

Rathbun-Rathbone-Rathburn

# FAMILY HISTORIAN



**The Family Moves West  
(1720-1850)**

Devoted to  
the perpetuity of  
our common heritage  
an honorable  
Name.

## Letter from the Editor

This issue of our Historian is devoted to the theme of next month's second national family reunion in Des Moines, Iowa — "The Family Moves West." The articles deal with our family's early migration patterns in America, beginning with the children of our immigrant ancestors, John and Margaret Rathbun of Block Island. These children began moving to the mainland in the early 1700s.

Our stories cover this migration and continue through later migrations until about 1850, when the westward tide crossed the Mississippi River. In future issues, we will continue the migration story to cover later generations who crossed the Great Plains to the Far West and the Pacific Coast.

Because of this special migration coverage, we will postpone the conclusion of our story on Justus Henry Rathbone, founder of the Knights of Pythias, until the October issue.

I am pleased to report that our membership has passed the 425 mark for an all-time high. Much of this growth is due to present members, who are "spreading the word" about our Association. Let me urge all of you to contact Rathbuns, Rathbones and Rathburns in your area, by telephone or letter, and tell them about our work. Some members have

sent me lists from local telephone directories, but we have found that letters from me in far-off Virginia get little response. Contact from a home-town "cousin" is much more effective. If you are willing to help, let me know and I will send you a family data form and membership application, which you can reproduce.

As you noticed, our April issue was not mailed until early May. The com-

puter process proved more complex than I had expected. Hopefully, this issue will be in your hands by mid-July.

Advance registration for the reunion in Des Moines has nearly reached the 200 mark! It should be another successful reunion, and I look forward to seeing many of you there.

*Frank*

## Richard Rathbun Takes Part in Unique Awards Program

Richard Rathbun of Palo Alto, Calif., played a major role on Dec. 13, 1984, in a unique international awards ceremony held simultaneously in the United States and Russia, and linked by communications satellites orbiting 22,000 miles above the earth.

Rathbun is president of The Creative Initiative Foundation (See story in April 1984 issue), which each year presents an award to a selected person or group for working toward a "World Beyond War."

The 1984 award went to the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), which has 105,000 physician/members in 54 nations. Accepting the award for the IPPNW were its co-founders — Dr. Bernard Lown of the United States and Dr. Eugene Chazov, Russian deputy minister of health.

A combined American-Russian television audience of more than 3,500 watched on a two-way satellite link as Rathbun presented an award to Dr. Lown in San Francisco, and Dr. Chazov received his award in Moscow. Richard Rathbun met Dr. Chazov on a 1983 visit to Russia.

When the IPPNW was formed in 1980, the founding physicians agreed that there could be no winner in a nuclear war and that they would pool their

efforts in a non-political movement to prevent such a catastrophe.

The Creative Initiative Foundation was formed in 1962 through the efforts of Richard's father, Harry J. Rathbun, now 91 but still active in the Foundation's work.

*(We feel this story is most appropriate for this issue of our Historian. Richard and Harry Rathbun are surely "pioneers" in one of today's greatest challenges — the fight to prevent a nuclear holocaust.)*



Richard Rathbun

**The Rathbun-Rathbone-Rathburn Family Historian is published quarterly by the Rathbun Family Association at 11308 Popes Head Road, Fairfax, Va. 22030.**

(703) 278-8512

**Frank H. Rathbun**  
Editor & Publisher

ISSN 0737-7711

# We've Been Moving Westward for More Than 300 Years

The history of our family for more than three centuries has been a steady move westward — to new and unsettled lands offering greater freedom and a higher standard of living for those willing to work hard and meet great challenges.

Beginning in 1654, when our immigrant ancestors, John and Margaret Rathbun, sailed from England to America, the restless, the ambitious and the venturesome in each generation have pressed steadily westward — always lured by the promise of more and better land, greater opportunity and the call of adventure.

John and Margaret lived briefly in Massachusetts, then spent almost all the rest of their lives on Block Island. Two of their sons and most of their grandsons moved to the mainland, to towns on or near the coastline in Rhode Island and Connecticut. The next two generations moved further inland — to western Massachusetts and Connecticut, Vermont and New York. Succeeding generations continued the drive westward, through Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and eventually across the Mississippi, through Iowa and Missouri, over the Great Plains and finally to California, Washington and Oregon.

Not everyone joined the westward march. Many remained in Rhode Island and Connecticut, where their descendants are still found today. Others stopped in various towns along the way where their descendants still live. Not all who migrated found the land of their dreams. Not all could overcome the hardships of frontier life. Some returned to their homes in the East. Some met with untold hardships, tragedy and early death. But Federal census records document our family's continued drive to the west. (See census figures in accompanying box.)

Unfortunately, few pioneers had the time or inclination to leave a written record of their journeys or their experi-

ences. The invention of photography in the middle 1800s came too late to provide a pictorial record. We can only imagine some of the problems they encountered — epidemics with few doctors; crude log cabin homes heated by inefficient fireplaces; crop failures, food shortages, contaminated water, floods, fires, destructive storms, and travel in uncomfortable wagons over bumpy dirt roads, or no roads at all.

The stories in this issue of our Historian are based on general historical data — the Conestoga Wagon, or prairie schooner; the Erie Canal, gateway to the west; the common migration routes, and some of the reasons for migrating. From various sources, we have culled a few personal experiences of Rathbuns, Rathbones and Rathburns who took part in the early migrations, but they are few and sketchy.

Though we will never know much about the details of their lives, we do know that our pioneering ancestors and cousins were courageous and capable, and we dedicate this issue of the Historian to them — the men and women who expanded our nation across a continent, and transformed 13 tiny colonies into a mighty nation.

*(In this issue, we have confined our coverage only to the major westward migrations. In future issues, we will look at lesser-known movements — northward to Canada, southward to Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, Louisiana and Texas, and even one venturesome Rathbun sailor who settled in Hawaii more than a century before it became a state.)*

State	1790	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840
R.I.	27	33	26	29	40	38
Conn.	29	29	28	31	32	43
Mass.	16	12	8	7	6	12
Vt.	1	7	3	3	4	3
N.Y.	13	44	76	121	136	141
Pa.	1	2	4	5	12	17
Ohio	—	—	8*	28	47	62
Ind.	—	—	—	0	1	6
Ill.	—	—	—	2	3	11
Mich.	—	—	—	—	0	17
Iowa	—	—	—	—	—	4
Mo.	—	—	—	—	—	3
Total	87	127	153	226	281	357

This chart, based on Federal census records, shows the steady movement of our family westward from 1790, the year of the first Federal census, until 1840. The figures represent the number of households headed by Rathbuns, Rathbones and Rathburns, by state, in each census. Some families, especially in the early years, were overlooked, so the actual totals were no doubt somewhat higher. Notice that New York, by 1800, had more than any one of the New England states, and by 1810 had almost as many as all the other states combined.

\*Estimated — Census Figures Lost.

---

# Better, Cheaper Land Lured Rathbuns from Block Island

For 60 years, from 1661 to about 1721, Block Island, R.I., was home to the first three generations of our family in America. John and Margaret Rathbun, our immigrant ancestors, spent most of their lives on the island and both probably died there. Most of their children and grandchildren were born there and many were married there, but only one of their grandsons was to die there.

John and Margaret gave farms on Block Island to all of their sons and at least one of their daughters, and family tradition relates that this was done to encourage all of them to remain on the island. This was not to be. John died in 1702 and Margaret some time after 1716. In the decades of the 1720s and 1730s, most of the Rathbuns left the island for the mainland, settling along the coastlines of Rhode Island and Connecticut. It was the first step in a migration that was to take John and Margaret's descendants across the entire breadth of America in the next 150 years.

We can only speculate on the reasons for the exodus from Block Island, but a desire for land was undoubtedly one of the driving forces. Block Island is a small area, with rocky soil, hardly suitable even for subsistence farming. The early settlers were basically self-sufficient, raising their own cattle and sheep and most of their food. As the population grew, and large families were common in that era, the available land had to be divided into smaller and smaller farms. The island simply could not provide a comfortable living for such a burgeoning population.

By contrast, the mainland only 12 miles away was sparsely settled and land was both plentiful and cheap in comparison. For example, in 1713, Jonathan<sup>3</sup> Rathbun (John<sup>2-1</sup>) bought 100 acres in Colchester, Conn., for forty pounds. In 1716, William<sup>2</sup> Rathbun sold 50 acres on Block Island for fifty pounds, and two years later sold eight acres for thirty pounds.

Another factor was undoubtedly the limited "pool" of marriage partners for young adults. One of the results was cousin marriages. Eight of John and Margaret's grandchildren married first cousins.

There were other obvious reasons for leaving the island. Life there in the early 1700s was not easy. The unprotected island was a tempting target for pirates and French privateers, who attacked it many times. The winter months must have been times of extreme hardship, with bitter winds whipping across the island from the cold North Atlantic. Most of the trees had been cut down over the years, and a dwindling supply of peat was the major source of heat.

The question perhaps should be rephrased — not why they left the island, but why they didn't leave sooner!

Three of John and Margaret's sons — John Jr., Thomas and Samuel — remained on the island and died there. The other two left about 1725 — William to Westerly and Joseph to Exeter, both in Rhode Island.

Of John Jr.'s six sons, Jonathan moved to Colchester, Conn., about 1713; Joshua to Stonington, Conn., about 1724, and John III to Exeter, R.I., about 1725, followed by his brothers, Benjamin, Nathaniel and Thomas, about three years later.

Of the three sons of Thomas<sup>2</sup> Rathbun, Samuel was in North Kingstown, R.I., by 1725; Thomas moved to Exeter by 1733, and John followed him about 1749.

William<sup>2</sup> also had three sons. William Jr. and Jonathan moved about 1712 to Lyme, Conn., and Ebenezer settled in Westerly by 1733.

The three sons of Joseph Jr. accompanied their father to Exeter.

Although Samuel<sup>2</sup> remained on the island, his son Thomas was in North Kingstown by 1723; Abraham lived in Newport, R.I., by 1739, and James moved to Greenwich, Conn., about

1740. The only grandson who stayed on the island was Samuel Jr.

All the grandsons who moved to the mainland lived out their lives in the various towns where they settled. It was their sons and grandsons who would launch the migration into the interior.

This migration began after the end of the French and Indian War in 1763. The war had ended the danger of Indian attacks, and land was much cheaper in the interior. A 50-acre farm in West Greenwich, R.I., was sold for 370 pounds in 1763. A 50-acre farm in Hancock, Mass., near the New York border, sold for 75 pounds in 1767.

It was no wonder that many farmers in R.I. and Conn., hard pressed by the war-fueled inflation, sold their property and moved westward. They crossed Connecticut by land to the Housatonic River and then followed it north. Their destination was the Berkshire Mountain area of western Massachusetts and northwest Connecticut; the Green Mountain area of southern Vermont, and the eastern edge of central New York, along the Hudson River.

Rathbuns who migrated in the 1760-1790 era were:

Job<sup>4</sup> (Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>); to Canaan, Conn., by 1758.

Amos<sup>4</sup> and Daniel<sup>4</sup> (Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>); to Richmond, Mass., about 1765.

Valentine<sup>4</sup> (Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>); to Pittsfield, Mass., by 1774.

Jeremiah<sup>4</sup> (Joseph<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>); to Stephentown, N.Y., by 1770.

Jonathan<sup>4</sup> and Edmund<sup>4</sup> (John<sup>3-2-1</sup>); to Tyringham, Mass., by 1774.

Joshua<sup>4</sup> and Benjamin<sup>4</sup> (Benjamin<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>); to Washington County, N.Y., by 1777.

James<sup>4</sup> (James<sup>3</sup> Samuel<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>); to Dutchess County, N.Y., by 1775.

Benjamin<sup>4</sup> (Benjamin<sup>3</sup> Joseph<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>); to Springfield, N.Y., about 1780.

Nathaniel<sup>4</sup> (Nathaniel<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>); to Stockbridge, Mass., about 1781.

*(continued on page 42)*

# Post-War Inflation Drove Thousands to the Frontier

The end of the Revolutionary War, followed by a severe economic depression, launched a massive migration from the Eastern Seaboard into the uncharted wilderness of present-day New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio, beginning in the early 1790s. Nearly eight years of war had reduced the national economy to a shambles. The continental dollar had become virtually worthless, giving rise to the expression "Not worth a Continental."

Judah Williams, a prosperous farmer in Berkshire County, Mass., whose daughter, Mary, married Amos<sup>5</sup> Rathbun (Amos<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> Johh<sup>2-1</sup>), had served as a captain in the Revolution and spent his own money to feed and clothe his men. He was repaid after the war in the worthless Continental dollars. Unable to pay his taxes, he saw his farm sold at public auction. To show his disgust, he piled his worthless currency in the town square, and burned it. He then moved to Troy, N.Y.

To help recompense war veterans, the new government in the 1790s decided to give them military land grants in New York and Ohio. Few were able to take advantage of the offer and most sold their rights to land speculators at a fraction of their value. The speculators, many of whom purchased thousands of acres this way, then encouraged settlement on their new lands and offered property for \$1 to \$2 an acre.

Struggling with worthless currency, high taxes and mounting inflation, thousands of disgruntled farmers and businessmen sold their land and shops for whatever they could get, and set off for the frontier.

Many of our family's early migrants settled in New York, just over the Hudson River from Massachusetts and Connecticut, but many pushed even further west into central New York. A few went north into Vermont, and at least one went all the way to Pennsylvania. By the early 1800s, they were moving into Ohio.



*Some went by land, moving their families and their household possessions in wagons pulled by horses or oxen, following Indian trails or river valleys, or cutting their own route through the wilderness.*



*Some went by river, loading their goods on rafts or flatboats and making their way west by water — west on the Mohawk, south on the Allegheny and eventually south and west on the Ohio.*

---

# Huge Migration of 1820-1850 Launched Drive into Midwest

One of the greatest migrations in world history took place in the 1820-1850 period of American history, when tens of thousands of settlers poured into the midwestern states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Missouri. Among them were hundreds of Rathbuns, Rathbones and Rathburns.

As in earlier migrations, the reasons for moving varied from family to family, but the driving force was the same — the lure of cheap and fertile land. Newspaper articles, pamphlets and letters from earlier immigrants gave glowing pictures of life and opportunity on the frontier.

The problem had always been getting there. It had meant long, difficult and dangerous trips — overland by wagon or by river on makeshift rafts. The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 eliminated this difficulty. The trickle of immigration turned into a flood. Whole families, whole neighborhoods and even whole towns packed up and headed west.

At one point, the Connecticut State Legislature was so alarmed it considered a law forbidding migration.

Thousands in New England and New York took the Erie Canal to Buffalo, then continued overland or by Lake Erie steamer to Cleveland or Detroit. Some followed the Genesee Pike, which paralleled the Erie Canal, and then headed southwest on crude roads. Some went by rafts down the Allegheny River to Pittsburg, and then on the Ohio River to locations in western Ohio, or in Indiana or Illinois. Others just struck out "cross-country", following river valleys or Indian trails. A few hired professional wagoners to haul them, their families and their belongings to the west.

Throughout the Midwest, along rivers and major wagon routes, new towns sprang up almost overnight. Enterprising businessmen opened general stores, taverns, hotels, sawmills, gristmills, blacksmith and cooper shops. Doctors and lawyers opened offices.

Churches, schools and postoffices followed. Land speculators prospered, banks and newspapers were begun.

Michigan offers a graphic example of the mushrooming growth. In 1830, then a territory, it had a population of less than 30,000, mostly Indians and descendants of early French settlers. Then what was called "Michigan Fever" spread throughout New England and New York. A surge of immigrants pushed the population to 80,000 in 1834. It more than doubled in the next three years to 175,000, and reached 212,000 in 1840 — an increase of 182,000 in one decade.

Most of the immigrants, and most of our family, were farmers, seeking fertile land at bargain prices. But we had our share of business and professional men:

Perry Rathbun and members of his family were coopers in Washington County, Ohio. Alfred Rathbone was a

lawyer in Grand Rapids, Michigan; his brother, Amos, was a businessman and their brother Charles was a hotelkeeper. Another brother, Nathan, was a lawyer and justice of the peace in Maumee, Ohio. Benjamin Rathbun owned a hotel in Buffalo. Daniel Clark Rathburn, his son, Daniel Jr., and a cousin, Sereno Rathburn, were doctors in Meigs County, Ohio. Three Rathbun brothers were blacksmiths — George in Pennsylvania, Cornelius in Iowa, and Sebra in Michigan. Amiziah Rathbun operated a tavern in Cordova, Illinois. David Rathbun was a miller in Athens County, Ohio. Solomon Rathbun was a lawyer and postmaster in Knox County, Indiana.

By 1850, thousands of our family members had moved west, and were living on farms and towns in a broad path from New England across New York and Ohio all the way to the Mississippi.

---

The following is excerpted from an 1838 newspaper published in Wisconsin, and entitled "A Few Hints for Emigrants."

"Emigrants would find it to their advantage to go by way of Lake Erie and Lake Michigan, which not only would be the most pleasant but also the cheapest and quickest. The general fare from Buffalo, N.Y., to Green Bay or Milwaukee is, in the cabin, from 20 to 25 dollars, and deck passage from six to eight dollars. The deck for such passengers is in the midship, where they are protected from the weather, and they are also entitled to a berth, but no bedding; the provisions they furnish themselves. Hundreds and thousands of very respectable people go as deck passengers. . .

"Another mode of immigrating is by land in large wagons and four to six horse teams. Under all circumstances, either by land or water, the farmer ought to take his teams and waggons along

with him, as he will need them upon his arrival or when traveling the prairies, where he will find plenty of food which costs him nothing.

"The prairies are the garden of the west. The soil is of the richest and finest land. From May to October the prairies are covered with tall grass and weeds, and in the season of flowers the eyes and all the senses receive the highest gratification. At the time of strawberries, thousands of acres are reddened with the finest quality of this delicious fruit, several of which have been found to measure over two inches in diameter. . . This is one of the greatest countries in the west for raising stock. Thousands of hogs are raised without much attention or expense. The beef raised here is the best in the world. Poultry is raised in great profusion. . .

"This is the country for the good things of the earth. All the grains, fruits and roots grow most luxuriantly. . ."

# Few Settlers Left Stories of Their Pioneering Days

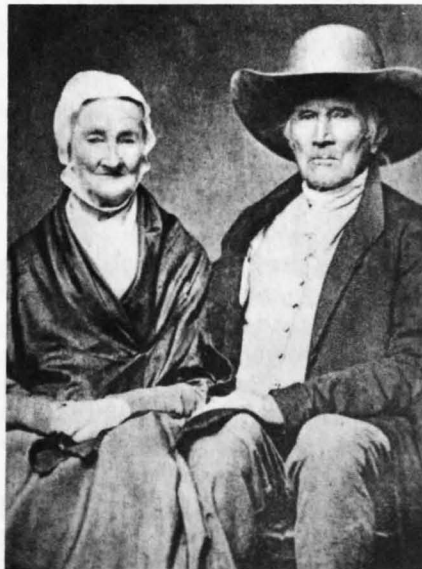
*First-hand accounts of early migration and frontier experiences are rare. Few of the pioneers had the time or inclination to keep diaries or write of their activities. The following are examples of the very few such accounts which have survived in our family:*

One of the earliest western pioneers of whom we have a record is Edmund Rathbone (1737-1801), son of John<sup>3</sup> Rathbun (John<sup>2-1</sup>). After serving in the Revolution, he moved about 1785 with his wife and eight children from Tyringham, Mass., to Delhi, Delaware County, N.Y., where he operated a mill. About 1796, probably accompanied by his oldest son, John, and John's family, Edmund set out for the west in a horse-drawn wagon. They probably followed the Susquehanna River valley south into Pennsylvania and then followed the Ohio River westward. On their trip, they fell in with another west-bound immigrant, Isaac Taylor, and his family. They all continued together and settled near present-day Wheeling, West Virginia, then part of Ohio County, Va. They were joined in the next year or two by Edmund's wife, Mercy, and younger children — Edmund Jr. and Lovica, both of whom married children of Isaac Taylor. Edmund died there in 1801, and his son John in 1802.

Edmund Jr. moved on down the Ohio River in 1805 and settled at Belpre on the Ohio side, where he manufactured grindstones and operated a cooper's shop for 10 years. In April 1815, he and his family loaded their belongings onto flatboats and started down the river for Illinois. Illness forced them to interrupt their journey for 14 months at Lawrenceburg, Ind., but in July 1816 they took to the river again. At Little Pigeon River they disembarked. Edmund purchased a team and wagon and they traveled by land across southeast Indiana to Vincennes on the Wabash River, which was to be their home for 10 years. Edmund's brothers, Gideon and David, fol-

lowed him to Ohio about 1806, and their older brother, Perry, moved to Belpre about 1815.

In the winter of 1802, Acors Rathbun (1772-1855), son of Joshua<sup>5</sup> Rathbun (Joshua<sup>4-3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>), loaded his family and possessions into a covered wagon at Richmond, R.I., and headed for Oneida County, N.Y., where his brother, Benjamin, had settled several years earlier. The weather was cold and stormy and the trip was difficult. Near present-day Utica, the wagon went out of control on a steep hill and overturned. His wife



*Acors Rathbun (1772-1855) and his wife, Sarah (Peckham) Rathbun (1777-1859), pictured about 1850.*

and five small children, the oldest only six, were hurled out, but none was injured. Finding that one of the wagon's axles had been broken, Acors found a tree of the proper size, chopped it down and formed a new axle. Replacing the broken one, he hitched up his team and renewed the trip. They founded a new town in the wilderness, which was called Rathbunville for many years. It was later renamed Verona Mills.

Clark Rathbun (1760-1815), son of Jonathan<sup>4</sup> Rathbun (John<sup>3-2-1</sup>), left West Greenwich, R.I., about 1797 and took his family probably by wagon to Butler County, Pa., where he built a log cabin in Penn Township. In 1808, leaving his oldest son, Thomas, and a married daughter to maintain the cabin, he took the rest of his family and moved further west to Ohio. They settled in Clark County, where the son Thomas joined them three years later. The married daughter stayed in Pennsylvania.

Two other early Ohio settlers were William and Daniel Rathbun, sons of William<sup>5</sup> Rathbun (Daniel<sup>4</sup> William<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), who left Granby, Conn., about 1804 and drove ox teams and wagons across country to Ohio — William to Trumbull County and Daniel to Gallia County. One of William's grandsons later related that his grandfather made two trips from Connecticut to Ohio with ox teams, possibly bringing his wife, two young children and personal belongings on the second trip. It is about 500 miles from Granby, Conn., to Trumbull County, so he traveled a total of about 2,000 miles. A younger brother, Elijah Rathbun, migrated to Ohio a year later.

We have an exact account of the route followed by another early cousin, who went from Westchester County, N.Y., to Licking County, Ohio, in the fall of 1805. Thomas Wells Rathbone, son of John<sup>5</sup> Rathbone (John<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>), was living in Westchester when his wife of three years died at the age of 24, leaving him with a two-year-old son. In his grief, Rathbone left the child with relatives and joined a company of migrants from Connecticut and Massachusetts on their way to Ohio. Their wagon train crossed the Hudson River at Fishkill Landing, crossed the Delaware River at Easton, the Schuylkill at Reading, the Susquehanna at Harrisburg, and then continued past Carlisle and over the

*(continued on page 40)*

(continued from page 39)

Allegheny Mountains through Washington County, Pa.; crossed the Ohio River at Wheeling, and arrived at Zanesville, Ohio, after a six-week journey. They settled at present-day Granville, where Rathbone, a graduate of Columbia College, conducted the first religious services on Nov. 17, 1805. A log schoolhouse was built the following year and Rathbone became the first teacher. He moved a few years later to Kentucky.

Solomon Rathbone (1778-1860), son of Daniel<sup>4</sup> Rathbun (Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>), an attorney, left Mendon, N.Y., in October 1817 with his wife and two small children. They hauled their household goods by wagon to Olean Point on the Allegheny River, loaded them on a flatboat, and started south on the river. At Pittsburg, they transferred to a larger flatboat and set off down the Ohio River, heading for Vincennes, Ind. They reached Cincinnati on Dec. 22, but winter had set in and the river was so filled with ice he decided to unload his goods and wait for spring. In April, they boarded a flatboat again and resumed their trip, disembarking near what is now Golconda, Ill. They built a cabin in the wilderness, but encountered only troubles. The entire family fell ill with fever and ague, and in August, Solomon's nine-year-old daughter died of "bilious fever." They then moved to Vincennes, their original destination, where Solomon operated a hotel. In October 1822, his sister, Abigail (Rathbun) Beecher and her family decided to join them in Indiana. They made their way to Pittsburg, loaded their goods on a raft and started down the Ohio River. The raft crashed into rocks in rough water and was wrecked. The family managed to get ashore safely, but most of their possessions were lost. They finally reached Solomon's home only to have Mrs. Beecher's husband die in 1823 of the same fever which had killed Solomon's daughter. Five years later, Abigail's oldest son died, and she "gave up" on the west, and returned to Pennsylvania. She returned to Indiana in 1830 and died there in 1879, a few weeks short of her one hundredth birthday.



*Chest brought in 1801 from Rhode Island to Herkimer County, New York, by Thomas Rathbun (1765-1835), son of John<sup>4</sup> (Samuel<sup>3</sup> Thomas<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>). It is now owned by his descendant, Beverly Gillette of Frankfort, N.Y.*

Clarissa (Rathbone) Smith, daughter of John<sup>5</sup> Rathbone (John<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>), moved in 1816 with her husband and children from New York City to Edwardsville, Illinois. The journey, she later wrote, was made on flatboats and prairie wagons, and they endured many hardships. Ten years later, she sent her two teen-aged daughters back to New York for a year's schooling. The girls were six weeks on the road, by stagecoach, sleeping overnight at farmhouses along the way.

Amiziah Riley<sup>5</sup> Rathbun (Job<sup>4</sup> Benjamin<sup>3</sup> Joseph<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>) moved in early 1836 from Howard, Steuben County, N.Y., to McDonough County, Ill., and in the fall he headed west on horseback to find a homesite. At the Green River, near present-day Geneseo, he stopped at the home of Dr. Thomas Baker and persuaded the doctor to join him on the trip. The two men made their way to the Mississippi River, spent one night at a trading post, and then started north on

horseback, seeking a likely spot. They found it at present-day Cordova, on a wide bend in the river. A small log blockhouse built by soldiers three years earlier stood on a high rocky ledge, overlooking the river and surrounded by gentle slopes. The two men staked out claims side by side and rode to Prophetstown to record their claims. They returned the following spring, Amiziah and his family in a high "Pennsylvania Schooner," painted blue in the style of the day. The wagon was pulled by four yoke of oxen and was followed by several head of horses and cattle tethered to it. Amiziah, or Ami as he was known, built a substantial wood home which later became a tavern.

Samuel<sup>6</sup> Rathbun (Robert<sup>5</sup> John<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3</sup> Thomas<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>) bought several hundred acres in the late 1830s in Wyandotte County, Ohio; laid it out as a town, now Whartonburg, and sold lots to settlers for the next 15 years. He is considered the founder of the city.



In May 1812, Jonathan Coffin<sup>5</sup> Rathbone (Coggeshall<sup>4</sup> Abraham<sup>3</sup> Samuel<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), a retired sea captain, decided to seek his fortune in the west (See Vol. 1, No. 2). He and his wife, Mary (Fosdick) Rathbone, sold their home and most of their possessions in Nantucket, Mass., and traveled by stagecoach to Philadelphia. On July 9, he hired Conrad Miller, a professional wagoner, to haul him, his wife and their belongings to Pittsburg, a 250-mile trip. Miller's receipt for payment is still in the possession of Jonathan's descendants:

"Rec'd. of Jonathan C. Rathbone the above goods in good order which I promise to deliver in Pittsburg without delay of time, also his family in like manner, for which I am to receive One Hundred and Seventy Dollars. Phila. July 9th, 1812. Conrad Miller (his mark)."

At Pittsburg, Jonathan hired space on a riverboat and embarked on the Ohio River for Cincinnati, 350 miles away. Arriving there in September, he bought a team and wagon, and proceeded 20 miles further west to Clermont County, where he purchased 236 acres at \$5 an acre. He then paid \$78 to have a log house built, and they moved in that fall.

Lucy Rathbun (1804-1847), daughter of Ashley<sup>5</sup> Rathbun (Isaiah<sup>4</sup> Jonathan<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>), married James Kennedy in 1828 and moved to Sherburne, Chenango County, N.Y. In 1847, knowing that she was dying of pneumonia, she urged her husband to remarry after her death so that their four young children, aged four to 13, could have a mother. She even suggested a candidate — an unmarried schoolteacher friend living about 50 miles distant. After Lucy's death, and after several unsuccessful experiences with housekeepers, Kennedy rode 50 miles to visit the teacher, Hannah Chapman. He told her of his wife's suggestion and asked her to marry him. Hannah agreed, and became the children's stepmother.

Jeanette (Rathbun) Cleveland (1815-1891), daughter of Chaplin<sup>6</sup> Rathbun (Jonathan<sup>5-4</sup> John<sup>3-2-1</sup>), moved with her parents in 1820 to Sandusky County, Ohio. As a young girl there, she earned the money for her first dress by picking strawberries and carrying them on foot eight miles to Sandusky, where she sold them for 12½ cents a quart. With the

money, she bought calico, at 25 cents a yard; took it home, and made her first dress. In 1831, she married James Cleveland and helped her husband clear land by hauling rails with a yoke of oxen while he cut trees and split them into rails. She used the rails to build fences. The following spring, with a new baby fastened to her back with a shawl, she planted corn on the newly cleared land, and hoed it throughout the summer.

Jeanette's sister, Catherine (1818-1893), married Christian Huss in 1837 and became a frontier nurse. She traveled by horseback, often for many miles, to treat the sick and injured. Among her patients were Indians living on a nearby reservation, who called her "The Little White Angel."

Still another sister, Lucinda (1819-1868), who married Morris Lemmon, became the neighborhood midwife, as well as a nurse. She also traveled on horseback, and was one of the few persons who would treat victims of the highly contagious cholera. She wore a voluminous black cape, and neighborhood children, who noticed that new babies often appeared after her visits, were convinced that she carried babies under the cape.

A severe depression hit the United States after the War of 1812, causing financial havoc for farmers who had purchased farms at inflated prices and high interest rates, expecting prices to keep rising. Jonathan<sup>5</sup> Rathbun (Jonathan<sup>4</sup> John<sup>3-2-1</sup>) had moved about 1812 from Tyringham, Mass., to Avon in Hartford County, N.Y., where he purchased a farm with a substantial mortgage. In 1820, still owing \$2,000, he was unable to keep making payments. All but 50 acres of his farm was sold at public auction to pay off the mortgage. In December, 1820, he sold the remaining 50 acres for \$1,380 and in the following spring moved to Ohio with his wife and several children, including some who were married. They settled in Green Creek Township, Sandusky County, where he built a log cabin home a quarter mile west of present-day Clyde. He died on his farm in the summer of 1824 aged 52, after collapsing while at work.

A cluster of Rathbun brothers and cousins settled between 1815 and 1817

in Newburgh, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, now part of Cleveland. They included Edmund<sup>5</sup> Rathbun (Jonathan<sup>4</sup> John<sup>3-2-1</sup>); his three sons, and his brother, Joseph, with his four sons and several daughters. They had previously lived in Avon, Hartford County, N.Y. Edmund's son, Edmund Jr., later told how he had made the trip in November 1817 over snow and ice on a horse-drawn sleigh. He purchased 44 acres and added another 125 acres a year later. By 1820, there were eight Rathbun families in Newburgh, all living on Harvard Street. The area was known as the Rathbun Settlement.

Two of Joseph's sons were among those who did not prosper in the west. Pearson Rathbun (1792-1843) fell into debt and his farm was sold at auction in 1828. His brother, Milton, died in 1822, aged 25, when he and a teen-aged neighbor boy were overcome by methane gas while cleaning out a 20-foot well. He left a widow with two babies, aged one and three.

Benjamin Rathbun (1788-1840), son of William<sup>4</sup> Rathbun (Job<sup>3</sup> Joseph<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), left Howard, N.Y., on January 31, 1834, with his wife and five children in a wagon pulled by a team of horses. They stopped at White Pigeon, Mich., site of a Federal land office, where Benjamin left his wife and younger children and pushed on further west with his son, Benjamin Jr., aged 16. In the Rock River valley of Illinois, now Ogle County, he found a spot he liked, laid out his claim, and built a log cabin 12 feet square. He and his son slept in their wagon while building the cabin. They returned to White Pigeon that fall and found his wife pregnant. A baby girl was born the following February, and five months later, the entire family left for their new home, arriving on July 26, 1835. Their only neighbors were Indians and the nearest town, Dixon, was 20 miles away.

In 1824, Nathan Williams<sup>5</sup> Rathbun (Amos<sup>5-4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>) helped organize a group of 14 men in Brownville, N.Y., and set off for Lenawee County, Mich. They went overland to Buffalo, where they chartered a steamer, the Red Jacket, for Detroit. From there, they walked 50 miles to the site of present-

(continued on page 42)

(continued from page 41)

day Tecumseh, arriving on May 21, 1824. Rathbun moved a few years later to Maumee City, Ohio, at the mouth of the Maumee River, which he expected to become a major port. He purchased large areas of river frontage, cleared the land and began building docks. His property soon became almost worthless when nearby Toledo developed into the area's port city.

Dyer Rathbun (1777-1859), son of Daniel<sup>5</sup> (Valentine<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>), moved to Michigan from Oswego County, N.Y., in the summer of 1835 with his wife and seven children. They traveled with two wagons, pulled by four oxen and two horses, carrying all their household goods and farm tools. They probably followed the Genesee Pike, just south of the Erie Canal, to Buffalo, and then followed the southern shore of Lake Erie through Pennsylvania, Ohio and into Michigan. They settled in Shiawassee County, where Dyer bought a farm for \$1.25 an acre and built a substantial home of logs cut in the surrounding forests and lumber hauled from a sawmill at Dibbleville, now Fenton. The house became a major stop-over for stagecoach drivers between Detroit and Lansing.

Jonathan Niles Rathbone (1793-1847), son of James<sup>5</sup> (Valentine<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>), and his sister, Charlotte (Rathbone) Hillebert, with her family, migrated about 1816 from Onondaga County, N.Y., to Clark County, Ill., in company with a group of neighbors. They traveled in a wagon train to the Ohio River, then loaded their wagons and teams on keel boats and followed the Ohio to the Wabash River. They went up the Wabash, using poles to move the boats against the current, to Clark County. Rathbone, in 1836, helped lay out the village of Auburn, where he became a justice of the peace and Circuit Court clerk.

Benjamin Rathbun (1790-1873), son of Moses<sup>5</sup> John<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>) decided to "go west" in 1818, and took his wife and young son from Otsego County, N.Y., to Toledo, Ohio, then a frontier hamlet called Maumee. It was just being surveyed to be laid out into

lots for sale to settlers and speculators. Benjamin bought the first lot ever sold there. They spent the early summer of 1818 in the little village, sharing a log cabin warehouse, dug into the bank of the Maumee River, with another migrant. The only other building was the cabin of a Frenchman who earned his living selling liquor to the Indians. The Rathbuns were plagued with hordes of mosquitoes and were discouraged by the loneliness. Then Benjamin learned that there were legal problems with the title to his new property. It was the final straw. In August, he and his family packed up and left, first for Sandusky, and then to Buffalo a year later. (See Vol. 2, Nos. 1, 2 and 3) for a full story of Benjamin Rathbun's fascinating career.

Elijah Rathbun (1805-1888), son of Elijah<sup>5</sup> (Thomas<sup>4-3</sup> Samuel<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), a stonemason in Lisbon, Conn., decided in 1836 to take his savings and invest in land at Chicago, then a tiny village. He traveled there, inspected the land, and concluded that the town had no future because it was surrounded by swamps. He returned to Connecticut with his money. He returned to Chicago in 1863 and found that the property he could have bought in 1836 for a few thousand dollars was worth more than \$100,000,000!

## Migrants

(continued from page 36)

Joshua<sup>4</sup> (Nathaniel<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>) to Tyringham, Mass., about 1791.

Joseph<sup>5</sup> (Jonathan<sup>4</sup> John<sup>3-2-1</sup>); to Schoharie, N.Y., by 1787.

Thomas<sup>5</sup> (Thomas<sup>4-3</sup> Samuel<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>); to Washington County, N.Y., by 1788.

Benjamin<sup>5</sup> (Samuel<sup>4</sup> Jonathan<sup>3</sup> William<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>); to Shaftsbury, Vt., by 1790.

John<sup>4</sup> (John<sup>3</sup> Thomas<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>); to Hancock, Mass., by 1790.

Gamaliel<sup>5</sup> and Walter<sup>5</sup> (Thomas<sup>4-3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>); to Hancock, Mass., by 1790.

Joseph<sup>5</sup> (John<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>); to Pittsfield, Mass., by 1788 and to Lucerne, Pa., by 1790.

Amos<sup>5</sup> (Thomas<sup>4-3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>); to Shaftsbury, Vt., by 1790.

Wait<sup>4</sup> (Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>); to Troy, N.Y., by 1790.

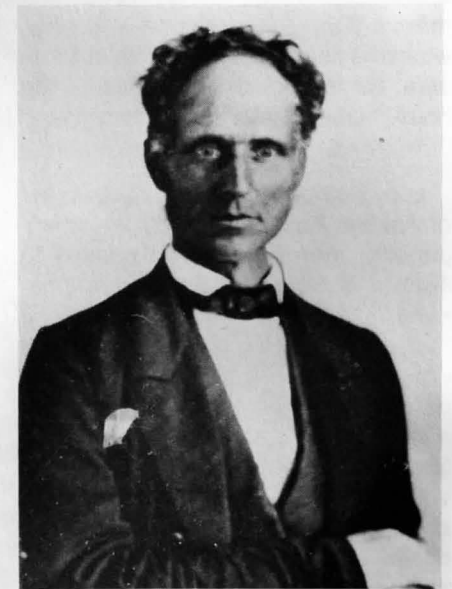
Amos<sup>5</sup> (Amos<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>); to Troy, N.Y., by 1790.

## Ezra Rathbun Picture Found In Des Moines

A picture of the Rev. Ezra Rathbun (1809-1879), the grandson of a Rathbun slave (See Vol. 4, No. 4), has been provided for us by the First United Methodist Church of Des Moines, Iowa. Mrs. Ruth G. Leupold, chairman of the church's Records and History Committee, located the picture in the church archives. It was obviously made some years before his death.

Ezra and his father, Abner, who was also a minister, were the founders of the church, which was the first church of any denomination in Des Moines.

Abner, whose middle name appears as Rasom (probably Ransom) in the



Rev. Ezra Rathbun  
(1809-1879)

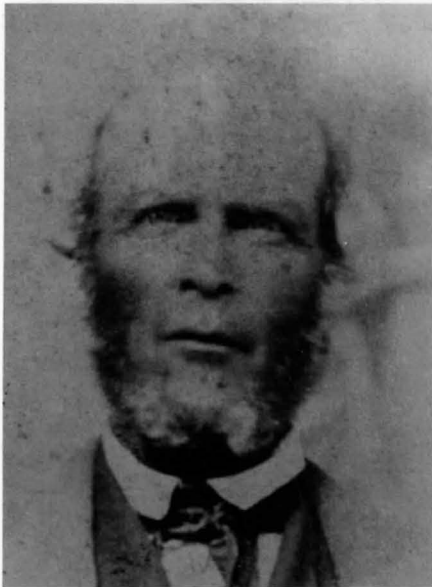
church records, was known as "Father Rathbun" in Des Moines Methodism.

The church archives relate that Abner was of Portuguese ancestry and that his wife was a Frenchwoman named Mary Maria LaHenry. The story of Portuguese descent has never been established, and other records show Abner's wife as Elizabeth. More research is required.

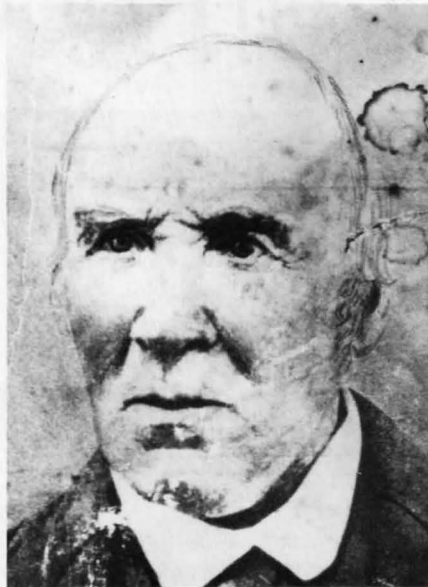
Both Abner and Ezra are buried in the Canfield Cemetery near Des Moines, just outside the town of Ivy.

---

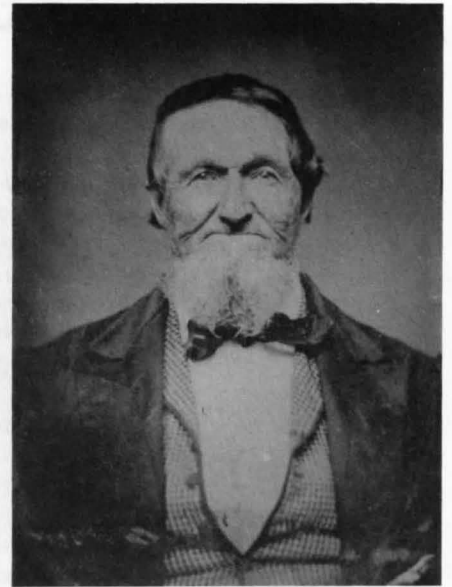
# Pictures of Some Pioneers



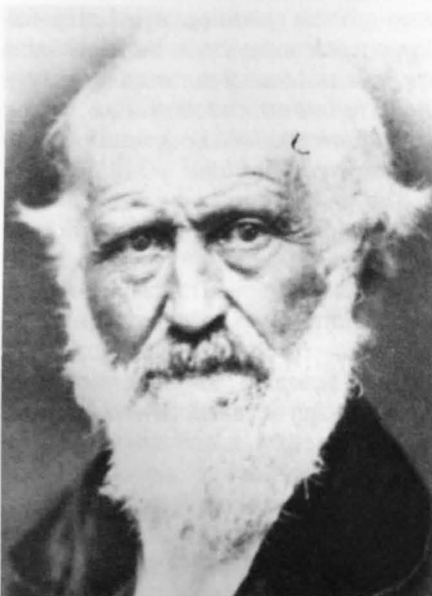
*Thomas Rathbun (1798-1878), son of Thomas<sup>5</sup> (John<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3</sup> Thomas<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>). Settled in Wisconsin 1843.*



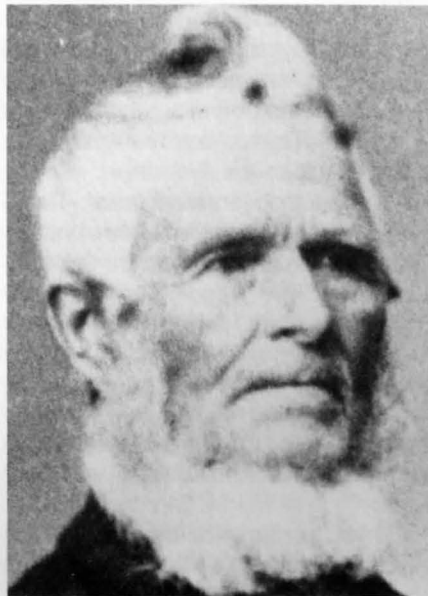
*Nathaniel Rathbun (1798-1871), son of Walter<sup>5</sup> (Thomas<sup>4-3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>). Settled in Michigan 1831; Minnesota by 1857.*



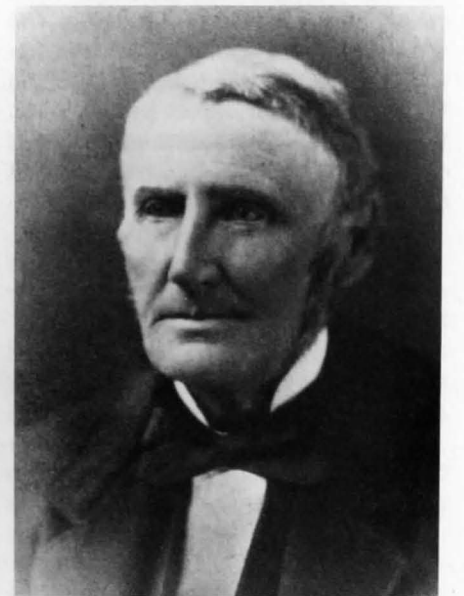
*Lucius Rathbun (1800-1875), son of Jonathan<sup>5</sup> (Jonathan<sup>4</sup> John<sup>3-2-1</sup>). Settled in Ohio 1821; Michigan 1841.*



*Hiram Rathbun (1800-1864), son of Edward<sup>5</sup> (Amos<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>). Settled in Michigan 1844.*



*Charles Rathbun (1796-1875), son of Amos<sup>5</sup> (Amos<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>). Settled in Ohio 1825; Michigan 1844.*



*Saxton R. Rathbun (1805-1875), son of Saxton<sup>5</sup> (Valentine<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>). Settled in Ohio 1832; Illinois 1845.*

# Conestoga Wagon Became Symbol of Westward March

The covered wagon has become the symbol of America's march to the west, and with good reason. Wagons, covered with white cloth or canvas and pulled by horses or oxen, carried American immigrants, including our ancestors, as they moved generation by generation from New England through New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio, and on through the west.

The early wagons were of varied size and construction, but by the early 1800s most of them fell into the category of "Conestoga Wagons." This type of vehicle was developed in Pennsylvania but the basic concept was picked up and adapted all along the eastern seaboard. Minor details varied from wagon to wagon, area to area, but the overall construction was the same.

The bed, or box, of the wagon might range from 10 to 14 feet long, and about 42 inches wide. Eight to 12 wooden bows were arched over the top to support the cover, and inserted into iron staples along the sides. Two or three wooden planks formed the sides, which were usually about 30 inches high. The beds and sides were often curved upward at the front and rear to keep the contents from spilling out on steep hills.

Rear wheels were between four and five feet in diameter, with 12 to 14 spokes. The front wheels were somewhat smaller. An oak tongue, or pole, about 12 feet long projected in front to accommodate two teams of horses or two yoke of oxen.

The horses or oxen were controlled by a "jerk line" fastened to the left lead animal. The driver either walked on the left side of the wagon or rode the left rear horse or ox. The seat in front of the wagon, familiar in pictures of the far west, did not appear until later in the 1800s.

The wagons carried up to several tons of furniture, food and other items, and could travel up to 30 miles a day, depending on the terrain. The average was about 15 to 20 miles. The wheel rims



were broad, to avoid sinking in mud or sand, and were bound with iron to withstand the wear and tear of long journeys.

Each wagon carried a wooden "tar box," filled with a mixture of pine tar and lard, which was used to lubricate the axles. An iron-bound wooden bucket and a wooden feed box were carried to water and feed the animals.

The wagon covers were usually made of sail canvas, but sometimes of homespun, coarse linen. They were traditionally white. The wagon bed was customarily painted blue while the wheels and undercarriage were barn red, giving the rig a colorful look. But although they were colorful and rakishly built, with their upswept ends, the wagons were tough and able to withstand long and hard wear.

Our ancestors, who traveled west in these dependable vehicles, had to be almost as tough as the wagons, on trips that often lasted for weeks or even months.

In New England and western New York, the wagons followed fairly well-

defined routes, often ancient Indian trails, for much of their journeys. As they moved further west, however, the early pioneers had to make their own trails through the wilderness, usually following river valleys to avoid impassable mountains. Most of our ancestors probably followed the Mohawk Valley through central New York state for much of their westward trips.

The journeys must have been challenging for the men, frightening for the women, and exciting for the older children. They also must have been terribly noisy, with wheels rumbling, harnesses and undercarriages creaking, horses' hooves clomping, the shouts of older boys herding livestock behind the wagons, and often a baby crying in the wagon.

It was a far cry from today's travels on smooth superhighways or jet airplanes; it was slow, hazardous and uncomfortable, but hundreds of our ancestors bumped and bounced their way westward for many rugged miles to open America's frontier and pave the way for development by their descendants.

# Erie Canal Gave Settlers A 'Gateway to The West'

Few events in American history have had such a great and immediate impact as construction of the Erie Canal, begun in 1817 and opened to traffic in 1825. It was the greatest engineering feat in America up to that time — 363 miles long, connecting the Hudson River at Albany with Lake Erie at Buffalo. It averaged four feet deep and was 28 feet wide at the bottom and 40 feet across at the top. It cost more than five million dollars and took eight years to complete.

It was to be one of the best investments ever made. It became the "Gateway to the West," and opened up middle America to a stream of eager immigrants.

When N.Y. Governor DeWitt Clinton first proposed the canal, the idea met with skepticism. Thomas Jefferson called it "little short of madness." Other critics scornfully called it "Clinton's Ditch."

But its supporters were enthusiastic. One of them was John<sup>5</sup> Rathbone (John<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>), a New York City merchant who helped finance the project and considered it one of the greatest events in American history. Another was his nephew, Benjamin<sup>6</sup> Rathbun (Moses<sup>5</sup> John<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>), in whose Buffalo hotel the Canal Commission met in 1822 and decided to make Buffalo the canal's western terminus.

Work was begun July 4, 1817, at Rome, N.Y., and proceeded from there in both directions. In some areas, workmen had to cut through solid rock, and aqueducts had to be built to carry the canal over 18 rivers. Part of the excavating work was contracted out to farmers along the route, who were paid about ten cents for each cubic yard of dirt excavated. Farm hands and young men jumped at the chance to work on the canal, at wages of \$8 to \$12 a month. One of them was Thomas<sup>6</sup> Rathbun (Thomas<sup>5</sup> John<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3</sup> Thomas<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>) of Norway, N.Y., who was 19 when the work began. No doubt his brothers and many others in our family also worked on the canal.



*The Erie Canal through the Mohawk Valley as it looked nearly a century ago. (Picture courtesy of Beverly Gillette).*

But most of the work was done by Irish immigrants, who had fled the potato famine in Ireland. Many had been given free transportation for agreeing to work on the canal — for fifty cents a day plus food and lodging. They worked six days a week, from dawn to dark. Hundreds died of malaria when the canal was cut through mosquito-infected swamps. No one connected the malaria with the mosquitoes, even when both disappeared after the first frost.

The Erie Canal was completed in 1825 and officially opened on Oct. 26. Celebrations were held in every city and hamlet along the route. A festive party was held in Benjamin Rathbun's Eagle Hotel in Buffalo, and a huge parade through town was led by a militia company commanded by his brother, Lyman.

DeWitt Clinton became a hero and his brightest predictions came true. The cost of carrying wheat and other produce from Buffalo to New York City dropped from \$100 a ton to \$6. Land values skyrocketed. In Buffalo, lots purchased for \$200 in 1815 were sold for \$20,000.

Immigrants heading west filled the canal's barges on their return trips — an estimated 40,000 in the first year. The

entire cost of the canal was recovered in less than 10 years.

There were two types of canal boats, each pulled by horses on a towpath alongside the canal. Freight boats carried cargoes and passengers. They were towed by one horse and traveled about two miles an hour. Passengers cooked their own meals, supplied their own bedding and paid only a penny a mile. Packet boats were designed for passengers only, were pulled by two or three horses, and made four miles an hour. The fare was four cents a mile with meals, three cents without.

The boats were as long as 100 feet, but were limited to 14 feet in width — the size of the locks. Horses, which pulled towropes as long as 80 feet, were changed every 10 to 15 miles, as were the drivers, usually boys. It was a 24-hour operation.

Once in full operation, it took 25,000 men and boys to keep the boats going — captains, steersmen, deck hands, cooks, lock-tenders, teamsters, liverymen, towpath inspectors and maintenance men.

It must have been a colorful and exciting trip through the canal, as our early cousins traveled over it on the first leg of their journey to the west.

# Genealogy: The Fifth Generation in America

**150. BALDWIN<sup>5</sup> RATHBUN** (Thomas<sup>4-3</sup> Samuel<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), born Sept. 5, 1785, at Lisbon, Conn., and married about 1812 Elizabeth Mowrey, born April 21, 1790, the daughter of Amos and Ruth Mowrey. He served as a musician in the War of 1812, and later became a mason in Lisbon, Providence and North Kingstown, R.I. He died Aug. 27, 1847, at North Kingstown. Elizabeth died there on March 1, 1875.

## CHILDREN

See Corrections 07-2 p 31

ELIZABETH, born about 1812; married Edward Capron.

JEDEDIAH, born July 30, 1817; married Emeline G. Tourgee.

HENRY B., born about 1822; married (?) Hannah \_\_\_\_\_.

ALICE C. born about 1825; married John C. Carr on April 19, 1848.

GEORGIANNA, born about 1827; alive in 1850, no further data.

**151. JAMES<sup>5</sup> RATHBUN** (Walter<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), born May 13, 1768, on Block Island, and married there about 1790 Waity Littlefield, born Sept. 12, 1772, daughter of Caleb and Mary (Dickens) Littlefield. Both died sometime after 1810, probably on Block Island, the exact dates not known.

## CHILDREN

SAMUEL, born in June 1791; married Mary Mitchell.

WALTER, born Feb. 22, 1794; married Sarah Rose.

LYDIA, born Jan. 1, 1801; married (1) James Dewey on Aug. 13, 1826, and (2) Giles Dunn on Feb. 14, 1839.

HANNAH, born in 1810; married Abel Sprague in April 1832.

**152. BENJAMIN<sup>5</sup> RATHBUN** (Elijah<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), born Sept. 14, 1766, at Groton, Conn., and married about 1790 Elizabeth Packer, birth date unknown,

daughter of John and Hannah (Avery) Packer. They moved to New York City where both died of yellow fever in October 1795.

## CHILDREN

LUCY, born about 1792; married Lodowick Latham.

NATHAN JAMES, born Aug. 6, 1794; married Phoebe Wood.

**153. SAMUEL<sup>5</sup> RATHBUN** (Elijah<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), born July 15, 1776, at Groton, Conn., and married about 1795 Abigail Burroughs, born in 1776, the daughter of Nathan and Amy (Williams) Burroughs. He was a sailor and served in the Conn. militia in the War of 1812. He died April 3, 1840, at Groton. Abigail died there Sept. 13, 1853.

## CHILDREN

EIZABETH, born April 16, 1796; married Joseph Fish on Sept. 29, 1824.

NANCY, born Oct. 25, 1798; died unmarried on June 4, 1854.

DESIRE, born Aug. 14, 1800; married William E. Chester, her sister's widower, on March 25, 1842.

BENJAMIN, born May 3, 1802; married Eliza Latham.

JOHN SAWYER, born Nov. 21, 1803; married Lucy Ann Packer.

LUTHER MORGAN, born Sept. 8, 1805; married (1) Henrietta Potter, and (2) Mary Chipman.

HENRIETTA, born Dec. 13, 1807; married William E. Chester on July 10, 1831, and died Jan. 23, 1841.

LATHAM, born Dec. 8, 1809; married Eleanor J. Wilbur.

WILLIAM, born Dec. 14, 1811; married Harriet Rice.

SAMUEL, born May 8, 1813; married Phoebe Packer.

CALVIN, born Dec. 16, 1819; married Rebecca Prentice.

See Corrections 12-2 P 30

**154. ELISHA<sup>5</sup> RATHBUN** (Elijah<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), born Dec. 14, 1782, in Halifax, Vt. He married Jan. 5, 1804, at Groton, Conn., **Lucretia Packer** born April 9, 1787, daughter of John and Hannah (Avery) Packer. He was a sea captain until he was 60 years old, and was deacon of the Fort Hill Baptist Church at Groton for 28 years. He died May 6, 1857, and she died Nov. 16, 1857, both at Groton.

## CHILDREN

LUCRETIA, born Aug. 14, 1804; died Sept. 13, 1804.

ELISHA, born Oct. 6, 1805; married Wealthy Wolfe.

LUCRETIA, born Nov. 18, 1807; married Ransford Ashby Aug. 8, 1824.

GRISWOLD PACKER, born July 25, 1810; married (1) Eleanor Packer, and (2) Phoebe Packer.

HANNAH, born Nov. 27, 1812; married Simeon Ashby Sept. 19, 1830.

LUCY, born Dec. 22, 1814; married George Packer Oct. 15, 1851.

ALDEN H., born Nov. 25, 1816; married Hannah Avery June 13, 1838. He was a sea captain and was drowned near New Orleans on March 23, 1839, nine months after his marriage. No known children.

CHARLES, born Oct. 4, 1820; died Sept. 5, 1841.

BRIDGET, born April 12, 1824; married William H. Potter on April 4, 1842.

MARY ELIZABETH, born Feb. 9, 1826; married Henry S. Stark Aug. 10, 1843.

MARGARET, born Feb. 17, 1830; married David N. Prentice on April 22, 1846.

SIMEON, born Jan. 12, 1832; died July 23, 1852, at sea.

**155. JAMES<sup>5</sup> RATHBUN** (James<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), born about 1758, probably in Greenwich, Conn. He was married about 1780 to a wife whose name is not known. He is probably the James Rathbun who was living in New Cornwall, Orange Co., N.Y., in 1790, and in Schaghticoke, Rensselaer Co, N.Y., in 1800. No further information.

**CHILDREN**

JAMES, born Feb. 7, 1781; married (1) (Polly Crane), and (2) Elizabeth

?DORCAS, born about 1783; married Staatz Jewel.

OTHERS, names unknown.

**156. ?SAMUEL<sup>5</sup> RATHBUN** (James<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), born about 1762 and married about 1790 to a wife whose name is not known. He served as a sailor in the Revolutionary War, and later moved to New York City, where he was living in 1800 and 1810. No further information.

**CHILDREN**

?JOHN, born about 1792; married Eliza \_\_\_\_\_.

?CATHERINE, baptized Aug. 13, 1795, in Richmond, Staten Island, N.Y.; no further information.

OTHERS, names unknown.

**157. JONATHAN COFFIN<sup>5</sup> RATHBONE** (Coggeshall<sup>4</sup> Abraham<sup>3</sup> Samuel<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), born Sept. 7, 1764, on Long Island, N.Y., and raised on Nantucket Island, where he married Nov. 20, 1788, Mary Fosdick, born Dec. 21, 1768, daughter of Benjamin and Lydia (Coffin) Fosdick. He was a sea captain for many years, then moved in 1812 to Clermont County, Ohio, where Mary died of consumption on Dec. 19, 1818. He married on May 17, 1821, Sarah (Whipple) Clift, born Aug. 20, 1786, daughter of Samuel and Sarah (Leonard) Whipple, and widow of Elisha Clift. Jonathan died Sept. 20, 1838, in Clermont County, and Sarah died there June 23, 1841. (See story of his eventful life in Vol. 1, No. 2).

**CHILDREN**

(By Mary)

MARY, born Oct. 4, 1798; died Oct. 15, 1798.

(By Sarah)

MARY FOSDICK, born March 25, 1822; died Dec. 6, 1840.

THOMAS WORTHINGTON, born Sept. 21, 1824; married Martha Wyatt.

**158. JETHRO<sup>5</sup> RATHBUN** (Coggeshall<sup>4</sup> Abraham<sup>3</sup> Samuel<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), born June 28, 1767, probably at Nantucket, and married there in October 1793 Elizabeth Baxter, born June 21, 1772, parentage unknown. He served as a sailor in the Revolutionary War, and was a seaman after the war. He reportedly died in the late 1790s at sea somewhere off Africa. Elizabeth married, about 1810 at Yarmouth, Mass., Samuel Hopkins, and died in July 1867.

**CHILD**

MARY, born Aug. 19, 1794; married (1) Benjamin Smith in 1820, and (2) John DeGaris.

This concludes the fifth generation of our family in America. The next issue will begin the sixth generation.

**WE THANK** — the following members who have sent in family records, pictures and other material in recent months — Ruth M. Rathbun, George and Linda Rathbun, Hugh Rathbun, J. Corbett Rathbun, Gerald Reser, Rosma Limbeck, Jerrold Rathbun, Loren Marvin, Lois Swett, Paula K. Boone, Nancy Holesapple, Jeanette Busboom, Robert R. Rathbun, Kathryn Phillips, Fred C. Rathbun, Glenn E. Rathbun, Frank E. Rathbun, Mary Lou Sharp, Douglas Hampson, Mildred Rathburn, John Bowen, Diane Croad, Fran Collord, Robert Greene, Edison Rathbone, Mrs. Emmet Rathbun, Dr. Donald Rathbun, Bill Lieuellen, Beverly Gillette, Alyce Rathburn, Hazel Jones, Phara Holdredge, Jack Rathbun, Sharon Jahn, Charles Murray, Victor Streeter, Marjorie Gibson, Lydia Littlefield and R. Van Rathbun.

# Births

**BORN** — April 24, 1985, Levi Paul Gunn to Steve and Patricia (Rathbun) Gunn of Superior, Neb. Patricia is the daughter of the late Paul Henry<sup>9</sup> Rathbun (William<sup>8-7</sup> John<sup>6</sup> Perry<sup>5</sup> Edmund<sup>4</sup> John<sup>3-2-1</sup>).

**BORN** — March 13, 1985, Rebecca Katheleene Kershner to Patrick and Darcy (Holdredge) Kershner of Overland Park, Kansas. Darcy is the daughter of our members, Virgil and Phara<sup>10</sup> (Rathbun) Holdredge (Ottie<sup>9</sup> Marvin<sup>8</sup> David<sup>7</sup> Lewis<sup>6</sup> David<sup>5</sup> Edmund<sup>4</sup> John<sup>3-2-1</sup>).

**BORN** — March 18, 1985, Christine Newland to Richard and Sharon Patricia (Rathbun) Newland, at Fairlawn, N.J. Patricia is the daughter of Clarence P.<sup>10</sup> Rathbun (Oscar<sup>9</sup> George<sup>8</sup> Corbett<sup>7</sup> Gideon<sup>6</sup> Tibbets<sup>5</sup> John<sup>4-3</sup> Thomas<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>).

**BORN** — Dec. 18, 1984, Michelle Lynn Mantegna, at Las Cruces, N.M., to William and Cynthia (Spadone) Mantegna. Cynthia is the daughter of our members, Donald and Joyce<sup>10</sup> (Rathbun) Spadone (Charles<sup>9-8</sup> William<sup>7</sup> Joshua<sup>6</sup> Elias<sup>5</sup> Joshua<sup>4</sup> John<sup>3-2-1</sup>).

# Corrections

The death year of Joseph Sheffield Rathbun, whose picture appeared on the front cover of our January 1985 issue and on page 5, was 1859, not 1850. The correct year was listed on page 10.

Eliza Rathbone was named associate curator of the Phillips Art Collection in Washington, D.C., not assistant curator as reported in our last issue. There is a big difference — as associate curator she is the Collection's third-ranking officer.

One of the children of Erastus<sup>5</sup> Rathbun (Thomas<sup>4-3</sup> Samuel<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>) was omitted in our last issue (Vol. 5, No. 2, Page 30). His son, Baldwin Rathbun, was born March 28, 1811, and married Sophronia Green.

# Obituaries

**DIED** — March 13, 1985, Arthur S. Rathbun, 87, of Pawcatuck, Conn. He was the son of Ira Stewart<sup>8</sup> Rathbun (Elisha<sup>7</sup> Griswold<sup>6</sup> Elisha<sup>5</sup> Elijah<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>) and Laura Barnett. Survivors include his wife, Mildred (Eccleston) Rathbun; a son, Arthur S. Rathbun Jr., one of our members; a daughter, Mrs. Joyce Mitchell; three grandchildren, and a sister, Mrs. Adeline Cardella.

**DIED** — Nov. 24, 1984, James Atkinson Rathbone, 55, of Cincinnati, Ohio. He was the son of John<sup>8</sup> Rathbone (John<sup>7</sup> Samuel<sup>6</sup> William<sup>5</sup> Wait<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>) and Evelyn Midkiff. Survivors include three sons, James A. Jr, Joseph and Jason; a brother, David Rathbone, and his former wife, now Mrs. Carole Klumb. Mr. Rathbone was a charter member of our Association.

**DIED** — April 13, 1985, Asa Dearing, 83, in Vancouver, Wash. He was the son of Claire<sup>8</sup> (Rathbone) Dearing (Albert<sup>7</sup> Amos<sup>6-5</sup> Thomas<sup>4-3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>). Survivors include his widow, Celia; a son and three daughters; nine grandchildren, and three sisters.

**DIED** — April 28, 1985, Harriet V. Rathbun, 91, of Mystic, Conn. She was the widow of Fred Seneca<sup>9</sup> Rathbun (Charles<sup>8</sup> Seneca<sup>7</sup> John<sup>6</sup> Joseph<sup>5</sup> Joshua<sup>4</sup> John<sup>3-2-1</sup>). She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Lois Swett, one of our members.

**DIED** — May 10, 1985, Louie E. Rathbun, 82, at Glen Ellyn, Ill. He was the son of John<sup>8</sup> Rathbun (Rowland<sup>7</sup> Acors<sup>6</sup> Joshua<sup>5-4-3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>). Survivors are his wife, Amy (Gathman) Rathbun; six children; a brother, Richard; a sister, Annie; 13 grandchildren, including our member, Van Rathbun, and six great-grandchildren.

**DIED** — Feb. 18, 1985, at Herkimer, N.Y., Mrs. Dora D. Rathbun, aged 77. She was the widow of William Clark<sup>8</sup> Rathbun (George<sup>8</sup> Ralph<sup>7</sup> Samuel<sup>6</sup> Wilbur<sup>5</sup> Jeremiah<sup>4</sup> Joseph<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>) and the daughter of Herman and Anna (Ranft) Decker. There are no close survivors.

# Our New Members

Mary Eade  
Cupertino, Calif.

Mary Gagliardi  
Yucca Valley, Calif.

Douglas E. Hampson  
San Diego, Calif.

Nancy Holesapple  
Portland, Texas

Gail Jacobson  
Weston, Conn.

Hazel Jones  
Lincoln, Kansas

Helen Landis  
Canton, Ohio

Charles A. Rathburn  
Irving, Texas

Donald C. Rathburn  
Morgan Hill, Calif.

Edward C. Rathburn  
Irvine, Calif.

Lt. Col. James P. Rathburn  
Manassas, Va.

Michael D. Rathburn  
Holland, Mich.

Robert L. Rathburn  
Escondido, Calif.

James Roe  
Wheaton, Ill.

Mary Lou Sharp  
Minneapolis, Minn.

James F. Wachter  
Seattle, Wash.

Raymond D. Wachter  
Enumclaw, Wash.

Mrs. A.J. Watts  
Camarillo, Calif.

# People

**JOHN H. RATHBONE** of Denver, Colo., has been named councilor of the Rocky Mountain Association of Geologists. Rathbone, known as "Jack," is also consultant for "Outcrop," the association's monthly newsletter. He is the son of Samuel Harvey<sup>8</sup> Rathbone (Samuel<sup>7</sup> Charles<sup>6</sup> Samuel<sup>5</sup> John<sup>4</sup> Joshua<sup>3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>).

**HAZEL ELMIRA RATHBURN** and Thomas Joseph LeClaire were married Feb. 14, 1985, at Athol, Mass. Hazel is the daughter of our member, Alyce G. (Williams) Rathburn and the late Clarence Harris<sup>9</sup> Rathburn (Henry<sup>8</sup> Valentine<sup>7</sup> John<sup>6</sup> Tibbetts<sup>5</sup> John<sup>4-3</sup> Thomas<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>).

**R. VAN RATHBUN** has become assistant pastor of the First Reformed Church of Kalamazoo, Mich. He was graduated May 13 with a Master of Divinity degree from Western Theological Seminary. Van, who is one of our members, is the son of Raymond<sup>10</sup> Rathburn (Louie<sup>9</sup> John<sup>8</sup> Rowland<sup>7</sup> Acors<sup>6</sup> Joshua<sup>5-4-3</sup> John<sup>2-1</sup>).

**BEVERLY GILLETTE** of Frankfort, N.Y., is a charter member and secretary of the new Mohawk Valley Chapter of the National Society of Colonial Dames of the Seventeenth Century. She is the daughter of James<sup>9</sup> Rathbun (James<sup>8</sup> John<sup>7-6</sup> Thomas<sup>5</sup> John<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3</sup> Thomas<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>) and Ruth Slaughter. Also a charter member is Margery Foss of Newport, N.Y., a granddaughter of Martha<sup>8</sup> (Rathburn) Kimball (John<sup>7-6</sup> Thomas<sup>5</sup> John<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3</sup> Thomas<sup>2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>). Both Beverly and Margery are members of our Association.

**WINIFRED BLAND**, of Block Island, R.I., has sent us an old Rathbun bible she bought at a local "tag sale." Printed in 1842 for the American Bible Society, it has no pages for recording family data, but on the inside back cover is written, "New Shoreham, Jan. 3, 1846, Mary Roathburn, Her Book." We have identified her as Mary (Mitchell) Rathbun (1794-1873), the wife of Samuel<sup>6</sup> Rathbun (James<sup>5</sup> Walter<sup>4</sup> Samuel<sup>3-2</sup> John<sup>1</sup>), who died in 1840.