NIXOLA GREELEY-SMITH.

John Ruskin, author of "Sesame and Lilies," "The Seven Lamps of Architecture" and other works which many persons of discernment rave over and some others leave respectfully alone, was not half so original in his works as in his life.

He had several love affairs of very pastel coloring before the great romance of his life began with his marriage to Euphemia Chalmers Gray and ended with her divorce and second marriage to the great painter, Sir John Millais.

The most important of his preliminary love affairs was best told by Ruskin himself. The heroine, Charlotte Withers, "a fragile, fair, freckled, sensitive slip of a girl about sixteen," was on a visit to his parents' home.

"She was," Ruskin wrote, "graceful in an unfinished and small wild flower sort of a way, extremely intelligent, affectionate, wholly right-minded, and mild in pley. An altogether sweet and delicate creature of ordinary sort, not pretty, but quite pleasant to see, especially if her eyes were looking your way, and her mind with them. We got to like each other in a mildly confidential way in the course of a week. We disputed on the relative dignities of music and painting, and I wrote an essay nine foolscap pages long, proposing the entire establishment of my own opinion, and the total discomfiture and overthrow of hers, according to my usual manner of paying court to my mistresses. Charlotte Withers, however, thought I did her great honor, and carried away the essay as if it had been a school prize. And, as I said, if my father and mother had chosen to keep her a month longer, we should have fallen quite melodiously and quietly in love, and they might have given me an excellently pleasant little wife, and set me up, geology and all, in the coal business, without any resistance or further trouble on my part. When Charlotte went away with her father, I walked with her to Camberwell Green, and we said good-bye, rather sorrowfully, at the corner of the New road; and that possibility of meek happiness vanished forever. A little while afterward her father 'negotiated' a marriage for her with a well-to-do trader, whom she took because she was bid. He treated her pretty much as one of his coal sacks, and in a year or two she died."

Though his first love was a child for whom he wrote ponderous essays, Ruskin married in 1848, when he was twenty-nine years old, the girl for whom he devised his first fairy story.

Euphemia Gray was an extremely statuesque beauty whom he met at a ball and whom he admired about as much as he might St. Paul's Church or Lincoln Cathedral. Soon after the meeting he proposed, and she accepted him, though the feeling on neither side was stronger than friendship. Marriage did not strengthen it, and when Ruskin brought the handsome young pre-Raphaelite painter, John Millais, to his home to paint Mrs. Ruskin's portrait, the result was swift and inevitable. The artist and his sister fell in love, and being honest and unconventional, they told Ruskin about it. The latter met the situation as few men have ever done. He promptly secured the annulment of his marriage, and at the wedding of his ex-wife and Millais, which followed immediately, he gave the bride away.

This action was as bizarre as that of any Edward Shaw hero and has a prototype only in the astounding romance of Richard Wagner.—*New York Evening World.*

### The Cheerful Man.

What a boon he is in everybody's life! Like a bright sunrise and a gentle wind coming together on a winter morning, he is to all who cross his path. He brushes cheerily along, knocking grief and disappointment out of his path, and leaving it fringed with flowers. Such a man is worth a great deal to the world; more than all his money, his wisdom or his ambitious schemes. People feel a sort of pleasure just seeing him coming down the street, and when they meet him, there is not a cloud in sight.

Such men are a blessing to a town. They make one feel that the town is growing, is getting more beautiful, more than a place just to eat and sleep and make a living in. Sometimes one doesn't meet such men, and then he feels that the town is degenerating, that things are going wrong, and that the evil spirit is trying to put a little malice in his heart, and he goes home and meets his wife's smile with a feeling of suspicion.

A cheerful man doesn't realize the amount of good he is doing in the world. But it is his nature, and he cannot help it. Heaven has picked him out as one of its angels, and he is faithful to his mission. Every day some fellow has been made happy by his pleasant smile and his genial "good morning;" and if one has a bit of business with him, it passes by very much like an exchange of compliments.

To be cheerful may not be so great a duty as to be honest or unselfish, but it certainly widens the radiance of these virtues.—*Ohio State Journal.*

The fish population of the Nile is said to present a greater variety than that of any other body of water. An expedition sent from the British Museum not long ago secured 9000 specimens.



### With the Funny Fellows

Wasn't It a Shit!  
A hen-pecked Mormon named Jas. Took leave of his best of us. "When I reach Cal. I'll at once tel. He cried; but they all called him nam. —The Columbia Jester.

### His Idea of It.

"What is it a sign of when a young man kisses a girl on the forehead?" "Poor eyesight."—*Milwaukee Sentinel.*

### Requests.

Johnny — "No grandmother died and left me some money."  
Tommy — "Huh! Mine died and let me go to a ball game." — *New York Sun.*

### Caution.

Customer — "When was this chicken killed?"  
Waiter — "We don't give dates with chickens, sir; only vegetables." — *Illustrated Bits.*

### The Difference.

Mrs. Crimsonbeak — "When a dog wags his tail he's not mad, is he?"  
Mr. Crimsonbeak — "No, but it's often different when a woman wags her tongue!" — *Yonkers Statesman.*

### Gray Ones at That.

"It isn't hard to understand why some jokes tickle," spoke up Uncle Allen Sparks.  
"It's because of their whiskers." — *New York Mail.*

### The Modern Query.

"Well, they are divorced."  
"No?"  
"Yes."  
"Which gets rid of the children?" — *Washington Herald.*

### A Searching Question.

Stella — "Laugh, and the world laughs with you; weep, and you weep alone."  
Bella — "Did you ever try to find a place to cry in private?" — *New York Sun.*

### Vishnu Up to Date.

It was the terrible car of Juggernaut. Suddenly a man was seen to hurl himself between the ponderous wheels.  
"Drat that carburetor!" he muttered. — *Puck.*

### Wouldn't Dare Say It Now.

The Millionaire's Youngest — "Say, pop, it was Monte Cristo who said 'The world is mine!' wasn't it?"  
The Millionaire — "Sure! But you know muck-rakers were unheard of in his time!" — *Puck.*

### Only Hypothetically.

"That young lawyer friend of yours."  
"Well?"  
"Has he popped the question?"  
"Only hypothetically." — *Louisville Courier-Journal.*

### Knew His Boston, All Right.

"Now, Jimmy!"  
"Yes, dad."  
"Try to keep that Boston girl outen the conservatory. A sudden drop in temperature would kill them flowers." — *Washington Herald.*

### An Alternating Wife.

"Henry, what is this dark hair doing on your coat?"  
"I haven't worn that coat since last month, dear. You were a brunette then."  
"Oh, yes." — *Washington Herald.*

### Preference.

"Which do you prefer," said the artistic young woman, "music or poetry?"  
"Poetry," answered Miss Cayenne. "You can keep poetry shut up in a book. You don't have to listen to it unless you choose." — *Washington Star.*

### Freshman Wit.

"When I graduate I will step into a position at \$20,000 per," modestly exclaimed the Sibley senior.  
"Per what?" skeptically inquired the obliging sophomore.  
"Per-haps!" chortled the noisy freshman.—*Cornell Widow.*

### Great Thing For Managers.

"A French invention, consisting of bulb thermometers, predicts at sundown whether there will be a frost," said the citizen.  
"I've certainly got to have one of them," replied the theatrical manager.—*Yonkers Statesman.*

### The Surprise.

Little Wife — "I'm going to give you a surprise, George. I want some money."  
Elderly Hubby — "That don't surprise me a bit."  
Little Wife — "But it will when I tell you how much I want." — *Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday.*

### Time to Move.

"They're putting out an awful lot of good songs these days," said Mr. Staylate.  
"Yes?" queried Miss Patience Gonne with a yawn.  
"Yes; there's a new march song that's great. It's fine to march to—"  
"Indeed? I wish I had it. I'd play it for you." — *Philadelphia Press.*