

Rathbun-Rathbone-Rathburn

FAMILY HISTORIAN



John Tobey Rathbun
(1810-1893)

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

Letter from the Editor

This issue marks the end of our tenth year. It is hard to believe that our Association and Historian are that old! We are now one of the "older" active family associations in the country.

We are also one of the largest. As we go to press, our membership has just reached 566 (counting husbands and wives, that actually means more than 1,000 members!). That equals our record breaking total of 566 in 1989.

As usual, this October Historian brings the news that "Dues Are Due!" A renewal form is enclosed with this issue, with a deadline date of December 5. We are again keeping the dues at \$15, as we have since 1984.

However, we must again charge an extra \$5 for those who miss the deadline. In other words, \$20 for procrastinators! That \$5 will cover the cost of removing and then replacing names on our computer mailing list. It will not cover the extra work and aggravation required. So PLEASE, send your renewal check before the deadline; do it right now, before you forget!

I have had to close the books on our "lost checks" problem. We have recouped \$627 of the missing \$870, thanks to 19 members who have sent in replacement checks. We are still "out" \$243 — which means about 12 checks averaging \$20 each.

A final plea — if you sent us a check last January or February, look at your

records to see if it has cleared. If not, it means your check was among those lost or stolen. Please send a replacement check. And my sincere thanks to the 19 members who did check their records, and sent new checks.

Special thanks this month to Haybron Adams and Art Hutchinson. Haybron sent me five computer disks containing

DUES ARE DUE!

A membership renewal form for 1991 is enclosed with this issue of the Historian. Dues are again \$15, but we must charge an extra \$5, or \$20 total, if you do not renew by the deadline of December 5. It will save you \$5 if you renew on time, so send your check now. If you put it aside, you may forget.

all the Rathbun-Rathbone-Rathburn data in the Mormons' International Genealogical Index (IGI). Art used his state-of-the-art equipment, including a laser printer, to print the data for me — a stack of sheets nearly eight inches thick. I will be busy all winter going through the information.

Plans are moving ahead for our national reunion next July in Springfield, Illinois. Complete details, and registration forms, will be sent with the January issue.

We are trying to arrange for "Abraham Lincoln" himself as a guest speaker, and "Mary Todd Lincoln" as another guest. We will be visiting Lincoln's home and his tomb in Springfield, and also the reconstructed village of New Salem, where he lived as a young man.

The reunion theme will be "The Lincoln Connection," stressing the many links of our family members to the Lincolns. Roy Rathbun of Streeter, Illinois, is working with Hazel and me to help plan our best reunion ever. We hope to see a record turnout, with lots of familiar faces and a lot of new ones.

The first annual reunion of the Rathbun-Rathbone-Rathburn Association of Rhode Island was held July 29, at

Stonington, Conn., and was a great success. President Helen M. Rathbun reported that 56 cousins attended, including many members of our national Association.

The event was organized by David E. Rathbun, Frank E. Rathbun and Donald J. Rathbun, aided by Rosemary and June Rathbun. A popular spot for the day was a genealogy table operated by Frank E. Rathbun.

Other big hits were the license plates on Richard Rathbun's car, bearing the letters "RATHBN," and on Scott Rathbun's car, "RTHBN."

The Rhode Island group is also pushing our campaign to have a postage stamp issued in honor of Captain John Peck Rathbun. Helen Rathbun reports that they have had responses from Rhode Island's senators and congressmen.

From Fairfax, Virginia, Hazel and I send our best wishes to all of you for a bright and happy Christmas season!

Frank

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Frank H. Rathbun

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Single copies of any 1983-1989 issue are \$4 each. Earlier single issues (some available only in xerox) range from \$2 to \$5, depending on our supply. Write if interested.

Two Killed in 1881 Shootout; Rathbun Aids Town Marshal

One of the enduring traditions of the Old West is the shootout between the "good guys" and the "bad guys" on Main Street. This is the story of just such a gunfight, with a Rathbun cousin starring as one of the "good guys."

Edwin Fillmore Rathbun was born March 11, 1855, in Barry County, Michigan, a son of Ebenezer⁶ Rathbun (Ebenezer⁵ Thomas⁴ Jonathan³ William² John¹).

Edwin's father joined the Union Army at the age of 48 in 1862, and died a few months later of pneumonia and typhoid in an Army hospital at Nashville, Tenn. Edwin was only seven at the time, the tenth of Ebenezer's 12 surviving children.

When he was in his middle teens (somewhere between 13 and 17; his descendants are not sure), Edwin left home to "Go West" as did many young men and boys in the booming years after the Civil War.

He ended up in Kansas, where for several years he was a buffalo hunter on the Great Plains. In the late 1870s, he became a stagecoach driver between Emporia and Dodge City, Kansas.

A few years later, he was put in charge of the Southwest Stage Company's line between Caldwell, Kansas, and Fort Reno, Oklahoma, and was entrusted with the delivery of U.S. Mail in Kansas and Oklahoma.

By 1881, he was living in Caldwell, and on April 28, that year, at the age of 26, he was married in nearby Wellington to Seraphina Mabel Hawley. They settled down in Caldwell, and that was where he found himself in the middle of a famous gun battle.

The principal player in the fight was a 27-year-old Irishman named Mike Meagher, who had earlier served several years as town marshal in Wichita, where one of his deputies was the later-famous Wyatt Earp.

Meagher moved to Caldwell in 1877, served briefly as marshal, and then was elected mayor in April 1880. Two months later, he and some of the town's police force were arrested by county officials and charged with complicity in the murder of George Flatt.

The charges were dropped, but Mayor Meagher continued to get into trouble. He was arrested for gambling, fighting and selling bootleg whiskey. He did not run for reelection in 1881, but the



*Edwin Fillmore Rathbun
(1855-1922)*

new mayor nominated him for town marshal. The city council rejected him, however, and he served for only five days.

A man named John Wilson became marshal, and it seems likely that Edwin Fillmore Rathbun, known as Ed, was named as one of his deputies.

Marshal Wilson soon found that he had taken over a tough, challenging job, and things came to a head on the night of December 17, 1881.

A local "tough guy" named Jim Talbot headed a gang of thugs who frequently terrorized the little town. Talbot apparently had been a friend of George Flatt,

and he had sworn revenge on Mike Meagher for his role in Flatt's murder.

After a night's drinking spree, Talbot and his gang woke up on the morning of December 17 with hangovers and bad tempers.

Mike Meagher had heard of Talbot's threat to kill him, and went to Marshal Wilson that morning to seek assistance. Wilson, accompanied by Meagher, went to the Moore Bros. Saloon, and confronted Talbot and his men — identified as Tom Love, Bill Mankin, Bob Munson, and Dick Eddleman. They were heavily armed with revolvers and Winchester rifles.

When Tom Love fired his revolver into the air, Marshal Wilson tried to place him under arrest. When Love resisted, Wilson asked Meagher to help him. At that, Talbot and his men rushed toward Meagher, who ran outdoors and up a stairway which led to the town's opera house.

Wilson, guns drawn, stood at the bottom of the stairs and stated that he would shoot any man who tried to go up. In the confusion, Love disappeared, and in the face of Marshal Wilson's guns, Talbot and his gang dispersed.

The town was quiet for a few hours, but about 1 p.m., Wilson arrested Jim Martin, another of Talbot's men, for brandishing his pistol, and took him to the courthouse, where he was fined by the local judge. Martin had no money with him, so Wilson and a deputy agreed to escort him to the bank.

On the way there, they were attacked by Talbot and three of his men, who seized the prisoner and fled south on Main Street, shooting as they ran.

Wilson started after them, accompanied by his deputy, W.D. Fossett, by Mike Meagher, and by Ed Rathbun, who enters the narrative at this point. Newspaper reports of the gunfight do not identify Rathbun as a deputy mar-

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John T. Rathbun, Farmer, Became Noted City Leader

This is the story of a Rathbun doctor's son, who began life as a farmer and ended up as one of New York state's leading citizens — a legislator, businessman, industrialist, hotel owner, educator, church leader and financier.

John Tobey Rathbun was born March 8, 1810, in Ballston, New York, one of nine children of Dr. John Zacheus⁵ Rathbun (Daniel⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹) and his wife, Celia Tobey. Dr. Rathbun practiced medicine for some 40 years, first in Ballston and then in Scipio, N.Y., where he moved in 1822.

John T. Rathbun spent his teen years in Scipio, where he attended the local schools. Although both his brothers, Valentine and Lorenzo, followed in their father's footsteps and became doctors, John decided to be a farmer.

As a relatively young man, he operated one of the most prosperous farms in the Scipio area, specializing in wheat. In 1835, he was married to Abigail Maria Reed. They had four children in the next eight years, but tragedy struck in 1844, when their youngest daughter died aged one. A year later, his wife died at the age of 29.

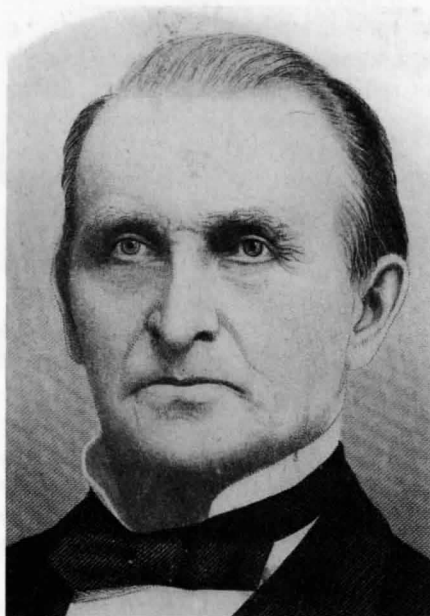
By that time, Rathbun was a strong opponent of slavery, an active member of the Whig Party, and had served seven terms as a Whig member of the Cayuga County Board of Supervisors, including two years as chairman. In 1845 he was elected to the New York State Assembly, where he served three terms.

While serving in the Assembly, at the state capitol in Albany, he became a close friend and political ally of William H. Seward, former New York governor and senator, and later President Lincoln's secretary of state. When Seward led the New York Whigs into the new Republican Party, Rathbun was one of his key followers.

It was in Albany that Rathbun met Sarah Maria Benjamin, the only child of

Simeon Benjamin, described as the wealthiest man in the city of Elmira. They were married Sept. 22, 1847, and in the next 10 years they had four children. One daughter died at the age of six, but three sons lived to maturity.

Mr. Benjamin, in the early 1850s, became ill, and urged his son-in-law to



*John Tobey Rathbun
(1810-1893)*

move from Scipio to Elmira and take over the Benjamin family business interests.

About 1855, Rathbun agreed. After 30 years of farming, he sold his farm and moved his family, including his aging parents, to Elmira. (Both parents died in Elmira, the mother in 1858, and the father in 1868, at the advanced age of 97). The move to Elmira ushered in a new life for the Rathbuns.

Soon after his arrival, Rathbun purchased one of Elmira's leading hotels, the Brainard House, renovated it extensively, and renamed it the Rathbun House. For many years, it was one of

the most popular hotels in southern New York. It was to be the first in a long and profitable line of investments.

A Tioga County historian commented in 1879, "To tell in full the business life of Mr. Rathbun would almost be to tell the history of every large business enterprise in the city of Elmira."

He became a director, and then president, of the Chemung Railroad Company, a division of the Northern Central Railroad; director of another local company which built the Tioga Branch of the Erie Railroad, and was a director for nine years of the Canandaigua Railroad. He helped found the first steel rolling mills in Elmira, and was an original investor and major force behind the La France Manufacturing Company, one of the country's primary builders of fire engines.

Rathbun was deeply interested in education, and soon after moving to Elmira he became a trustee of the Elmira Academy. One of his first moves was to suggest a system of free public schools for all children in the city — a radical idea for that time. Other trustees at first ignored his proposal, but Rathbun persisted.

It probably helped that his wealthy father-in-law paid more taxes than any other single interest in the city.

The Board of Trustees finally agreed to support Rathbun's idea, and with his influence in Albany, the State Assembly in 1859 approved Elmira's plan for universal free public education — one of the earliest in the country.

Rathbun was also an early believer in advanced education for women, and served as trustee and president of the Elmira Female College.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Rathbun became an active supporter of Lincoln's call for troops. When New York found itself short of funds to arm and equip its militia Rathbun joined with several other Elmira men and put up \$80,000 to send the 23rd New York Regiment into action.

During all these years, Rathbun was also busy as executor of the Benjamin estate, and later carried out the many charitable bequests made in Simeon Benjamin's will.

Benjamin died Sept. 1, 1868, leaving a large fortune, earned primarily in banking and property investments. A deeply religious man, his will left nearly \$100,000 to religious, educational and charitable organizations, including \$30,000 to the Presbyterian Church and \$25,000 to the Elmira Female College. His only surviving daughter, Sarah, and Rathbun, her husband, inherited the balance of the estate.

Rathbun also found time to devote many hours to religion. He was a trustee for more than 25 years of Elmira's First Presbyterian Church. Another of his interests was journalism, and for many years he served on the board of directors of the Elmira Daily Advertiser.

In 1880, Rathbun was appointed a commissioner of the New York State Reformatory at Elmira, serving for six years. The experience gave him a special interest in prison reform, which led to his appointment as chairman of the New York Commission for Prisons and Penitentiaries.

Also in 1880, his son John (by his first wife) died, unmarried, at the age of 40. A few years later, his wife became ill, and in 1887, they decided to spend the winter in Florida, hoping her health might improve. She died there on Jan. 25, 1888.

Rathbun was devastated by her death, and was hit by another tragedy in 1891 when his only surviving daughter, Mary Elizabeth, died on June 17 at the age of 53. She had married Samuel Van Campen and had two sons.

Despite these tragedies, Rathbun in 1892, when he had already passed his 82nd birthday, still continued his active life. According to an 1892 county history, "Mr. Rathbun is to be seen daily at his modest office on Baldwin Street, as keen in his business instincts and projects as though life was just beginning for him, his eye as bright and clear as it ever was, and his mind as active and fresh."

That year, however, he developed what his doctors diagnosed as a "carbuncle at the base of his brain," and which took his life on January 23, 1893, two months before his 83rd birthday.

His obituary, in part, stated: "Few men in this city were better known and none more generally honored and respected. . . Mr. Rathbun leaves as a legacy to his children a name which will be honored in this community for all time."

John Tobey Rathbun's oldest son, George R. Rathbun, was involved in a tragic episode as a young man. In 1857, he was married to Mary Fitch, described as "the beautiful daughter of Alvah Fitch, a well-to-do farmer in Scipio."

Their troubles began when they learned that they would not be able to have children. About 1860, they adopted a little girl named Minnie, who died on Nov. 19, 1862. Her death apparently affected Mary Rathbun's mind, and she began to exhibit erratic behavior.

All the details are not known, but Rathbun left his wife in 1867 and moved to Jefferson County, Missouri. In 1870, Mary divorced him in Syracuse, N.Y., on the grounds of adultery. She moved to Oswego, N.Y. and apparently continued to brood over the separation and divorce. About 1873, she disguised herself as a Negress, and set off for Missouri, armed with a gun, to kill her former husband. She got as far as Buffalo, N.Y., where she was arrested, but released without charges when friends came to her rescue.

Three years later, she again set out for the west, and this time got as far as Rochester, where she checked in at the Whitcomb House. Employees there became concerned over her behavior, and called police.

She was taken to the police station, where she pulled a pistol from her purse and fired it once before officers could take it from her. Also in her purse, they found \$30 in cash, a gold watch and chain, about a dozen bonds, worth several thousand dollars, the deed to her home in Oswego, and a copy of her divorce decree from Rathbun. She told police she had come to Rochester to deposit the bonds, and claimed to be a friend of Baron Rothschild, one of the world's wealthiest men.

She was ordered sent to the county lunatic asylum, where a panel of doctors was ordered to question her, to determine whether she was mentally fit to be

released. She told them the story of her marriage and divorce, and added that she hated her mother and blamed her for the divorce.

The doctors decided that she was sane enough to take care of herself, and on January 8, 1876, Mary was released and returned to Oswego.

Newspaper reports in Oswego indicate that her mental problems grew worse. Neighbors complained that she frequently shot at passing men whom she thought looked like her former husband.

Nothing else is known of her ensuing life until she died in March 1886, at the age of about 47.

Her husband, George Rathbun, married again in Missouri, but never had children.

John Tobey Rathbun's three sons by his second wife fared much better in life. Simeon Benjamin Rathbun had a successful business career; William R. Rathbun took over his father's foundry business, and Louis Goldsmith Rathbun held many public offices in Elmira, including the positions of alderman and postmaster.

Reunions

The descendants of John K. Rathbun and Laura (Howell) Rathbun held their annual family reunion July 7 in Fitzgerald, Georgia.

Among the 158 in attendance were several of our Association members, including Reba Reeves and Dixie Fountain.

John K. Rathbun (1884-1940) was the son of Hallet⁷ Rathbun (Thomas⁶⁻⁵ John⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹). John K. and Laura (Howell) Rathbun (1892-1929) had 10 children, including Reba and Dixie.

A family reunion was held May 12, 1990, in the Chicago area by 25 descendants of Louie⁹ Rathbun (John⁸ Rowland⁷ Acors⁶ Joshua⁵⁻⁴⁻³ John²⁻¹).

Included were his widow, Amy Rathbun; all six of his children, and many grandchildren, including our member Rev. R. Van Rathbun.

Medieval Court Records List 'Rathebons' in 1200s

This article is based on your editor's continuing research into people bearing our family surname in Medieval England. It is possible that some of these early Englishmen were our ancestors, but it is unlikely that we will ever know for certain. At any rate, our name was so rare in the pre-1500 era that some of the persons listed in this story were very likely related, in some degree, to our earliest known English ancestors.

The earliest record I have found of any name similar to ours was that of "Will. filio (son of) Rabon'," who was one of several witnesses to a land-grant confirmation in the year 1172, in Lancashire County. Whether Rabon' was a surname or given name is not certain.

The first occurrence of our name, similar to its present spelling, is found in 1275 in the County of Worcestershire, where Richard and John Rathebon were listed on a tax roll that year. In neighboring Yorkshire, a "Ricardo Rathebon of Dunclent" paid twopence in taxes for the year 1280.

The most frequent early appearance of our name, however, is found in the ancient city of Chester, where on June 3, 1287, William de Rathebon was among several persons sued by Hugh de Beeston. (See our Historian of January 1981 for your editor's theory that this William came from the Parish of Rathboyne in Ireland).

Nothing more of this William appears in the Chester records, but two men, possibly his sons, are listed in Chester court records 30 years later.

Thomas Rathebon posted bond for a defendant in a court case on October 24, 1317. A few months later, on March 6, 1318, this same Thomas brought suit in the court, and a Ricardus de Rathebane posted bond in still another case.

In this same period, the name appears in Lancashire County, a short dis-

tance northeast of Chester. William Rathebon was fined four pence for "breach of the peace" at a Court of Trials held October 27, 1323, at Rachedal (Rochdale). This is not too far from Ditton, in Lancashire, where our known ancestors lived in the middle 1500s.

Further north in Lancashire, in the parish of Urswick, a "William Rabayne" was taxed 16 pence in the year 1331. Our name also appears in the early 1300s in both Yorkshire and Worcestershire in such varied forms as Rabone, Rawbone, Raybon, and Rabayne, as well as Rathebon and Rathebayne.

For example, a Thomas Rathebayne of York was killed in a fight in 1310; a William Rabayne of Berningham, Yorkshire, was taxed in 1301, and a Robertus Rathebon of Skerkenbeck, Yorkshire, was taxed in 1303. About 1331, William Rathebon and his wife Edith were granted land in Yerdley, Worcestershire.

A John Rathebon, born about 1270, possibly a son of William de Rathebon of Chester, was granted land in 1316 at Tushingham, 15 miles south of Chester. He was the ancestor of a wealthy, manor-owning branch of Rathbones who became prominent during the 1300s and 1400s in Tushingham, Malpas and Masafen.

Another branch of the Chester Rathbones moved into the Wirral Peninsula, west of Chester, and were large landowners there through the 1600s. They were the ancestors of Colonel John Rathbone, who was executed for treason in 1666 (See our Historian of April 1989).

It was in the city of Chester, however, that our name became most prominent during the 1400s and 1500s, and we can begin to establish some lines of descent.

One of the earliest records in Chester is that of a widow Hannah Rathebon, who had some problems with one of her

neighbors in 1476, and was ordered to post bond and promise to "keep the peace."

A John Rathebon, shoemaker, was elected a constable in 1486, and served as a councilor for several years during the early 1490s.

Another John Rathebon, possibly his son, became a draper (dry goods merchant), and was a political leader for many years. He was a councilor from 1499 to 1503, sheriff in 1503, and an alderman from 1505 to 1507.

He became the leader of the citizens of Chester in an on-going political battle with political leaders living in the surrounding rural areas, who had the right to vote in Chester elections. He was accused of participating in a riot in 1511, apparently during a pitched battle between the two factions.

A suburban knight, Sir Piers Dutton, won the mayoral election in 1514, but the city residents refused to accept the results. They held their own election, and chose John Rathbone as their mayor. The story is told in an early Chester history:

"There was a greate discorde and fallinge out betwixte the gentlemen of the Shire and the cittizens of Chester. The commanalty thought that Mr. Mayor took the countre gentlemen's parte. By which means the cittizens thought good and put Sir Piers out of his mayoraltye and chose by free election John Rathbone in his place."

Rathbone served two years, and was elected to another two-year term in 1518. Nothing more is known of him, or of his family, except that he had at least one son, Robert, who was a barker (tanner), and was admitted freeman on Dec. 19, 1504, with his father as his guarantor.

A Richard Rathbone, probably a grandson of Mayor John, also became a draper, and was admitted as a freeman in 1536. He was a city councilor in 1543,

PLACITA PENTICIE CESTRIE TENTA DIE LUNE PROXIMA POST
FESTUM SANCTI CEDDE EPISCOPI ANNO REGNI REGIS EDWARDI
UNDECIMO ^a

Thomas Rathebon queritur de Henrico Coty de placito debiti. Plegius de proseguendo Gilbertus de Northgate. Plegius de respondendo Rogerus de Lincoln. Partes habent diem prece parcium usque etc. Postea concordati sunt per licentiam. Et predictus Henricus pro licentia habenda in misericordia per plegium Roberti Can.

One of the early Chester court records which mentions a "Rath-ebon." Dated March 6, 1318, it has been reprinted in its original Latin, the written language of England at that time. It translates, roughly, as: "As it pleases the court of Chester held the next Monday after the holiday of St. Cedric, Bishop in the eleventh year of the reign of King Edward. Thomas Rathebon sues Henry Coty in a matter of debt. Representing the prosecution Gilbert of

Northgate. Representing the defense Roger of Lincoln. The parties have a day for request of mercy. Afterward, agreements in proportion to freedom (?). And the above Henry in exchange for having freedom in the compassion at the hands of the attorney Robert Can." It is difficult to understand the meaning of the last sentence, and there is no indication whether Thomas "Rathebon" won or lost his suit.

tax appraiser in 1544, and sheriff in 1547. He is possibly the "Mr. Rathbone" who died of the plague during an epidemic in 1551. He was buried at Holy Trinity Church, where the records show his family paying four shillings to have him buried inside the church.

Another Richard Rathbone, probably his son, became a merchant, and also a political leader. He was admitted a freeman in 1571 as "Richard Rathburne, merchant," and by 1582 was serving as sheriff. He was an active and prosperous merchant, and was heavily engaged in importing. When a Chester ship carrying goods from Spain was taken by pirates in 1575, his loss was estimated at more than 82 pounds. In 1584, he supplied "cheese, bread and beer" for troops being shipped to Ireland.

In 1598, Rathbone was elected mayor, but he had a problem — he was illiterate. As a solution, John Brereton, who was literate, was named sheriff and given the additional duties of helping the mayor with correspondence and other tasks involving the written word.

After his term as mayor, Rathbone was elected again as alderman, and served also as a justice of the peace.

In the first years of the 1600s, Chester was again hit by the plague. Rathbone's wife, Alice, died in January 1603, and his son, Richard Jr., an innkeeper, died in November 1606. Two years later, on Oct. 7, 1608, the register of Holy Trinity Church records the burial of "Richard

Rathbone, alderman and justice of the peace, in the middle aisle of the church."

Richard's will, which is signed "Richard Rathburne," left his substantial estate to his two daughters. His only son apparently died childless.

Richard was thus the last in a long line of Rathbones who had served as civic and political leaders in Chester for nearly two centuries.

There were several other Rathbone families in Chester who were probably cousins of Richard. A John Rathbone, "joyner" (carpenter), was married in 1585 to a Grace, whose surname is unknown. They had two sons, John and Richard, born in the next few years. John died by 1605, and his widow and both sons died of the plague in July 1605.

Mayor Richard Rathbone apparently had a brother named Ralph Rathbone, a draper, who died in 1600. The inventory of his estate, gives some interesting hints of life in Chester at that period.

His possessions included "one barren cow, one standing joined bedstead with a featherbed, blanket and boulder; one old square table; three chairs; two chests; a glass (mirror), and a spit and dripping pan in the fireplace. There was also other furniture and utensils in "the milk house, the chamber over the butery and the street chamber."

This Ralph Rathbone, unlike other Chester Rathbones of the era, was not interested in politics. He was elected

sheriff in 1587 but refused to serve because of "disabilities and unableness." In 1599, while Richard Rathbone was mayor, Ralph was assigned to "provide lodgings for the soldiers appointed to come to this citie and to see them shipped (to Ireland)."

An earlier cousin, Robert Rathbone, was a participant in Chester's early "Mystery Plays," which were staged every year by various trade guilds in the city during Whitsun Week — beginning on the eighth Sunday after Easter. The plays were elaborate productions depicting Biblical events, and were presented on large wagons, which were drawn through the town. The plays were shown at different locations, and spectators could remain at one point and watch each one in turn.

Similar plays were produced in several English cities, but those in Chester, dating from about 1375, are believed to be the oldest. They were performed for 200 years, until 1575, when they were banned as being too "Popish."

In 1567, the city of Chester paid sixteen pence to Robert Rabon for his work in the plays that year. The city also paid for "refreshments for the players" — a whole cheese, a bushel of malt, a barrel and a quart of beer, and large quantities of bread and butter, spices and a spit, evidently used to roast an ox or steer.

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Early Rhode Island Rathbuns Probably Quakers in 1600s

We had earlier speculated that our first Rathbun ancestors in Rhode Island may have been Quakers. Continued research strongly indicates that they were.

As noted in previous Historians, the birth of Samuel Rathbun, youngest son of John and Margaret (Acres) Rathbun, was recorded in Newport, R.I., in Quaker records which still survive. Quaker historians tell me that the birth would not have been recorded in their records unless the parents were Quakers.

Samuel was born in 1672 at Newport, where John and Margaret lived at that time on the Hammersmith estate of William Brenton. In 1687, John Rathbun was a partner in a Newport land transaction with William Allen, a known Quaker. During the late 1600s, it has been estimated that possibly half of all Newport residents were Quakers.

The Quaker movement had been founded in England about 1652 by George Fox (1624-1691), who called his new church the Society of Friends. One of his major tenets was that spiritual inspiration, or "inward light" was superior to scriptural or ministerial authority. Such a radical belief quite naturally enraged leaders of the established church. Quakers, as they came to be known, were persecuted, imprisoned and even banished, but their message spread rapidly and their membership grew.

A strong anti-war position probably helped in their growth. Among their other beliefs were a simple style of dress, use of the biblical pronouns "thee" and "thou", a rejection of music in church, and complete democracy in church government. All members, including women, were considered equal.

They refused to take oaths, on the principle that Quakers were always expected to tell the truth, and that swearing to do so would cast doubt on this important belief. They became known as Quakers, a Seventeenth Century nickname



George Fox (1624-1691), founder of the Society of Friends, or Quakers. Our ancestors probably heard him preach in 1672.

for persons who trembled and shook as they waited to hear the word of God.

The first Quakers in America arrived in Boston during the 1650s, and the Puritans there treated them even more harshly than in England. They were arrested, whipped, mutilated and even hung. The Puritan leaders would accept no challenge to their authority in all matters, civil and religious.

The Quakers found refuge in Rhode Island, where Roger Williams, founder of the colony, preached toleration and religious freedom for all. Newport became a center of Quakerism, and the first "Yearly Meeting" of Quakers in the world was held there in 1661.

George Fox visited Newport in 1672, preached several times, and received a warm welcome from his many followers. He was also welcomed, but not warmly, by Roger Williams, who believed in the Quakers' right to their beliefs, but considered them to be absolutely wrong on theological grounds. He even challenged Fox to a public debate, but Fox,

perhaps wisely, declined. Roger Williams was a strong and skillful debater. Instead, the two exchanged harsh views for several years in a series of pamphlets.

John and Margaret Rathbun were living in Newport in 1672, and quite probably heard George Fox preach. They apparently returned to their home on Block Island at regular intervals, and there, in the 1680s, they found another charismatic Quaker — Dr. John Rodman.

Dr. Rodman was born in Barbados, West Indies, to where his father, one of George Fox' early converts, had been banished in the 1650s. Dr. Rodman moved to Newport about 1682, and to Block Island about two years later. There, according to Rev. Samuel Niles, an early island historian, he "held meetings in his house on Sabbaths with exhortations unto good works, after the manner of the teachers in that (Quaker) society."

Niles described Dr. Rodman as "a gentleman of great ingenuity and of an affable, engaging manner." If the early Rathbuns were indeed Quakers, they were certainly among the island residents who met in Dr. Rodman's home for those weekly meetings.

John Rathbun died in 1702, but there is strong evidence that his widow, Margaret, and at least some of their eight children, continued in the Quaker faith.

For example, when Dr. John Rodman Jr. was married to Margaret Gross in 1705 on Block Island, the 25 witnesses included nine Rathbuns — Margaret, widow of John Sr.; her sons, John, Thomas and William; Mary, wife of Thomas; Sarah, wife of William; Thomas' daughters, Margaret and Mary, and William's daughter, Sarah.

It was customary, then as now, for Quakers to attend their fellow Quakers' weddings, and bear official witness to the ceremony.

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Deaf at Age Two, Rathbun Girl Lives Full, Courageous Life

The following story about the sad but inspiring life of Ophelia (Rathbun) Baker was written by her great-grandniece, Elaine Flathers, a member of our Association. Ophelia, a daughter of Gameliel⁶ Rathbun (Walter⁵ Thomas⁴⁻³⁻² John¹), was born June 11, 1841, and two years later, after a bout with measles, was left entirely deaf.

When Ophelia Rathbun, 55, married Frank Baker, 63, on March 24, 1897, in Spring Valley, Minn., her sister-in-law Jane (Mrs. Dwight) Rathbun had to interpret for her. Ophelia, who was deaf, understood Jane's "signing" very well. (Frank and Ophelia were first cousins; his mother, Sophia, being a sister of her mother, Lucretia).

The ceremony probably took place at the Dwight Rathbun home. Witnesses were Mrs. J.C. Cook, the minister's wife, and Theodore Raabe, husband of Ophelia's niece Carrie (Rathbun) Raabe. The Raabes were my grandparents. Carrie, daughter of Ophelia's brother John D. Rathbun, also communicated well with her deaf aunt, but Carrie probably did not attend the wedding; her son Ralph had been born just 10 days earlier.

Since the age of two, when measles left her deaf, Ophelia had learned to live with her handicap. Today, she would have special schooling, but living in the Nineteenth Century, she probably had none at all.

She was able to go through the local newspaper looking for names of relatives and other people she knew, but that was the extent of her reading ability. She had to have someone else help her understand the rest of the story.

What a mind must have been locked up behind her deafness! What a courageous spirit showed itself when needed. With the little speech she could remember from her baby days, she made sounds, most of which were not real words, and used her hands to communicate with others. In later life, she did refer to her husband as "my Baker."

According to all accounts, she was not only a good housekeeper but an excellent seamstress as well. One relative, at the time of the marriage, speculated sarcastically that Frank Baker was mostly interested in getting a housekeeper, and Ophelia was interested in his Civil War pension. Be that as it may, they were married eight years, and then Baker died in 1905. Ophelia was a widow, never again to have a home of her own. For the next 25 years of her life, she moved from one relative's home to another, staying a few weeks or months at a time.



The 1897 wedding picture of Ophelia Rathbun and Frank Baker.

For many years before her marriage, she had lived with her older, unmarried sister, Emerette, who later developed tuberculosis, and died in 1898 at the home of Frank and Ophelia Baker.

In the first years after Frank's death, Ophelia lived at times with her brother Amander; her sister-in-law, Jane, widow of Dwight, and her niece, Carrie Raabe, whose son Clifton remembered her visits quite vividly.

He said that she would stay for a month or six weeks at a time, and was a pleasant woman who spent much of her time sewing and piecing quilts.

Carrie Raabe died in 1915, and Jane

Rathbun in 1918 — the last of Ophelia's close family. Today, a woman such as Ophelia would end up in a nursing home. Luckily for her, perhaps, there were no nursing homes then, but there was still "family" — dozens of Rathbuns and Rathbun cousins living in the southeastern part of Spring Valley, most of them in a four-block area.

She went to the home of a second cousin — Sherman Rathbun, and "announced" that she was going to live with him, probably paying her way with her widow's pension. He was kind enough to take her in for some years.

Ervin DuMond, Sherman's grandson, has different memories of Ophelia. A small boy at the time, he found that she was not very tolerant of little children. She would rap him with her cane if he got too close to her favorite rocker, where she always sat. Ervin was glad when her time there was up, and she went to the home of her nephew Glenn Bly.

As Ophelia became elderly, it seems that she, of all people, had the right to get a little crochety. Perhaps some child, somewhere, had played a trick on the deaf lady, making her suspicious of all children.

It was at Glenn Bly's home that Ophelia died on January 24, 1930, at the age of 88 years, six months and 13 days. Only one of her 11 brothers and sisters survived her — brother Amander, who died a short time later on April 4, 1930.

Everybody thought that Ophelia was destitute in her last years, but after her death, relatives found that she had sewn her savings into her petticoat — a substantial sum in silver coins.

Ophelia and "her Baker" are buried in the Spring Valley Cemetery, near her parents, many of her brothers and sisters, and scores of other Rathbun relatives.

(I appreciate all the help I received in writing this story from Sharon Jahn, Clifton Raabe, Carolie Emerson, May Whittemore and Ervin DuMond).

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shal, but in view of his presence with Marshal Wilson and Deputy Fossett, he most likely was.

The marshal later reported:

"Talbot started to run south, turned around, and fired two shots at me. I followed him down the sidewalk on the east side, and passed through the alleyway south of Pulaski's Store. Mike Meagher was with me. We stopped in the alley in back of the store, and Jim Talbot commenced firing at us from north of the Opera House with a Winchester rifle."

Deputy Fossett added:

"I was at the rear of Hockaday's Store; Meagher and Rathbun were near me. Doug Hill and Bob Bigtree were firing at us from the east, and Talbot from the north."

Ed Rathbun's account picks up the story from that point:

"I was with Meagher and Wilson at the rear of Pulaski's Store," Rathbun related. "We were firing at Bob Bigtree near the Chinese laundry, and they were returning our fire."

"I looked north toward the M & D Bank Building and saw Talbot standing with a Winchester rifle aimed at Meagher or myself. Mike was standing with his six-shooter in his right hand and his rifle under his left arm, aiming at Talbot. I saw smoke issue from Talbot's gun, heard the report, and saw Meagher begin to sink down."

"I said 'Good God, Mike, are you hit?' He said, 'Yes, tell my wife I have got it at last.' I assisted him to the south side of Pulaski's Store, from where he was removed to the barber shop. (A coroner later found that the bullet had gone through Meagher's upper arm and then into his lungs. He was pronounced dead about a half-hour later.)"

At this point, Talbot and his men headed for their horses, as Wilson, Rathbun and Fossett kept up a steady fire against them. One man was killed — George Speers — who had apparently not participated in the fighting, but was helping the Talbot gang saddle their horses.

Talbot and four of his men — Bob Bigtree, Bob Munson, Jim Martin and Doug Hill — rode hastily out of town, across the railroad tracks and off to the east. A horse was shot dead under one

of them, and another horse was wounded.

The outlaws stopped twice to steal fresh horses as they fled, pursued by a posse of citizens led by Marshal Wilson. Ed Rathbun was certainly among them.

The posse caught up with Talbot and his men and surrounded them in a small canyon, where the two sides dug in and exchanged shots for several hours. One member of the posse, W.E. Campbell, was hit in the wrist and thigh, but not wounded seriously.

The shooting came to an end when darkness fell, but the next morning, bolstered by reinforcements, the posse made an all-out attack. They found that the outlaws had slipped away during the night.

Rewards of \$500 for Talbot and \$300 each for his companions were offered by Governor John P. St. John, but the only one soon captured was Tom Love, who was tried but acquitted in Meagher's death.

Another, Doug Hill, was arrested six years later, and charged with murder. He pleaded guilty to manslaughter, and served six months.

Talbot was not captured until 1895, fourteen years later. He was charged with murder, but his first trial ended in a

deadlocked jury, and he was acquitted in a second trial. He was killed a year later in California, reportedly by his wife's lover.

Ed Rathbun had a long and interesting life after the famous gunfight.

He operated a livery stable for some years in Caldwell, then in 1889 he moved to the Oklahoma Territory, where his wife and children joined him a few months later. In 1893 he participated in the famous "Cherokee Strip Run" for free homestead land.

Rathbun returned to Kansas in 1909, and worked variously over the next few years as a farmer, freighter, liveryman and night watchman.

He died on Christmas Day, 1922, at the age of 67, after a long and full life. His obituary described him as a "well-known frontiersman, a friend of the Indians, a champion of law and order, and a man of jovial nature."

His wife died seven years later at Arkansas City, Kansas, at the age of 72. Her grandson, Cliff Drake, recalls visiting her house and seeing several buffalo robes and buffalo horns, souvenirs of Ed Rathbun's days as a buffalo hunter. Strangely, his descendants had never heard of the 1881 gunfight in which he played a key role.

New Data

Electa (Jones) Rathbun, wife of George⁶ Rathbun (Robert⁵ John⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹), died March 28, 1898, in Otego, N.Y. (Historian of Oct. 1989, page 62). Our thanks to Larry Trask.

We have discovered that Russell⁵ Rathbun (Job⁴ Benjamin³ Joseph² John¹) had a first, previously unknown wife. A New York newspaper of Nov. 25, 1805, contains a notice by Russell that his wife Rebecca had "left my bed and board," and that he was no longer responsible for her debts. Our thanks to Rob Rathbun.

Lucy Sterling, second wife of William⁵ Rathbun (Daniel⁴ William³⁻² John¹), was born March 15, 1753, at Lyme, Conn., a daughter of John and Jane (Ransom) Sterling.

Loretta Rathbun, daughter of Benjamin⁶ Rathbun (James⁵ Valentine⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹), married Morris Worms July 1, 1868, in Washtenaw County, Mich. Our thanks to K. Haybron Adams.

WE THANK the following members who have sent in family data, clippings, pictures and other materials: Keith Rathbone, Rev. R. Van Rathbun, Lauren Landis, Rob Rathbun, Jackie Hanna, Narda Rathbun, Jean Halden Walker, Reba Reeves, Robert B. Rathbone, Art Hutchinson, Marilyn Streeter, Jayne Rezin, Betty Winterland, John and Alberta Rathbun, Mary Ellen Claypool, Ellen Gardner Brown, Frank E. Rathbun, Richard Parfitt, K. Haybron Adams, Rhoda Durkan, Rosma Limbeck, Larry Trask, Mildred Rathbun, Elaine Flatheers, Terry Rathbun, Grove and Jan Rathbun, Elwin and Ellen Kenyon, Alvin Rathbun, Sharon Busboom, Dr. Donald Rathbun, Clair Cornell, Gwen Koenig, Joe Wiswall.

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Robert "Ratheburne" and his brother Richard (probably the future sheriff) were among several hundred persons who were accused in 1545 of destroying the property of one William Glazier. It sounds like another controversy between the "city folk" and "country folk."

Another John Rathbone in Chester was an ironmonger (hardware merchant) in 1591, when he borrowed fourteen pounds from another merchant, and faced imprisonment if the debt was not repaid in the specified time.

Still another John Rathbone, from Ashbury, in Cheshire County, was born about 1499, entered the ministry and became a lay preacher. He ended up in London where in 1528 he was called a "chanter" at Lambeth. Later he was put in charge of the Lambeth chapel and in 1549 was listed in a clerical survey as "John Raboune, clerk (cleric), of the age of 50 years, having small learning nor any other promise, is the incumbent of the Chantry at Lambeth." He died about 1558 at Lambeth.

Other early Rathbones also made their way to "London Town." A Thomas Rabone in 1560 was leasing property near "The House of the Black Friars."

At a much later date, Thomas Rathbone, carpenter, was among a group of tradesmen who about 1685 built a substantial house at No. 30, Soho Square, which later became a hospital for women. Another Rathbone, possibly his son, built a home in the area in 1718, and what was his driveway from Oxford Street is now Rathbone Place, and the adjoining roadway is called Rathbone Street.

A tablet at the Corner of Rathbone and Oxford Streets reads: "Rathbone's Place in Oxford Street, 1718."

Our earliest known ancestors were living by the 1530s at Ditton, in Lancashire County (See our Historian of January 1981), but how long they had been there, and from where they came, it is impossible to determine.

Due to Ditton's proximity to Chester, it seems quite likely that the Ditton Rathbones originated in Chester, and probably moved from there in the late 1400s or early 1500s. It is possible that continued research in early English records may provide some of the answers.

Teen-Age Suicide Recorded in 1891

The growing problem of teen-aged suicides in the United States today is not a new phenomenon, as shown by this story from the New York Times of 99 years ago.

On the night of May 5, 1891, Wilbert⁸ Rathbun (Allen⁷⁻⁶ Josiah⁵ Job⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹), was awakened by a noise on the roof of the family home at 100 West 53rd Street, in New York City.

He got up to investigate, and looked into the bedroom of his 18-year-old son, Charles Rathbun. The boy was not there, but Wilbert saw a note on the floor:

"You have all been very kind to me," the note read, "but I think that I will have to leave you all forever. I hope I will meet you all in Heaven. I have had no trouble with anyone. I have been on special good terms with my (fellow) employees for the past three or four weeks (he was a clerk in a furnishings store on Sixth Avenue).

"I am discouraged with everything. There is too much trouble in this world.

"Now my darling father, I know there will be a disgrace to the family from my act, but as soon as you read this letter, tear it up to pieces so that no one will see it. You will find me hanging on the roof.

"Kisses to all. The next world is happier than this. I am ready to be put in the (ground?). I think that it will be better to hang than to shoot myself. I know this will be hard on you all. Father, you must not think that I have had any trouble."

Wilbert rushed up to the roof, and found his son's body hanging from a telegraph pole with a length of clothesline.

Valuable Book!

In our Historian of January 1982, we reprinted the front cover of a religious pamphlet written in 1782 by Rev. Valentine Wightman Rathbun, attacking the Shaker Society. Our member Dr. Donald Rathbun recently learned that a copy of Rathbun's very rare booklet had been sold for \$3,000. Valentine was the son of Joshua³ Rathbun (John²⁻¹).

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Eleven years later, in 1716, Job Card and Margery Tosh were married on Block Island in another Quaker ceremony. Of the 15 witnesses, three were immediate family members, and eight others were Rathbuns and/or their spouses — John Rathbun Jr.; William Rathbun, his wife, Sarah, and their daughter Sarah; Margaret (Rathbun) Mitchell and her husband Thomas, and Sarah (Rathbun) Ball, and her husband John.

Strangely, although John Rathbun Jr. witnessed both weddings, his wife, Ann, was not listed. Perhaps she did not share her husband's religious views. Neither Joseph nor Samuel Rathbun, the two youngest sons, was listed in either witness list. Possibly they did not join the rest of the family in the Quaker faith.

Further research is necessary, but based on what we do know, your editor is reasonably certain that John and Margaret (Acres) Rathbun, and at least some of their children, were practicing Quakers, for probably 40 years or more.

Block Island's South East Lighthouse has been added to the National Trust's list of America's 11 most endangered historic buildings. The lighthouse, built in 1873, sits atop the Mohegan Bluffs, where erosion is moving the building closer to the sea each year. Once 200 feet from the edge of the cliffs, it is now only 60 feet away. It is hoped that the lighthouse can be moved before it falls into the sea.

In our January 1983 Historian, we reported that Daniel⁴ Rathbun (Joshua³ John²⁻¹), served in the French and Indian War under the command of his brother-in-law, Captain Uriah Stephens. It was actually his brother-in-law's father, Captain Uriah Stephens Sr. Our thanks to Laura Burrows, a descendant.

A REMINDER — Dues for 1991 are due by Dec. 5. If you miss that deadline, it will cost you an extra \$5. Send your renewal now. It will save you money and save us a lot of needless work.

Genealogy: The Sixth Generation in America

286. SAMUEL G.⁶ RATHBUN (? Ebenezer⁵⁻⁴⁻³ William² John¹), born September 27, 1818, at Waterford, Connecticut. (This line of descent is unproven, but most likely.) He was married Sept. 30, 1840, at Stonington, Conn., to Clarissa B. Dewey, born about 1824, parentage unknown. They lived at Stonington until the 1850s, when they moved to nearby Groton, where Clarissa died probably in the 1890s. Samuel was married again by 1900 to Maria _____, born in Feb. 1835, in England, parentage unknown. Samuel, who served in the Conn. Militia during the Civil War, died Sept. 30, 1903, at Groton. Maria's death date is not known.

CHILDREN

JAMES A., born in June 1852; married Alida _____.

MARY E., born about 1859; possibly died young.

WILLIAM IRA, born in March 1862; married (1) Nellie Porter, and (2) Martha (Place) Potter.

287. JOSEPH DENNISON⁶ RATHBUN (Christopher⁵ Ebenezer⁴⁻³ William² John¹), born Oct. 14, 1822, in Westerly, R.I., and married there Aug. 9, 1846, Sarah Perry Carpenter, born March 5, 1804 (18 years older than Joseph?), daughter of Jeremiah and Hannah (Perry) Carpenter. Sarah died at Westerly on Jan. 14, 1892, and Joseph on May 10, 1893.

CHILD

HANNAH P., born Nov. 29, 1847; married Joseph H. Smith on Jan. 8, 1872.

288. ELISHA KENYON⁶ RATHBUN (Christopher⁵ Ebenezer⁴⁻³ William² John¹), born April 17, 1824, at Westerly, and married on Nov. 15, 1849, Maria

Newbury, born Oct. 28, 1831, parentage unknown (reportedly an adopted child). He enlisted in the Conn. Militia during the Civil War and died August 2, 1863, in a hospital at Cairo, Ill., of a fever. Maria was married again in 1868 to Henry G. Knowles and moved about 1871 to Manhattan, Kansas, where she died July 16, 1896. She had two children by Knowles — Frederick and Ned.

CHILDREN

GEORGE HENRY, born Oct. 15, 1850; died Nov. 4, 1850.

ELIAS B., born June 15, 1852; married Frances Jaques.

CHARLES R., born Nov. 17, 1854; died Jan. 11, 1859.

GEORGE MARTIN., born Aug. 18, 1856; married Lulu Babbitt.

KATHERINE P., born April 8, 1859; died May 23, 1862.

PHOEBE M., born May 27, 1861; died unmarried Aug. 21, 1917, in San Francisco.

289. WILLIAM CLARK⁶ RATHBUN (Christopher⁵ Ebenezer⁴⁻³ William² John¹), born Aug. 18, 1830, at Westerly, and married there Oct. 20, 1852, Emeline Parks, born about 1834, daughter of Captain Thomas Parks. They moved to Groton, Conn., where they were divorced on May 10, 1865, after Emeline accused him of "frequenting a house of ill-fame." William was married again on Sept. 31, 1873, to Martha M. (Burdick) Maine, born in August 1832, daughter of Abraham and Rhoda Burdick and widow of David Maine. She died at Westerly in 1923, and he died March 15, 1926, at Cranston. Emeline (Parks) Rathbun was possibly the Emeline Rathbun who married James Sweet on March 23, 1870, in North Kingston, R.I., or she may have died a few years after the divorce, for their daughter Annie was living with William and his second wife in 1875.

CHILDREN

All by Emeline

ELLEN (or HELEN) E., born July 5, 1854; married George H. Braman on Dec. 16, 1871.

JOSEPHINE T., born Nov. 13, 1856; married William T. Collins on Feb. 14, 1884.

MARTHA ADA, born in September 1859; died Oct. 6, 1860.

ANNIE, born March 31, 1862; married Rev. Isaac C. Taylor on Sept. 8, 1881.

290. JOHN E.⁶ RATHBUN (Christopher⁵ Ebenezer⁴⁻³ William² John¹), born Nov. 1, 1841, in Westerly, and was married May 3, 1870, at New London, Conn., to Mary A. Sprague, born in Oct. 1848, daughter of Frederick F. and Mary Ann (Dodge) Sprague. They moved to Old Lyme, Conn., where John died April 13, 1891, and Mary on March 6, 1908.

CHILDREN

FREDERICK CHRISTOPHER, born in October 1875; married Hannah Bennett.

LEWIS N., born in July 1880; married Margaret S. Burrows.

PROBABLY OTHERS, names unknown.

291. EBENEZER⁶ (possibly GEORGE EBENEZER) RATHBUN (William⁵ Ebenezer⁴⁻³ William² John¹), born Oct. 30, 1844, in Westerly, and married there Dec. 21, 1867, Susan Idella Barber, born Feb. 12, 1848, daughter of George W. and Susan (Barber) Barber. They lived all their lives in Westerly, where Ebenezer was drowned March 25, 1907, in Quonochontaug Pond, and Susan died July 1, 1927.

CHILDREN

GEORGE WASHINGTON, born Jan. 8, 1868; died unmarried July 7, 1938, at Westerly.

LUELLEN, born Feb. 4, 1871; died unmarried on Jan. 19, 1923, at Block Island.

FRANCES GRACE, born Jan. 3, 1873; died August 3, 1896, unmarried, of scarlet fever.

SUSAN IDELLA, born July 3, 1876; married Louis M. Bentley on June 15, 1912.

ELIAS, born about 1878; living as late as 1938.

STEPHEN C., born about 1879; married (?) Anna Kenyon.

JAMES, born in October 1880; living at Westerly in 1938.

SAMUEL J.T., born in January 1882; married Maria _____.

KATHERINE BURDICK, born in December 1885; living, unmarried, in 1938.

(This concludes the sixth-generation descendants of William Rathbun, third son of John and Margaret (Acres) Rathbun. We now begin with the descendants of the fourth son, Joseph, following our pattern of carrying on only male children, beginning with the eldest).

292. ROBERT⁶ RATHBUN (Robert⁵ Jeremiah⁴ Joseph³⁻² John¹), born March 16, 1798, probably in Cayuga County, N.Y. He moved with his parents as a young man to Wayne County, Ohio, where he was married in 1817 to Hannah Warner, born about 1797, daughter of Ebenezer and Ann (Smith) Warner. Robert was a blacksmith, according to the 1850 census. He joined the Mormon Church in the 1830s, and apparently left his wife about that time and was married on April 28, 1839, in Pike County, Missouri, to Rowena Chapel. She either died or they separated, for in the 1850 census he was living with a Letitia Rathbun, aged 48, in Van Buren County, Iowa. He died there on April 14, 1856. Letitia was still living there in 1860. Robert's first wife, Hannah, was living in Michigan in 1860, and in Iowa in 1870. Her death date is not known.

CHILDREN

All by Hannah

ENOCH, born in 1818; died in 1821.

HIRAM, born April 3, 1820; married (1) Rosanna Edmunds, and (2) Lovina Waldo.

ALMIRA, born Nov. 28, 1822; married (1) William Ellsbury, and (2) William Johnson.

LUCRETIA (twin), born Nov. 28, 1822; died in infancy.

AURILLA, born June 7, 1824; married Michael King Tedrow on April 23, 1854.

ELEANOR, born July 5, 1826; died Dec. 23, 1887, in the Michigan Asylum at Kalamazoo, unmarried and apparently insane.

MARY, born in 1828; died in infancy.

ANN, born Nov. 8, 1830; died in 1837.

WILLIAM, born in 1832; probably died young.

ALLEN, born Nov. 8, 1834; died in infancy.

LYDIA, born March 30, 1836; married Hiram Nixon Jan. 9, 1864, in Eaton County, Mich.

293. SAMUEL⁶ RATHBUN (Robert⁵ Jeremiah⁴ Joseph³⁻² John¹), born March 15, 1800, in Cayuga County, N.Y., and moved with his parents as a boy to Wayne County, Ohio. He was married there on March 27, 1825, to Elizabeth (Edmunds) Fibley, born April 4, 1802, daughter of Peter and Elizabeth (Warner) Edmunds, and widow of Samuel T. Fibley. They lived all their lives on his father's homestead near Chester, in Wayne County. She died there June 1, 1873, and he on Sept. 1, 1891, nearly 92 years old.

CHILDREN

ROSANNA, born in 1826; married Andrew Byers on Nov. 20, 1845.

MARILLA, born in 1828; married Allen Bodine on April 16, 1854.

ROBERT, born Feb. 15, 1830; died May 28, 1833.

ANNA E., born Dec. 16, 1832; died Dec. 20, 1872, unmarried, of "the dropsy."

GEORGE, born Dec. 8, 1834; died Dec. 29, 1834.

MARY, born Dec. 15, 1836; died Jan. 2, 1837.

SAMUEL E., born about 1840; a soldier in the Civil War, he died Sept. 13, 1863, at New Orleans.

PETER, born Oct. 22, 1842; died Aug. 16, 1843.

WILLIAM ALBERT, born about 1844; no known marriage; was still alive in 1910.

294. CALEB ALLEN⁶ RATHBUN (Robert⁵ Jeremiah⁴ Joseph³⁻² John¹), born Jan. 6, 1805, in Cayuga County, N.Y. He moved with his parents as a boy to Wayne County, Ohio, and was married there Jan. 7, 1830, to Mary Ann Edmunds, born about 1812, probably a daughter of Peter and Elizabeth (Warner) Edmunds. They moved in 1837 to Elk Grove, in Caldwell County, Missouri, where he joined the Mormons for a short time, then left them to join the Methodist Episcopal Church. Mary Ann died early in 1842, and he was married that year on June 26 to Elizabeth (Hill) Anderson, a widow, whose parentage is unknown. She died Nov. 1, 1852, and he was married on Aug. 16, 1853, to Mrs. Mary Mann, widow of Eppa Mann, parentage unknown. She died on Jan. 11, 1862, and Caleb died four months later on May 17 of pneumonia and typhoid fever.

CHILDREN

By Mary Ann

ENOCH E., born Dec. 17, 1830; married Elizabeth Thompson.

MALINDA, born Jan. 27, 1832; died in 1840.

MARY, born Jan. 11, 1835; married William Hatfield.

ANNA ELIZABETH, born March 7, 1837; married Simeon S. Parker.

ISAIAH, born Jan. 11, 1839; died young.

By Elizabeth

JOHN, born March 22, 1844; he became a soldier and died Jan. 26, 1863, during the Civil War.

MARTHA, born Jan. 18, 1846; married Jacob F. Phillips on Feb. 21, 1867.

SAMUEL, born Oct. 27, 1847; married Martha Thompson.

ROBERT ISAAC, born March 12, 1850; married Anna Kinney.

PELINA M., born Nov. 23, 1851; died in 1855.

By Mary

WILLIAM ALLEN, born April 24, 1859; died in infancy.

TWO OTHER SONS, names unknown, born and died in the 1850s.

295. EZRA C.⁶ RATHBUN (?Jonathan⁵ Jeremiah⁴ Joseph³⁻² John¹), born about

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1806, in New York. (His ancestry is unproven as yet). He was married in Wisconsin on Jan. 15, 1845 (probably a second marriage) to Rachel Frazier, born about 1811, ancestry unknown. He was living in York, Sandusky County, Ohio, in 1840; Milwaukee, Wisc., in 1846, and Sheboygan, Wisc., in 1850. He apparently died in the 1850s, for only Rachel and the younger children appear in the 1860 census, at Pilot Township, Vermillion County, Ill. She is probably the Rachel Rathbun who married Caleb Judson Chaffee about 1861.

CHILDREN

By unknown first wife

SON, name unknown; born about 1834; no further data.

?SHERMAN VAN RENSSALAER, born in December 1836; died unmarried in 1914.

EVERETT, born March 2, 1838; married Melinda Reynolds.

By Rachel

ELIZABETH, born in 1846; married ?John Smith.

NAPOLEON B., born in November 1848; married Emma J. Barker.

ANDREW, born about 1853; alive in 1860; no further data.

296. FRANCIS WILBUR⁶ RATHBUN (Jonathan⁵ Jeremiah⁴ Joseph³⁻² John¹), born August 23, 1815, in Cayuga County, N.Y. He moved to Ohio with his parents as a boy, and served in both the Mexican War and the Civil War as a private in the Ohio infantry. One of his fellow veterans wrote in later years: "Francis Rathbun was an honorable man during his whole lifetime and a brave soldier during both the Mexican and Civil Wars. He was as worthy a soldier as ever shouldered a musket." Rathbun was married on Nov. 28, 1852, in Erie County, Ohio, to Mary Ann Marsh, born in July 1833, in England, parentage unknown. They moved soon after their marriage to Liberty, Henry County, Ohio, where he died June 6, 1894, and Mary died April 24, 1915.

CHILD

MARY ANN, born about 1857; mar-

ried ? Douglas Holmes on Nov. 5, 1879, in Huron County.

297. JEREMIAH⁶ RATHBUN (Jeremiah⁵⁻⁴ Joseph³⁻² John¹), born about 1810, in New York state; moved as a young man with his parents to Scioto County, Ohio, where he appears in the censuses of 1830 and 1840. He apparently married and had children, but we have been unable to identify any of them. He apparently died by 1850, since he is not listed in any state census that year.

298. OLIVER P.⁶ RATHBUN (Jeremiah⁵⁻⁴ Joseph³⁻² John¹), born May 27, 1833, in Scioto County, Ohio. He moved as a young man to Miami County, Kansas, where on Oct. 14, 1866, at Stanton, he was married to Mary M. May, born about 1846, daughter of Jesse and _____ May. They moved throughout the Midwest, living in Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Colorado, Illinois and finally Cushing, Payne County, Oklahoma. He also served in the Civil War, described as five feet, seven inches tall, weighing 150 pounds, with dark hair and eyes. He was described at different times as a miner, baker and farmer. In Oklahoma, he was elected to the State's House of Representatives in 1893. He died at Cushing on Aug. 15, 1916. Mary died May 28, 1934.

CHILDREN

JOHN JESSE, born in December 1867; married Maude Meyers.

DAUGHTER, name unknown; born in January 1870, died in July 1870 of "spasms" at Stanton, Kansas.

LAURA, born about 1872; alive in 1880; no further data.

GEORGE H., born in 1879; no further data.

299. BENJAMIN D.⁶ RATHBUN (Jeremiah⁵⁻⁴ Joseph³⁻² John¹), born in April 1836 in Scioto County, Ohio, and moved to Iowa as a young man. He served in the Iowa Volunteer Cavalry during the Civil War, described as six feet tall, dark hair and eyes, and light complexion. After the war, he lived at Hayes in McPherson County, Kansas, where in

1902 he was declared "of unsound mind" at the request of his brother, Oliver. He died Dec. 3, 1907, at McPherson. He had no known marriage or children.

300. SAMUEL CLARK⁶ RATHBUN (Wilbur⁵ Jeremiah⁴ Joseph³⁻² John¹), born Feb. 22, 1820, at Norway, N.Y., and married there Oct. 1, 1846, Hannah Zerviah Jones, born in 1821, ancestry unknown. They moved to Newport, N.Y., where Hannah died Dec. 12, 1861. He was married again on Dec. 16, 1873, to Mary Annette Thompson, born May 20, 1834, daughter of Elias G. and Lucia (Rogers) Thompson. Samuel, a dairyman and farmer, who owned 300 acres near Newport, died Feb. 4, 1891, of apoplexy. Mary died March 17, 1922.

CHILDREN

All by Hannah

CHARLES WILBUR, born July 31, 1847; married Leila Hinckley.

ADELBERT C., born July 6, 1849; married (1) Mary A. Brown, and (2) Lillie Moody.

MERCY ANN, born March 4, 1853; married Henry P. Clark Aug. 20, 1873.

RALPH H., born June 22, 1855; married Minnie Lawson.

SARAH J., born Dec. 21, 1856; died Nov. 1, 1869.

ANNA ZERVIAH, born Feb. 11, 1859; married Benton K. Brown on Jan. 29, 1877.

Corrections

One daughter was omitted from the list of children of Ebenezer⁶ Rathbun (Ebenezer⁵ Thomas⁴ Jonathan³ William² John¹) in our July 1990 issue, pages 41-42. We inadvertently left out Lois Almira Rathbun, born March 25, 1857; died unmarried about 1877. Our thanks to Betty Drake.

Laurena Rathbun, daughter of Thomas⁶ Rathbun (Walter⁵ Thomas⁴⁻³⁻² John¹), married Gardner Greene Howe on Dec. 5, 1838, in Cattaraugus County, N.Y. We incorrectly listed his name as Gardner Green in our Historian of July 1989, page 45. Our thanks to Zona Perry Jones, a descendant.

Obituaries

DIED — June 18, 1990, Vivian (Johnson) Rathbun, 91, of Westerly, R.I. She was a member of our Association and the widow of Charles H.⁹ Rathbun (Charles⁸ Amos⁷ Newman⁶ Jonathan⁵ John⁴⁻¹), who died in 1976. They had no children. She is survived by two of her late husband's sisters, Sadie May Webster and Hazel Irene Ritchie, both members of our Association, and several nieces and nephews, including our member Ellen (Rathbun) Kenyon.

DIED — Sept. 7, 1990, Mary Rathbun, 76, of Mystic, Conn. She was the widow of Rollin E.⁹ Rathbun (Albert⁸⁻⁷ Calvin⁶ Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), who died in 1974. The daughter of Elmer and Nancy Coates, she was married first to Lloyd Gibson, who died shortly after their marriage. Survivors include two sons, Rollin and George Rathbun, members of our Association; two daughters, Nancy Savona and Mary Sealey; 17 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; a brother, and four sisters.

DIED — July 17, 1990, Walter E. Rathbun Jr., 52, of West Warwick, R.I. He was a son of Walter⁹ Rathbun (William⁸ John⁷ Robert⁶ John⁵⁻⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹). He is survived by his wife, Simone; five sons, Walter, Dennis, Almazor, John and Sonny; three daughters, Jackie and Sandra Rathbun and Denise Auclair; two brothers, William, a member of our Association, and John; three sisters, Marjorie Raymond, a member of our Association, Beverly Moriarty and Barbara Williamson, and six grandchildren.

DIED — July 15, 1990, Elizabeth (Hall) Rathbun, 54, of Providence, R.I. She was the former wife of Roland W.¹¹ Rathbun (Allen¹⁰ George⁹ Raymond⁸ Amy⁷ Olney⁶ Joshua⁵ Anthony⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹). She is survived by her parents; two sons, Danny A. and David A. Rathbun; two daughters, Donna E. Rathbun and Diane E. Maione; five grandchildren, and a brother.

DIED — June 4, 1990, Clifton Raabe, 87, of Mesa, Arizona, a former member of our Association. He was the last of eight children born to Theodore Raabe and Caroline⁸ Rathbun (John⁷ Gamaliel⁶ Walter⁵ Thomas⁴⁻³⁻² John¹). A jeweler for more than 35 years, he retired eight years ago. He is survived by a daughter, Gwen Peterson; a half-sister, Ione Pearce; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews, including our member Elaine V. Flathers.

DIED — July 28, 1990, Lillian (Nevin) Rathbun, 98, of Providence, R.I. She was the widow of Rodman Gardiner⁹ Rathbun (Thomas⁸⁻⁷ Abraham⁶ Joshua⁵⁻⁴⁻³ John²⁻¹). She is survived by three daughters, Edith Rathbun, Virginia Stewart and Ruth Pittman, and five grandchildren.

DIED — June 3, 1990, Russell Rathbun, 76, of Providence, R.I. He was the son of Elmer⁸ Rathbun (Nathaniel⁷⁻⁶ Nathan⁵ Simeon⁴ Thomas³ John²⁻¹). Survivors include his widow, Mildred; a son, Austin W. Rathbun; two brothers, Harold and John, and a sister, Grace McCaffery.

DIED — July 7, 1990, Irving Palmer Rathbun, 76, of Franklin, Conn. He was the son of Austin B. Rathbun, grandson of Lucius Rathbun, and great-grandson of Justin Rathbun (1802-1853), whose ancestry is as yet undetermined. He is survived by his widow, Mabel; two sons, Richard and Robert Rathbun, and several grandchildren.

DIED — March 9, 1990, at Yankton, S.D., Harvey E. Miller, 69, husband of Virginia (Rathbun) Miller, the daughter of Curtis⁹ Rathbun (Henry⁸ William⁷ Gideon⁶ Job⁵ Gideon⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹). In addition to his wife, he is survived by three sons; 20 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; two sisters, and two brothers.

DIED — Feb. 21, 1990, Agnes M. Bohrnstedt, 88, the widow of Russell Bohrnstedt, whose parents were George William Bohrnstedt and Naomi Nancy⁸ Rathbone (Albert⁷ Amos⁶⁻⁵ Thomas⁴⁻³ John²⁻¹). She is survived by three children and several grandchildren.

New Data

We have obtained a full list of the children of Jonathan⁶ Rathbun (Jonathan⁵ John⁴⁻¹), and his wife Alice (also called Elsie) Crandall (See our Historian of April 1986, page 27). Jonathan was born Aug. 21, 1793, in Exeter, R.I., and died in 1832, probably in Oswego County, N.Y., during a nationwide cholera epidemic. Alice married Calvin Eason about 1834 and died Feb. 4, 1842, in New Haven, N.Y. Jonathan and Alice had the following children:

SUSAN, born about 1818; married Rice Justin.

CHARITY, born about 1820; married Joseph Barton.

ELSIE ABIGAIL, born about 1822; married Lorenzo Kenyon.

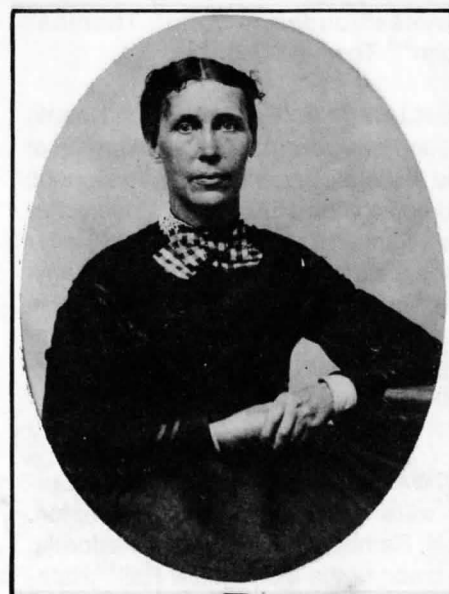
RUTH, born about 1824; married Robert Hall.

MARILLA, born about 1826; died young.

FREEMAN J., born about 1828; married (probably) Elvira Richards on Feb. 26, 1852, in Crawford County, Ohio.

LUCINDA ADELINE, born about 1831; married Almon W. Cheney on March 23, 1854, in Oswego County, N.Y.

Our thanks for most of this information and the picture below to our new member Judd L. Perry, a descendant of Elsie and Lorenzo Kenyon, and to William Wright who put us in touch with Judd.



*Elsie Abby (Rathbun) Kenyon
(1822-1878)*

People

DR. ARTHUR S. RATHBUN JR. of Monroeville, Pa., was recently elected to the position of Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, in recognition of his "significant contributions to the methods used in the thermal and hydraulic design and analysis of naval nuclear power plants." Dr. Rathbun, a member of our Association, is the son of Arthur⁹ Rathbun (Ira⁸ Elisha⁷ Griswold⁶ Elisha⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹).

FRANK E. RATHBUN of Coventry, R.I., has received a Certificate of Commendation for "Superior Performance and Accomplishments Above and Beyond Normal Requirements" in his job as a civilian employee of the U.S. Naval Submarine Base at New London, Conn. Frank is the son of Dorothy and the late Elmer⁹ Rathbun (Frank⁸ James⁷ Robert⁶ John⁵⁻⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹).

KENNETH AND HELEN LANDIS of Canton, Ohio, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on August 31. Helen's brother, James Roe, and his wife, Margaret, marked their 50th wedding anniversary two weeks earlier, on August 17. All are members of our Association, as is the Landis' daughter, Lauren Landis. Helen and Jim are children of Chauncey Roe and Lina May⁹ Rathbun (James⁸ Judson⁷ John⁶ Thomas⁵ John⁴⁻³ Thomas² John¹).

BENJAMIN F. RATHBUN of Noank, Conn., has been appointed chairman of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Sea Grant Review Panel. Captain Ben, who owns a charter fishing and marine surveying company, has served on the panel since 1986. He is the son of Benjamin⁹ Rathbun (Benjamin⁸ William⁷ Benjamin⁶ Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹).

EDWARD RATHBONE and Adele Berry were married May 19 in Hampton, N.H. Rathbone, of Torrance, California, is a son of the late Ludlow Hall¹⁰ Rathbone (Carlisle⁹ Joel⁸ Clarence⁷ Joel⁶ Samuel⁵ Joshua⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹).

Our New Members

Jacqueline Hanna
Portage, Mich.

Leila Jenkins
Newport, R.I.

Lyman Jones
Eugene, Oregon

Lyle C. Miner
Colfax, Illinois

Judd L. Perry
Grand Junction, Colo.

Barbara Petty
Midlothian, Va.

John B. Rathbone
Niantic, Conn.

Pembroke & Mary Rathbone
Marsing, Idaho

Rollin E. Rathbun, Jr.
Oakdale, Conn.

Carole S. Ritter
Colon, Mich.

Marilynn Streeter
Modesto, Calif.

Roger Vinsonhaler
Smith Center, Kansas

SUZANNE RATHBUN, daughter of our members George and June Rathbun of Pawcatuck, Conn., has entered the University of Connecticut Law School after graduating cum laude in psychology at Dartmouth College. George is the son of Rollin⁹ Rathbun (Albert⁸⁻⁷ Calvin⁶ Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹).

GEORGE MICHAEL RATHBUN and Cathleen Ann Weibrecht were to be married Oct. 14, 1990, in Hillsdale, N.J. George is the son of George¹⁰ Rathbun (Oscar⁹ George⁸ Corbet⁷ Gideon⁶ Tibbetts⁵ John⁴⁻³ Thomas² John¹).

DAWN RATHBUN, aged 16, of Groton, Conn., is training to enter the 1992 Olympics in the sport of figure skating on roller skates. She and her partner, Jim Henderson, are practicing under the supervision of Dawn's father, Ernest Rathbun, and are already top contenders in regional competition. We do not know the ancestry of this branch of our family.

DIED — May 25, 1990, Virginia Pearl Rodier, of Taunton, Mass. She was the daughter of Owen Hobday and Mary Susan⁹ Rathbun (Charles⁸ Seneca⁷ John⁶ Joseph⁵ Joshua⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹). She is survived by one son, Barry E. Rodier.

Births

BORN — August 9, 1990, Matthew Christopher Adorno, son of Chris and Marjorie (Rathbun) Adorno of Pittsfield, Mass., grandson of Henry Howe Rathbun III, and great-grandson of Henry Howe Rathbun Jr., all members of our Association. Henry Jr. is the son of Henry Howe⁹ Rathbun (Charles⁸ William⁷ Alfred⁶ Wait⁵⁻⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹).

BORN — July 31, 1990, in Oklahoma City, Okl., Kayla Nicole Winterland, daughter of Wayne and Carol Winterland, and granddaughter of our member Betty L. (Rathbun) Winterland. Betty is the daughter of Bertrand⁹ Rathbun (Ross⁸ Francis⁷ John⁶ Perry⁵ Edmund⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹).

WANTED — Information on descendants of Phidelia Jane Rathbun, daughter of Valentine⁶ Rathbun (Daniel⁵ Valentine⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹). She was born Feb. 26, 1822, and was married on March 19, 1856, in Steuben County, Ind., to Lafayette Hoose. He joined the Union army and died on Feb. 1, 1864. She died four days later. They had two sons, Sylvester and Frank, who were raised by relatives.