

# ANNUAL REPORTS

. . . . OF THE . . . .

Town Clerk, Selectmen,

OVERSEERS OF POOR,

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

. . . . AND . . . .

Superintendent of Schools

. . . . OF THE . . . .

## TOWN OF MIDDLEFIELD

For the year Ending February 1, 1894.

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HUNTINGTON, MASS.:  
HOME NEWSPAPER PUBLISHING CO.  
1894.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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HAMPSHIRE, SS.

To E. D. BLUSH, Constable of the town of Middlefield,

GREETING:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are directed to notify the inhabitants of the town of Middlefield, qualified to vote in town affairs, to meet at the Town Hall in said Middlefield, on Monday, the 5th day of March, current, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, then and there to act on the following articles, to wit:

ARTICLE 1. To choose a Moderator.

ART. 2. To choose under Chapter 386 of the Acts of 1890, and the amendments thereof, such town officers as are required by law to be chosen by ballot, also to vote "Yes" or "No" in answer to the question, "Shall license be granted for the sale of intoxicating liquors in this town?" The polls will be opened at 30 minutes past 10 o'clock, a. m. and may be closed at 30 minutes past 2 o'clock, p. m.

ART. 3. To hear the reports of the Selectmen, Assessors, Overseers of the Poor and School Committee and act thereon.

ART. 4. To choose such town officers as are not required by law to be chosen by ballot.





April 29—Carrie Bell, daughter of Jesse and Hattie Pelkey.  
 Aug. 6—Minnie May, daughter of Fred L. and Jennie L. Peach.  
 Aug. 31—Leon Merwin, son of John T. and Nora V. Bryan.  
 Oct. 12—Milda Elizabeth, daughter of Christmas and Mary M. Ould.

## DEATHS.

1893.  
 May 31—Amasa Blush, 63 years.  
 June 25—Fitz James Babson, 65 years, 4 months, 11 days.  
 Aug. 20—James A. Ryan, 20 years.  
 Sept. 22—Charles Smith, 77 years.  
 Nov. 3—Harriet Nobles, 53 years.  
 Dec. 9—Elbridge G. Wheeler, 91 years, 5 days.

## DOGS LICENSED.

For the year ending December 31, 1893.	
34 males, \$2 each	\$68 00
1 female, \$5 each,	\$5 00
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	\$73 00
June 1, Deduct 20 cents each, Clerk's fees,	\$7 00
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Jan. 1, Paid County Treasurer,	\$66 00

J. McELWAIN, Town Clerk.

## TREASURER'S REPORT.

## RECEIPTS.

For the year ending February 1, 1894.

Cash on hand from last year,	\$1,059 47
Received for rent of Hall,	1 50
Received from J. Robbins, Interest,	6 00
Received from Town of Becket, for Schooling,	75 00
Received from E. L. Hemenway, Secretary, Rebate on salary of School Superintendent,	95 17
Received from State Treasurer, Corporation Tax,	488 24
Received from State Treasurer, National Bank Tax,	124 90
Received from State Treasurer, State Aid,	193 00
Received from Mass. Benevolent Medical Association,	32 50
Received from County Treasurer, Dog Fund,	48 00
Received from State Treasurer, Income Mass. School Fund,	478 06
Received from State Treasurer, Reimbursement, Chapter 243, Acts of 1892,	133 97
Received from Town of Worthington, Schooling,	75 00
Received from Collector of Taxes,	2,408 25
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	\$5,219 66

## EXPENDITURES.

Selectmen's orders,	\$3,192 72
County Tax,	394 32
State Tax,	275 00
Cash on hand to balance account,	1,350 62
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	\$5,219 66

J. T. BRYAN, Treasurer.

I hereby certify that I have examined the books and accounts of the Treasurer and find them correct.

GEO. F. FRIEND, Auditor.

## ASSESSORS' REPORT.

Value of assessed real estate,	\$147,520 00
Value of assessed personal estate,	72,055 00
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	\$219,575 00
Number of polls assessed,	105
Tax on real estate,	\$1,475 20
Tax on personal estate,	721 05
Tax on 105 polls,	210 00
Tax on one poll, added October 1st,	2 00
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	\$2,408 25
Tax rate per thousand,	\$10 00
Number of horses assessed,	112
Number of cows assessed,	283
Number of sheep assessed,	443
Number of neat cattle other than cows assessed,	290
Number of swine assessed,	20
Number of dwellings assessed,	114
Number of acres of land assessed,	14,165
Number of fowls assessed,	837
Taxes abated as follows:	
Charles J. Blush, annual abatement,	\$1 60
F. H. Hughes, poll tax,	2 00
Amelia Houck, tax on real estate,	6 00
S. A. Knox, error in assessing tax,	1 00
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	\$10 60

J. T. BRYAN, } Assessors  
 GEO. W. COTTRELL, } of  
 H. STERNAGLE, Jr., } Middlefield.

## REPORT OF OVERSEERS OF POOR.

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State Lunatic Hospital, Northampton, board of	
D. McCarty, Jr.,	\$169 92
Expenses of Albert Gordan,	71 02
Burial expenses of Dr. E. G. Wheeler,	32 50
	\$273 44

The burial expenses of Dr. Wheeler have been reimbursed to the town, see Treasurer's report.

J. T. BRYAN,	}	Overseers of Poor of Middlefield.
GEO. W. COTTRELL,		
H. STERNAGLE, JR.,		

## SELECTMEN'S REPORT.

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Orders given for State Aid, Chapter 301, Acts of 1889.

George F. Friend,	\$60 00
George W. Howe,	60 00
Mrs. Sarah Rowen,	48 00
Mrs. Carrie Williams,	48 00
	\$216 00

Orders given for repairs on highways and bridges.

H. Sternagle, Jr., Center division, breaking road,	\$94 01	
H. Sternagle, Jr., Center division, highway work,	213 50	
		307 51
J. T. Bryan, Eastern division, breaking road,	126 12	
J. T. Bryan, Eastern division, highway work,	380 05	
		506 17
Orrin Pease, Western division, breaking road,	83 06	
Orrin Pease, Western division, highway work,	316 25	
		399 31
		\$1,212 99



## SCHOOL ACCOUNTS.

Orders from the School Committee have been approved to the following amount, see school report, \$1,199 72.

## TOWN OFFICERS.

J. T. Bryan, Services as Treasurer,	\$25 00
George F. Friend, Services as Auditor,	1 00
Mrs. L. S. Newton, Services as Librarian,	10 00
S. A. Knox, Services as School Committee,	10 00
George W. Cottrell, Services as School Committee,	9 00
J. T. Bryan, Services as Selectman, Assessor and Overseer of Poor,	15 75
George W. Cottrell, Services as Selectman, Assessor and Overseer of Poor,	10 50
H. Sternagle, Jr., Services as Selectman, Assessor and Overseer of Poor, 2 years,	18 25
J. McElwain, Services as Town Clerk,	35 46
E. D. Blush, Collecting Taxes,	40 00
E. D. Blush, Posting Warrants,	2 50
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	\$177 46

## INCIDENTAL EXPENSES.

William G. Atkins, printing town reports and blanks,	\$9 75
C. T. Bagnall, blanks,	1 60
J. T. Bryan, freight, new posts and setting guide boards,	5 00
Berlin Bridge Company, 17 guide boards,	8 50
J. McElwain, bill printing, town ballots,	5 50
E. D. Blush, order of Discount,	36 20
E. D. Blush, order of Abatement,	10 60
E. D. Blush, Counsel and expense on Marcy tax,	3 80
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Amount carried forward,	\$80 95

Amount brought forward,	\$80 95
J. T. Bryan, driving hearse,	7 00
J. T. Bryan, administering oaths,	3 00
J. T. Bryan, Cash advanced for express, postage, repairs and stationery,	9 08
Trustees of Library for books,	12 08
Election Inspectors,	8 00
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	\$120 11

## SUMMARY OF ORDERS GIVEN FOR THE YEAR.

Poor,	\$273 44
State Aid,	216 00
Highways,	1,212 99
School Accounts,	1,199 72
Town Officers,	177 46
Incidental Expenses,	120 11
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	\$3,199 72

## LIST OF JURORS PROPOSED BY THE SELECTMEN.

Arthur D. Pease,	Charles H. Ferris,
George W. Howe,	Daniel Alderman,
George S. Bell,	Edward D. Blush,
William B. Rowen,	John Cody,
Edwin S. McElwain.	

J. T. BRYAN,	} Selectmen of Middlefield.
GEO. W. COTTRELL,	
H. STERNAGLE, JR.,	

I hereby certify that I have examined the accounts of the Selectmen and Overseers of the Poor and find them correct and to correspond with their report.

GEO. F. FRIEND, Auditor.

ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
TOWN OF MIDDLEFIELD

For the Year Ending March 1, 1894.

Number of persons in town May 1, 1893, between 5 and 15,	65
Number of persons between 8 and 14,	34
Number of pupils enrolled,	99
Number of pupils under 5 years,	0
Number of pupils over 15 years,	5
Number of pupils between 8 and 14,	50
Average membership,	76
Average attendance,	68

Per cent of attendance,	90
Number of schools,	5
Number of male teachers,	1
Number of female teachers,	6
Average wages per month,	\$24 00

APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCHOOLS.

Raised by the town,	\$800 00
State school fund,	478 06
From town of Becket,	75 00
From town of Worthington,	75 00
Raised by the town for school supervision,	150 00
Income surplus revenue,	6 00
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	\$1,584 06

SCHOOL EXPENSES.

Wages of teachers,	\$927 40
Care of fires,	11 00
Wood and coal,	61 60
Books and supplies,	74 41
Salary of superintendent,	129 60
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	\$1,204 01
Balance unexpended,	\$380 05
Due from the state May 1st for school supervision,	\$86 40

BANCROFT SCHOOL, 30 WEEKS, 1 DAY.

Wages of teachers.	
Dora M. Sternagle,	\$63 00
F. Lena Smith,	64 40
Henry S. Pease,	90 00
Wood and coal,	20 10
Care of fire,	5 00
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	\$242 50



Average membership,	33
Average attendance,	28 5-6
Percentage of attendance,	85

## FACTORY VILLAGE SCHOOL, 30 WEEKS.

Edda F. Chamberlain, 3 terms,	\$150 00
Wood,	7 50
Care of fire,	1 50
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	\$159 00
Average membership,	4 15-16
Average attendance,	3 37-40
Percentage of attendance,	79

## CENTER SCHOOL, 32 WEEKS.

Mary E. Bryan, three terms,	\$224 00
Wood,	16 00
Care of fire,	1 50
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	\$241 50
Average membership,	25 $\frac{1}{2}$
Average attendance,	23
Percentage of attendance,	90

## NORTH EAST SCHOOL, 32 WEEKS.

Helen M. Wright, three terms,	\$176 00
Wood,	8 00
Care of fire,	1 50
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	\$185 50
Average membership,	6 9-10
Average attendance,	6 $\frac{2}{3}$
Percentage of attendance,	96

## SMITH HOLLOW SCHOOL, 32 WEEKS.

O. Lena Osgood, three terms,	\$160 00
Wood,	10 00
Care of fire,	1 50
	<hr/>
	\$171 50

Average membership,	5 2-5
Average attendance,	5 1-20
Percentage of attendance,	94

The children from the Pease school and one from the North school have been conveyed to the Center school.

## Expense for conveying scholars.

Michael Smart,	\$18 75
Mrs Carroll,	15 00
J. T. Bryan,	73 50
F. Hughes,	26 00
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	\$133 25

GEO. W. COTTRELL,	} School Committee of Middlefield.
S. A. KNOX,	
ARTHUR D. PEASE,	

# ANNUAL REPORT

—OF THE—

## Superintendent of Schools.

To the School Committee of Middlefield:

In compliance with the requirement of your regulations, I herewith present for your consideration my first annual report. It is the fourth of this department and partially covers the time from March 1, 1893, to February 28, 1894.

The schools have been run so late that it has been impossible to secure the date for compiling a table of statistics as was desired. The early preparation of a school calendar will aid in systematizing the work of all connected with the schools, either parents or officers. Allow me to emphasize the fact that there have been fewer changes of teachers during the past year. Just in so far as the town is able to secure permanency in the teaching force the benefits derived from the work of the Superintendent will be continuous. The zeal with which your teachers, in general, have sought to apply the advice and suggestions given them, has rendered my work pleasant.

The advantage and necessity of teachers' meetings is fully appreciated. Two were held last fall, one at Becket and the other

at Chester. At the latter every Middlefield teacher was present. These meetings should be held at frequent intervals throughout the year. There has seemed to be so many obstacles in the way that a great deal of individual work has been done with teachers before and after school. I am convinced, however, that no amount of such work can take the place of the regular teachers' meeting. The institutes held by the state board of education and the county conventions are additional agents in the professional education of our teachers. Attendance upon such institutes should be made compulsory. In no other way will teachers be kept up with the progress of the times.

The regular meetings of your board which I have repeatedly urged should not be overlooked. Only by permitting the Superintendent to confer with the full board in a candid manner regarding special needs of certain schools can best results be obtained.

Your Superintendent was elected and formally accepted the position May 5, 1893. Through the courtesy of the joint board he was allowed reasonable time in which properly and in an honorable manner to discharge prior obligations. He entered upon the duties of his office May 16. The few weeks remaining of the spring term were spent in learning the location and to some extent the conditions and needs of the schools.

September 1, the chairman of the joint board placed in my hands the division of time as determined under the provisions of section 2, chapter 200, of the acts of 1893. Such division gave to this town 2.593 fifteenths of the school days. The number of visits to your schools during the fall and winter terms is 54, of an average length of 2 hours, 27 minutes. The record of my work in each school is open at any time to the inspection of the board. Upon one of my visits to the Bancroft school I had the assistance of State Agent G. T. Fletcher. On account of the remote location of the schools but few short visits have been made. It has been urged upon the attention of the Committee and teachers that the Superintendent be notified whenever a school be not in session upon a regular school day; also whenever there may be a ses-



sion upon Saturday or other holiday. In view of the rights of the other towns in the district the necessity of such a regulation is apparent. The most of the teachers have been careful in this regard but there has been an occasional instance when a teacher has failed to apprehend the effect of such neglect. As a consequence four of the recorded visits do not appear upon the registers.

The schools are the most important trust of the town; their cost is more than any other single item of expense; their interests, both in the immediate present and in the future, far outweigh all others. These interests can best be served only by entire trust and harmony on the part of all; and it is a matter of congratulation that so cordial relations exist between officers, teachers, and pupils, and that the schools receive the hearty support of the citizens.

In the conduct of the schools we have tried to utilize whatever of good there may be in material means and method, and while avoiding startling changes, to work gradually towards a high and uniform standard. In this way, it is hoped, even radical reforms may be wrought while steady advancement is made. Other changes will be suggested, as occasion may require and experience demonstrate their usefulness. Real progress in education is of slow growth, and time is a very important factor.

The figures given above can indicate only partially the quantity of work done. The quality of the instruction given, the influences that are moulding the minds and characters of the children can best be learned from personal observation. Parents should visit the schools often. A great hindrance in the way of making our schools what they ought to be is a want of rational and definite information on the part of the many of their aim, their conditions and their needs. An intimate acquaintance with the schools would beget a sympathy which would be a potent factor for the best good of all. Irregularity of attendance, the great drawback to the progress of the schools, would diminish and improvements in many ways be manifested. Even moderate success is hardly possible unless a good attendance is secured. A careful observance of the five

day rule as required in the registers now furnished by the state will manifestly improve the per cent of attendance. By such rule pupils who are absent for five consecutive days or more are not counted as members of the school during such absence. The matter of dismissals also receives in the new register the attention it deserves.

A strict attention to systematic work is of the utmost importance. To this end a carefully prepared program of daily work has been urged. In some cases very good results are achieved while in others the teacher has seemed wholly unable to prepare or follow such a working plan.

As a means toward securing greater uniformity throughout the schools of the town a course of study has been placed in the hands of every teacher. This course was prepared with great care under the direction of the state board of education and in my judgment is the best that has been devised to meet the needs of your schools.

It would not be uninteresting to notice in detail the improvements which have been made in methods and results. The space allotted to me in this report precludes such a detailed account. In nothing is the progressive tendency more clearly seen than in the methods of teaching reading. There is a marked decrease in the amount of time wasted and a proportional increase in mental power. The effect upon the pupil's penmanship is also manifest and after three years of this training his writing will compare quite favorably with that of the average person, for he has had already two years' practice with slate and paper, while much of his reading has been that of script from the board. The more earnest of your teachers are showing equally good results in the presentation of other subjects. None but those who are willing to make careful preparation can expect to meet the demands of this enlightened age. There must be such a strong desire for self-improvement as will enable them to keep in the van of educational movements. The profoundest scholarship, the ripest culture, together with the graces of the loveliest character, are thought none too good for the humblest place in our schools; none too accomplished



and wise to be intrusted with the care of our children in the formative period of their lives, when right impressions are so easily made, and when mistakes are attended with such direful consequences.

In closing I desire to thank most cordially all those whose sympathy and co-operation I have enjoyed during the perplexities incident to my first year's work in a new field.

Respectfully submitted,

LOUIS A. PRATT, Superintendent of Schools.

Middlefield, February 28, 1894.