Letter from the Editor

Greetings from Virginia in Springtime. And a strange Spring it has been. Several pair of ducks which usually descend on our pond in March arrived this year in late January. We had snow drops and crocus blooming in February, and daffodils in early March, followed by heavy frosts later in the month and early April. But traditional Spring weather is finally here, and everything is budding or blooming.

In my last letter, I expressed hope that our membership would top 500. And indeed it did. As we go to press, the roster stands at 541, a comfortable figure, but a long way from my long-sought goal of 600.

I asked last fall for comments on the possibility of Williamsburg, Virginia, as the site for a reunion next year. The replies I received all seemed to favor the idea, so Hazel and I will be visiting Williamsburg later this year to check out hotel facilities and places to visit.

Last year’s Springfield reunion was held in July, rather than our traditional fall date, in hopes it would attract more people, especially those with children. The idea did not seem to catch on, so we will be looking toward a fall date again next year.

We are coming to the end of the sixth generation in our Genealogy Section. I expect to finish it in the July issue. We will have recorded 415 sixth-generation male descendants of John and Margaret Rathbun, our immigrant ancestors. It took nearly eight years—31 issues of our Historian. It took only four years to record the first five generations.

We now face the big question of whether to begin recording the seventh generation, which will be much larger and would probably require 12 years or more to complete. I know I will never be able to finish it, and I hate to start a task I cannot complete.

My inclination is to drop the genealogical section in the Historian, and devote more space to short biographies of past and present cousins—with more pictures. Members have sent me dozens of family pictures over the years, and this is the only way I can see to use most of them.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions on this subject, please let me know.

I have often urged members to help me in the task of recording the family history by doing research in their home areas, or while traveling in other parts of the country. A few members have done so, but new information now comes to me only rarely. There are still many untapped sources to be used—cemeteries, libraries, city halls, county buildings, old newspapers and others.

Please take a few hours when you can to do some research. Try to find and send me unpublished information on Rathbuns, Rathbones and Rathburns—dates of birth, death and marriage; biographies, obituaries and other data. We need the information, and you may find yourself enjoying the research.

William E. Wright, one of our members, has just published a genealogy which will be of interest to anyone researching Rhode Island families. It is entitled, “The Descendants of John Segar of South Kingstown, Rhode Island, including the Descendants of William Browning and Mary Hoxie (Lewis) Greene of Charlestown, Rhode Island.”

The 100-page book is available for $19 by writing to William E. Wright at 11710 Greenbay, Houston, Texas 77024.

Another book of family interest has been published in England by a former member, Joy (Rathbone) Robinson. Entitled “Relatively Rathbone,” it is the story of one branch of the noted Rathbone family of Liverpool. It can be ordered for $40, post paid, from Trotman and Co. Ltd., 12 Hill Rise, Richmond, Surrey TW10 6UA, United Kingdom.

Speaking of England, a number of member have asked about the possibility of another English “family roots” tour, similar to the one we had in 1987. If there is enough interest, we could look into it. The cost would likely be in the area of $3,000 a person. Let me know if you might participate.

The name of Rollin E. Rathburn Jr. of Oakdale, Conn., was inadvertently omitted from the list of donors to the Block Island Lighthouse Fund in our last Historian. My apologies.

Hazel and I send our very best wishes to all of you.

Frank

Even Our Family Has Had Its Share of 'Black Sheep'

In our first Historian of January 1981, we promised to tell about our family’s scoundrels as well as heroes. This is the story of some “Black Sheep” cousins, whose names have appeared in the past two centuries on police blotters, criminal court records and prison rosters.

One of our family’s first known criminals was an unidentified John Rathbun, who served from 1826 to 1828 in the old Newgate Prison at East Granby, Conn., for horse stealing. He was described as 60 years old and born in Exeter, R.I. He was probably the son of either Thomas Rathbun (Thomas3-2 John1) or George Rathbun (Joseph3-2 John1).

Another early Rathbun who ran afoul of the law was Alfred T. Rathbun, born in 1798, the son of Wait5 Rathbun (Wait4 Joshua3 John2-1). He was married in 1819 to Sophia Sargent, but the marriage soon floundered. In December 1824 he was arrested for failure to pay his debts, and was jailed in Vergennes, Vt.

Alfred escaped from jail the following March, returned home, and “drove his wife from their home with intolerable and abusive conduct.” She divorced him a few years later.

In 1827, he was arrested again on the earlier debt charge, and again jailed. He was freed pending trial when his father posted $500 bond. Alfred failed to appear for trial in June 1828, and the bond was forfeited.

Alfred apparently had left town, and turned up next in 1833 at Lee, Mass., where he published his intentions to marry one Susan Snow. The marriage was called off by Susan, who married another man a few months later.

Alfred then disappeared—from the area and from history. He appears nowhere in later censuses, and his descendants—including our member Robert B. Rathbun—have sought unsuccessfully for years to learn his fate.

He may have died, left the country or changed his name. The answer may never be known.

A more notorious criminal was Benjamin Rathbun (1790-1873), son of Moses5 Rathbun (John4 Joshua3 John2-1), who served five years in a New York state prison for forgeries totaling millions of dollars. The story of his fabulous career and downfall was told in our Historians of January, April and July of 1982.

Benjamin’s only son Thaddeus Loomis Rathbun (1816-1853) was a more dangerous lawbreaker. He was in trouble constantly as a young man, and was a major embarrassment to his parents. He once served time in the Buffalo, N.Y., jail for drunkenness and vagrancy. Later, in New York City, he became a heavy drinker and gambler, and in 1849, apparently in a drunken rage, tried to murder his mother by cutting her throat. She survived and apparently did not press charges.

Thaddeus fled to Detroit, Michigan, where he died in 1853. He was reportedly married, and possibly had children, although no record has been found.

Thaddeus may have been the father of a notorious bank robber and bandit of the 1880s and 1890s, who was known as “The Guerilla.” His criminal activities took him throughout 20 states in the midwest for a number of years, and came to an end only with his death in February 1893, when he was fatally shot in Memphis, Tenn., during a gunfight with one of his confederates.

On his deathbed, “The Guerilla” confessed his crimes and told police his real name was “Robert Rathborne” and that he was born and raised in Detroit—where Thaddeus reportedly married.

During his crime sprees, he had used a number of names, including James Kelly, John Rogers and John Roberts, as well as Robert Rathborne.

Police said he was the ringleader of a band of robbers over whom he ruled with “an iron hand.” His last escape was the robbery of a Chicago bank, where he stole $3,000. He was arrested, released on $2,500 bond, and immediately fled the city. He was recaptured several months later in Cincinnati, and returned to Chicago, where he broke out of jail and again fled. He ended up in Memphis, where he was killed, apparently in an argument with one of his men.

One early Rathbun who disappeared some 160 years ago has only recently turned out to be a lawbreaker. Dyer Dana Rathbun, born in 1784, was the son of Job4 Rathbun (Benjamin3 Joseph2 John1). He disappeared from Howard, N.Y., in the early 1830s, leaving a wife and seven children. He was never seen again, although his widow and later his children spent years trying to determine his fate.

We learned only a few years ago that Dyer went to Ohio, where he was arrested for horse stealing and sentenced in 1835 to spend three years in the Ohio State Penitentiary. He died there of diarrhea on July 28, 1837. Prison records describe him as a “frequent drinker,” which may have been the source of his troubles.

In Cleveland, Ohio, early newspapers record the escapades of Nelson Rathburn, or Rathbun, born in 1820, the son of Edmund5 Rathbun (Jonathan4 John3-2-1).

In 1838, aged 18, he and a companion were arrested for possession of $26,000 in counterfeit money. The companion was released for lack of evidence, but Rathbun was ordered held for trial. He escaped from jail, was eventually recaptured, but after lengthy court proceedings he was released without trial. He apparently had a good lawyer!

Nelson was soon in trouble again—this time for bigamy. Cuyahoga County records show that he was married in (continued on page 29)
Frank Hugo Rathbun Sr. Had Long, Eventful Life

This is the story of your editor’s father, Frank Hugo Rathbun Sr. (1874-1946), based on his letters, papers and other records, as well as my own personal knowledge and recollections. He had an interesting and eventful life, marked with tragedy and triumph, and he left a rich legacy for his descendants. I hope he would approve of what I have written.

Frank Hugo Rathbun was born January 19, 1874, on the family farm in Paris Township, Kent County, Michigan, near Grand Rapids, the third son of Hugo B. and Leversa V. (Wright) Rathbun (See our Historian of April 1990 for their story).

He spent his first 28 years on the farm, attended a one-room country school for eight years, and then went to a high school in Grand Rapids. As a boy, he trapped muskrats and minks during the winters with his younger brother, Eugene, along Plaster Creek which ran through the farm. I still have the old notebook in which they recorded and shared the profits from their traplines.

In the spring, summer and fall he worked on the farm with his father and brothers, and helped his mother with the garden where she grew much of the family’s food. In the summer of 1892, after finishing high school, Dad went to Chicago to stay with his aunt, Charity (Rathbun) Morton, where his older brother George had been living for about five years. He went to work as a clerk for the Union Cold Storage Company, where George was employed.

Dad did not take to city life, however, and returned the following spring to the farm. A year later, the family received word that George had been drowned on a weekend outing in Wisconsin.

It was my father’s first close experience with death, and it affected him deeply, for he had been very fond of his older brother. But four years later came a more crushing blow—his father died at the age of 57. My dad was then 24. His mother, then 50, stayed on the farm for several years, and ran it with the help of her five surviving children.

In 1901, Dad’s sister Leversa, known as Lee, was married to Jack Anderson and nine months later died in childbirth. It was the family’s third death in less than 10 years, and again my father was severely shaken. His world and his life were changing rapidly.

In 1902, his sister Louise (Lee’s twin) was married to Walter McCrath, and in 1903 his brother Charles was married to Elizabeth Swank. My grandmother decided to rent the farm to Charles and move into Grand Rapids with her two younger sons, my father and his brother Gene.

A year later, tragedy struck again. Jack Anderson, my Dad’s brother-in-law, died in Chicago, leaving a baby son, George Rathbun Anderson, then only 20 months old. The youngster came to live with his Grandmother Rathbun and his two bachelor uncles in Grand Rapids.

My father had worked on and off for several years in a greenhouse owned by Harley Strong and his much younger wife, Jessie. About this time, however, he and his brother Gene both went to work as shipping clerks for the Grand Rapids branch of the National Biscuit Company.

While working for the Strongs, he had met their beautiful young niece, Birdie Strong, and the two soon fell in love and decided to marry. As was customary at the time, he went to her uncle and aunt, her legal guardians, to ask permission. He met with an unexpected shock.

The Strongs sat down with him in their parlor and solemnly told him he could not marry Birdie. He demanded an explanation, and they reluctantly told him what had been a closely guarded
family secret—Birdie was a dope addict. She had become "hooked" on morphine during an illness several years earlier.

Jessie Strong, who 33 years later was to become my father's second wife, told me the story many years later, after his death.

My father, she said, at first refused to believe their story and angrily accused them of lying. When they finally convinced him, he cursed and swore and finally broke into tears. It was a heartbreaking experience which plunged him into a deep depression. Although his job was going well, and he had been promoted to the sales department, he could not settle down. The succession of family deaths, followed by the shattering end of his plans to marry Birdie Strong, was more than he could bear.

On Feb. 21, 1904, he went to the Grand Rapids Naval Recruiting Station and joined the United States Navy. He had one problem—he was 30 years old, and the age limit for recruits was 25. He solved the problem by altering his birth certificate. He carefully changed a four to a nine, making his birth year 1879 instead of 1874. I still have the altered certificate.

He kissed his mother goodbye and set off by train, first to Detroit, and then to the Philadelphia Navy Yard for training. His enlistment papers describe him as five feet eleven inches tall, weighing 165 pounds, with brown hair and brown (actually blue-grey) eyes.

After basic training, he was assigned to the USS Lancaster, for seven months, then was transferred to the USS Dixie, and made his first sea cruise—to Panama.

In the next few years, he learned the meaning of the Navy's recruitment motto—"Join the Navy and See the World." Serving successively on the Lancaster, Franklin and Amphitrite, he sailed to ports throughout the world—in Europe, the Mediterranean, the East and West Indies, the South Seas and Asia.

In 1908, he participated in part of the famous cruise of the "Great White Fleet," an armada of 16 American battleships and six cruisers, which was sent around the world by President Theodore Roosevelt as an example of his maxim: "Speak softly but carry a big stick." Roosevelt's "big stick" was the growing American Navy, and he sent the fleet, painted white as a sign of peace, to ports throughout the world.

The ships, he said, were making "courtesy calls," but in reality he was letting the other world powers know that the United States had acquired a powerful Navy. The fleet covered 46,000 miles in 14 months.

In 1908, when Dad's four-year enlistment was up, he was a Third Class Master At Arms, and decided to sign up for another four years. His records from that time describe him as five feet, eleven and a half inches tall, weighing 172 pounds, with grey eyes and balding brown hair. He was granted a reenlistment furlough, and returned to Grand Rapids for the first time in four years. His mother was amazed to see that he had become nearly bald at the age of 34.

Returning to duty in the spring of 1908, he was assigned again to the Lancaster, and in the next few years served on the Franklin, North Carolina (his first battleship), the Montana, Newark, Dubuque and Wabash.

In 1912, now a chief boatswain's mate, he was on the Wabash at the Boston Navy Yard when his second enlistment expired, and he quickly decided to sign up for another four years. Again, he was given a furlough,

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and visited his mother, sister and brothers in Grand Rapids. By now, there were several McCrath nephews and nieces, as well as young George Anderson, who were all impressed with their dashing “Uncle Frank” in his Navy uniform.

Returning to duty, he was again assigned to the Boston Navy Yard, and spent the rest of 1912 in Boston. It was there, aged 38, that he met the woman who was to become his mother—Florence Isabelle McLean, then 28. She had been married in 1903 in her native Sharon, Mass., and had two children, a baby boy who died in infancy, and a son Arthur, born in 1907. The marriage had broken up about 1908, and she and Arthur were living in 1912 with her mother in Salem, Mass., near Boston.

She and my father fell in love, and early in 1913 she became pregnant. She was still legally married to her first husband, so marriage was out of the question. Divorce in those days was seldom considered.

Meanwhile, my father was notified that he was being transferred to the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. There must have been much agonizing over the situation, but they solved it by announcing to his family that they had been married. She went with him to Washington as his common-law wife.

On Sept. 13, 1913, the baby was born, and was named Hugo Benjamin Rathbun—for Dad’s father, Hugo. The name Benjamin was also a family name. On Sept. 24, they sent a postcard to brother Charles Rathbun: “Little Stranger Arrived. Weight. Eleven and one half pounds. Name is Hugo Benjamin.” My father added a postscript—“Chas. Send some snow apples. I beat you to it.”

The two brothers had apparently made a bet some years before as to who would produce the first Rathbun grandchild.

My father had never legally adopted his stepson Arthur, but gave him the Rathbun name and told family members firmly that no one was ever to let the boy know he was not a Rathbun by blood.

My parents rented a house at 519 Twelfth Street, S.E., in Washington, and early in 1914 they wrote and asked his mother, than 66, to come visit them. She did so, taking her grandson George Anderson, then 11, along as a traveling companion.

What had been planned as a pleasant visit to see her new grandson soon ran into problems. Dad was unexpectedly ordered to sea. He was assigned to the USS Machias and sent first to Mexico, where a revolution had broken out and American lives and property were threatened.

The Machias was then sent to Puerto Plata, in the Dominican Republic, where the American consulate was under fire by anti-American rebels. My father was promoted to Master at Arms First Class, and sent ashore as official orderly at the consulate. The disturbances lasted three months, and it must have been a harrowing experience for my father. He was under fire both at the consulate and on his frequent trips to and from the Machias.

I remember only a few of the stories he told about his Navy days, but I do recall one from the Puerto Plata assignment. He was leading a squad of men, under the American flag, through the city one day, when he saw a German naval officer under fire by rebels. World War I had just broken out in Europe, but the United States was still officially neutral. He went up to the officer, saluted, and offered him the protection of the American flag.

The German, who spoke fair English, scornfully replied: “A German officer relies on no flag but his own.” My father shrugged, saluted again, and ordered his men to continue their march. Seconds later, the German was hit by a sniper’s bullet and fell dead.

That fall, my father received the following commendation for his actions at Puerto Plata:

“In the months of June, July and August, Frank H. Rathbun, master-at-arms first class, was employed on daily duty ashore as official orderly to the American consulate during the siege of Puerto Plata, when the entire town was under rifle fire each day.
"He was many times under direct fire when it was impossible to seek cover and when bullets were striking near and passing over him. He performed this difficult and unusually trying duty in the most satisfactory manner, with great coolness, self-control and personal bravery."

Back in Washington, things were going badly for his wife, mother, and sons. My grandmother wrote that summer to her son Charles:

"I am afraid I made a mistake by coming—but I did want to see Frank and his family so much. If this trouble had not come up, all would have been well, but Frank had to go to sea before payday and now he will get paid only once a month. It has left us in pretty hard shape."

The Machias left Puerto Plata in December 1913 and headed for New York City, with a short stop at Port-au-Prince, Haiti. There, U.S. Marines loaded $500,000 in gold, seized from the Haitian National Bank to prevent its falling into foreign (German) hands.

Dad returned to Washington and his anxious wife and children. About that time, he received an offer to attend officers' training school and work toward a commission. It was a tempting offer, but after much thought, he turned it down. After 10 years in the Navy, he decided, he had made too many friends in the enlisted ranks to become an officer.

In 1916, his third four-year enlistment was up. At the age of 42, he seriously considered returning to civilian life, but finally decided to remain in the Navy and make it his career.

After a reenlistment furlough, he was assigned to the battleship Virginia at his old base, the Boston Navy Yard, which delighted my mother for it was near her mother and other relatives.

That year, her first husband apparently died, or possibly she obtained a divorce, for on Oct. 17, 1916, she and my father were quietly married in Medford, Mass., in a private ceremony, with only the minister and his wife as witnesses.

In 1917, the United States entered the war, and Dad made several cruises with the Atlantic Fleet. When the war ended in November 1918, he was promoted to Chief Boatswain's Mate, the highest enlisted rank in the Navy, and transferred to the Brooklyn Navy Yard. They moved into a rented house at 273 Dean Street in Brooklyn.

Dad was then 45 years old, happy with life, and looking forward to a few more rewarding years in the Navy before retirement.

But then tragedy struck!

Little Hugo Rathbun, then five, was enrolled as a kindergartner in Brooklyn Public School 73. He was a bright and loveable little boy, and no doubt terribly spoiled by his parents. About February 22, while climbing on a schoolyard fence, he fell nearly eight feet to the ground, landing on his head.

At first, doctors though he had suffered only minor bruises, but within a day or two, he was diagnosed with meningitis—then an incurable disease.

For two more days, the little boy suffered horribly. My father was distraught. His wife's mother came to help them through the crisis, and many years later she told me about those terrible days.

My father, she said, cried uncontrollably. As the end neared, he "screamed and swore and cursed God" and shouted, "Why must he suffer so? What kind of God would let a little boy suffer so much?"

Then, mercifully, little Hugo sank into a coma from which he never emerged. He died February 27, 1916, aged five years and five months.

My father was devastated. He went into a dark depression which lasted for months, and finally turned to alcohol for solace. Like most sailors of the day, he was a frequent drinker, but now he started drinking constantly. There was a family tradition of alcoholism, and he fell into the pattern. He was soon a full-fledged alcoholic.

The next few years were unhappy ones for both my parents. He volunteered as often as possible for sea duty. In 1919, he was sent to Haiti, where another civil war was threatening American interests. He was stationed ashore and put in charge of the small Haitian Coast Guard, which had been organized a few years earlier by Marine Corps Major Smedley D. Butler.

My father worked closely with Major Butler, later to become a Marine Corps general and two-time winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor. The two developed a warm friendship and remained in contact for several years.

In October, 1920, Dad returned to the States, and was assigned to the Receiving Ship at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. I have a copy of his orders dated October 8, 1920, naming him "aide-de-camp to the regimental commander, to assume full charge of the regiment and to hold daily muster."

The following year, he made what was to be his last cruise, sailing on the USS Beaufort as master-at-arms. He was then sent to the Philadelphia Navy Yard, and soon became eligible for a 20-year retirement. He had actually served only 18 years, but double credit for sea duty gave him the required time.

On July 14, 1922, he officially retired from active duty and was transferred to the U.S. Naval Reserve. He began receiving a pension, but by joining the Navy Reserve he would be eligible for a pension increase after 10 more years.

For the next two years, he drifted somewhat aimlessly in civilian life. Through his friendship with Smedley Butler, then a brigadier-general, he obtained an appointment as deputy sheriff in a southern Pennsylvania mining..."
Book Gives More Details on Abel Rathbone Corbin

In our Historian of October 1989 we printed the story of Abel Rathbone Corbin (1808-1880), who married a sister of President Ulysses S. Grant and played a major role in the famous "Black Friday" scandal of 1869.

A recent book, "The Gold Bug," by Kenneth D. Ackerman, has shed some new light on Corbin's early life, and more details of his later years.

Corbin, the son of Eliakim Corbin and Lodama Rathbone (Abel John Jonathan John 2-1), was born May 24, 1808, in Otsego County, N.Y. (not Salem, Conn., as we reported). He received a good education at Bacon Academy in Connecticut and at Hamilton College.

He "went west" as a young man and ended up in St. Louis, Mo., then a rough-and-tumble frontier village. There he found a job as a high school teacher, and one of his early pupils was a young girl named Julia Dent—later to marry Ulysses S. Grant.

Corbin soon became embroiled in local politics and was a frequently published letter writer in St. Louis newspapers. About 1838, he was married to a young woman named Elizabeth (maiden name unknown), who proved a big boon to his career. (We had speculated that he may have been married in St. Louis.)

He eventually gave up his teaching post to become editor of the Missouri Republican, and soon after his marriage, with the backing of local Republicans, he founded his own newspaper, the Missouri Argus, with his new wife as co-editor.

In 1839, he was elected as an alderman to the St. Louis city council. His newspaper featured local news, poetry, humor and literature, but Corbin's major interest was politics. He became a frequent visitor to the nearby Illinois state capital at Springfield, and became acquainted with such rising political leaders as Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln (another of our family's many ties to Lincoln!).

In 1842, using his political connections, he wangled an appointment as clerk for the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Claims in Washington, D.C. That year, he and Elizabeth sold the Argus and headed for the nation's capital.

For the next 16 years, he held the clerkship, and came to know many of Washington's power-brokers. In sharp contrast to today's thousands of congressional staffers, he was one of less than a dozen aides serving the Congress. Corbin quickly mastered the rules and operations of the House, and became a trusted insider in the Washington political establishment.

One of the high points of his career came in 1843, when he helped Samuel F.B. Morse obtain a $30,000 Federal grant to develop his invention of the telegraph.

But the heady excitement of mixing with prominent national leaders and exerting influence through his congressional connections, soon led Corbin into trouble.

In 1852, he took a $7,500 payment from the textile interests to help secure passage of a bill to reduce tariffs on their imported wools and dyes. He was unsuccessful that year, but two years later offered to try again, this time asking for $50,000!

He made the mistake of putting his request in writing, and his letter was leaked to a Congressional investigating committee. Called before the committee, Corbin tried to justify his actions: the textile manufacturers would have benefitted by a million dollars a year, he said. Why shouldn't he be entitled to $50,000 for helping them?

The committee did not accept his reasoning, and Corbin was forced to resign his clerkship. The loss of the post did not seem to hurt Corbin's career. He and Elizabeth had bought an expensive home (which he later sold to President Grant), and he had made a lot of friends in the city, including Senator Andrew Johnson (later vice-president and president), and popular journalist-author William Cullen Bryant. He had also renewed his friendship with Senator Stephen A. Douglas.

After Lincoln's election as President in 1860, Corbin used their former acquaintance as an entry to the White House, and Lincoln called upon Corbin for help in working with Missouri politicians to keep that state from joining the southern states in secession.

Corbin also made some profitable investments, including a stagecoach line between St. Louis and San Francisco.

In 1863, Abel and Elizabeth moved to New York City, the nation's financial center, and the Corbins became popular members of the city's social elite. Corbin was described by a newspaper reporter at the time as a "good talker, original, versatile and well informed."

In New York, he kept up his Washington connections, and after Lincoln's assassination he became an unofficial advisor to the new president, his old friend, Andrew Johnson.

In April 1868, Elizabeth Corbin died in New York City, leaving Abel a widower at 60, with at least one child, a daughter, whose name is not known. She was probably born about 1840 in St. Louis, and was married to Robert Catherwood.

Corbin was among the thousands of Americans who crowded into Washington, D.C., in March 1869 for the inauguration of President Grant. The President's wife, Julia, had been his pupil in St. Louis 30 years earlier, and he probably used that connection to make contact with the new President.

At one of the many inaugural balls and receptions, Corbin was introduced to Grant's younger sister, Virginia (Jennie), then a 37-year-old spinster. Corbin (continued on page 30)
Genealogy: The Sixth Generation in America

381. THOMAS6 RATHBUN (Aaron5 Thomas4-3 Samuel2 John1), born Feb. 20, 1798, in Lisbon, Conn. He was married about 1823 to Sarah Howland, born about 1802, daughter of Stephen and Mary (Aldrich) Howland. They lived for a few years in Blackstone, Mass., then about 1805 in Slatersville, R.I.; Lebanon and Plainfield, Conn., and then moved about 1836 to Buffalo, N.Y., where he operated a stone quarry. He died at Buffalo on Nov. 14, 1866. His wife died Feb. 7, 1880.

CHILDREN

MARY ANN, married Nathaniel Emerson on Feb. 19, 1844.

EMELINE, born Dec. 20, 1826; married (1) Orange Burrows on Nov. 4, 1845, and (2) Delanie Moses.

EDWIN, born about 1831; died young.

FRANK AARON, born in Sept. 1845; married Rebecca Read.

382. ELIAS6 RATHBUN (Aaron5 Thomas4-3 Samuel2 John1), born March 30, 1800, in Lisbon, Conn. He married on Feb. 10, 1824, Elizabeth Campbell, born April 18, 1800, parentage unknown. He was a stone mason and lived for a time in Willimatic, Conn., then about 1833 moved to Hartford, Conn. He was in Buffalo, N.Y., in 1858, and New Haven, Conn., in 1860, but then returned to Hartford, where his wife died on April 13, 1863. He died there on June 14, 1867.

CHILDREN

EMILY AUGUSTA, born June 26, 1826; married William H. Kelsey on Sept. 8, 1846.

FRANCES JANE, born Oct. 4, 1827; died July 27, 1829.

EARL STANTON, born Feb. 13, 1830; married (1) Mabel Fletcher; (2) Emma A. Slocum; (3) Mary Ann (Sherman) Fisher, and (4) Eva L. ______.

JULIUS GILMAN, born June 9, 1833; married Martha Buell.

HENRY CLINTON, born July 11, 1844; died Aug. 27, 1849.

383. PATRICK6 RATHBUN (Aaron5 Thomas4-3 Samuel2 John1), born April 15, 1801, in Lisbon, Conn. A stone mason, he was married on Jan. 23, 1825, to Elmira Frost, born April 18, 1800, parentage unknown. They lived for several years in Paxton, then Worcester, Mass., and about 1828 went back to Lisbon. They moved by the 1840s to Pike County, Ill., where she died Aug. 18, 1845. He was married on April 9, 1849, to Margaret Jane Wilkinson, a widow, born Nov. 14, 1813, parentage and first husband unknown. He died January 5, 1854, probably in Pike County. His widow moved to Lebanon, Cooper County, Missouri, where she died in 1886.

CHILDREN

By Elmira

HENRY, born Oct. 11, 1825; married Elizabeth Rose.

GEORGE, born April 12, 1827; died April 8, 1828.

SILAS M., born Feb. 21, 1829; married Melissa Livingston.

SEREPHINA, born Jan. 12, 1832; no further information.

By Margaret

FRANCES ELMIRA, born May 3, 1850; married Washington P. Kelly on April 9, 1872.

AMELIA JANE, born Jan. 10, 1854; married John Curnett on April 11, 1874.

384. AARON6 RATHBUN (Aaron5 Thomas4-3 Samuel2 John1), born July 29, 1804, in Lisbon, Conn. He was married Sept. 29, 1829, in Uxbridge, Mass., to Julia E. Jenckes, born July 31, 1813, daughter of Job and Sarah (Aldrich) Jenckes. (See our Historian of January 1987 for the interesting stories of Aaron's life and that of his son Oscar). Aaron died March 24, 1854, in Woonsocket, R.I. His widow married Israel White on June 13, 1859, and died Dec. 31, 1872.

CHILDREN

OSCAR JENCKES, born March 12, 1832; married Rachel Harris.

385. SAMUEL6 RATHBUN (Thomas5-4-3 Samuel2 John1), born Feb. 28, 1793, in Washington County, N.Y. He was married about 1815 in Montgomery County, N.Y., to Jane Vroman, born May 13, 1795, daughter of John and Anna (Scheffler) Vroman. They lived for a few years in Mindon, Montgomery County, then moved to Elkland, Tioga County, Pa., where they were among the pioneer settlers. He was in the lumber business for many years. He died at Elkland on March 23, 1847. Jane died there March 18, 1876.

CHILDREN

HENRY, born March 6, 1816; married Marian Owens.

MARY, born June 9, 1819; married Henry Denninney.

JOHN, born Jan. 28, 1821; married Elizabeth Vroman.

ELIZA, born about 1824; married William Heysham, widower of her sister Elizabeth, about 1849.

SUSAN ANNETTE, born Sept. 13, 1826; married Philip Perkins on Jan. 1, 1846.

(continued on page 26)
ELIZABETH, born May 7, 1829; married William Heysham about 1847, and died the following year.

ORSEMEUS, born about 1831; married (1) Margaret Mathers; (2) Mary Watkins, and (3) Louise Sigler.

SAMUEL, born about 1833; married Mary (Smith?).

THOMAS, born March 20, 1838; married (1) Sarah Ann Vroman, and (2) Mary L. Fleming.

JOB, born March 8, 1841; married Susan Tubbs.

GEORGE MIFFLIN DALLAS, born about 1844; married Elizabeth Powelson.

386. THOMAS⁶ RATHBUN
(Thomas⁵  ⁴-3 Samuel² John¹), born about 1800 probably in Washington County, N.Y., and was married about 1821 to Nancy Vroman, born about 1803, probably daughter of John and Anna (Scheffler) Vroman. They moved to Jasper, Steuben County, N.Y., later to Pennsylvania, and about 1844 to Windsor, Dane County, Wisconsin. They moved by 1860 to Reedsburg, Sauk County, Wisc., where he died in 1876. His widow died some time after 1883, in the Dakota Territory.

CHILDREN

GARRETT, born about 1822; married Susanna Sidler.

WILLIAM WILSON, born Sept. 29, 1824; married Julia Perry.

JANE, born about 1828; married Volney Spink on Aug. 30, 1849.

ELIZABETH, born about 1833; married to James Jones.

Baldwin, born June 13, 1838; married Lydia J. Sparks.

ALVAH, born about 1840; joined the Union Army in 1862 during the Civil War and died in October 1862 of wounds suffered in action.

ARMENIA, born about 1843; possibly married a Vroman.

387. ORSEMEUS⁶ RATHBUN
(Thomas⁵  ⁴-3 Samuel² John¹), born Dec. 20, 1811, at Greenfield, Saratoga County, N.Y. He moved with his parents to Tioga County, Pa., and was married there May 24, 1835, to Betsey Cook, born about 1816, daughter of Levi and Betsey Cook. They lived in Allegheny County, N.Y., for several years, moved back to Tioga County for several years, then moved in September 1844 to Kent County, Michigan, settling in Caledonia. He died there in September 1887. Betsey’s death date is not known.

CHILDREN

SYLVA, born in January 1836; died July 4, 1857.

LEVI COOK, born Dec. 27, 1839; married Alzina Streeter.

ALMERON D., born in 1843; enlisted in the Union Army in the Civil War and was killed in action at Murfreesboro (Stone River) Tennessee, in January 1863.

JAMES BUCHANAN, born Jan. 8, 1845; married (1) Thurza Tobey, and (2) Lona Cornwell.

CHARLES, born in 1848; died young.

SAMUEL B., born Aug. 30, 1851; married Dora ___.

FRANKLIN R., born Sept. 4, 1855; married Hattie J. Sanborn.

LINCOLN ARTHUR, born May 21, 1858; married Mary Estella Rowland.

388. BALDWIN⁶ RATHBUN
(Erastus⁵ Thomas⁴-3 Samuel² John¹), born March 28, 1811, in Lisbon, Conn. He moved with his parents to Pennsylvania, and was married there in Luzerne County on April 20, 1839, to Sophrona Green, born Jan. 26, 1817, daughter of William and Philoma (Love) Green. They lived in Luzerne County for three years, then in May 1842 moved to Clinton County, Iowa. They bought 120 acres at Deep Creek in 1846 and built a log cabin in what was then a wilderness, with Indians as their only neighbors. By 1850 they were in Fairfield Township, Jackson County, Iowa, near the town of Maquoketa. Baldwin died there on Jan. 19, 1885. Sophrona lived another 16 years. She was a midwife and reportedly delivered over 75 babies. She had her right hand amputated because of cancer in 1897, at the age of 80, and died on July 26, 1901, aged 84.

CHILDREN

DANA ANDERSON, born March 21, 1841; enlisted in the Union Army early in the Civil War and died Jan. 21, 1863, at Helena, Ark.

JANE, born Dec. 20, 1842; died July 24, 1844.

FERRAL REYNOLDS, born Feb. 21, 1845; married Ellen Elvira Cunningham.

SEVERAL OTHER CHILDREN, died young.

389. NELSON⁶ RATHBUN
(Thomas⁵  ⁴-3 Samuel² John¹), born March 18, 1813, in Lisbon, Conn., and moved with his parents to Pennsylvania. A carpenter, he was married there in Susquehanna County about 1835 to Louisa Gaylord, born about 1809, parentage unknown. They lived for a time in Auburn, Susquehanna County, then moved by 1850 to Braintrim, in Wyoming County. They moved in the early 1850s to Jackson County, Iowa, to join his brother Baldwin. Louisa died there on Nov. 9, 1856, and he was married six months later on May 7, 1857, to Amanda (Rhodes) Button, born May 7, 1814, a widow, names of parents and first husband unknown. She had three Button children—Anna, Oscar and Adeline. Nelson died on June 8, 1881, and Amanda died three years later on April 21, 1884.

CHILDREN

All by Louise

MARY HELEN, born in 1838; married Israel Van Gorder.

DANIÈL, born about 1840; died in infancy.

GEORGE RANSOM, born June 25, 1842; married (1) Adelina Button, his step-sister, and (2) Mary Ann (Barrick) Oaks.

IRENE, born May 26, 1846; married (1) James W. Stallop, and (2) John Robinson.
390. JOHN 5 RATHBUN (Erastus 4 Thomas 3-3 Samuel 2 John 1), born about 1822 in Luzerne County, Pa. He moved to Jackson County, Iowa, as a young man and was married there about 1857 to Hannah L. Bowman, born in June 1837, parentage unknown. They moved in the 1860s to Clark County, Washington, where he died in April 1880. Hannah was still living in 1900, but her death date is not known.

CHILDREN

NICHOLAS O., born in March 1858; married Sarah Catherine Brinn.

JACOB B., born in July 1860; married Izola Fleming.

CHARLES, born about 1862; married Ella Lawton.

HARRIET, born about 1864; no further information.

JOHN G., born in Sept. 1869; married Carrie Kanzler.

EVA L., born about 1879; married Elmer Robinson on April 4, 1907.

391. WILLIAM 5 RATHBUN (William 4 Thomas 4-3 Samuel 2 John 1), born May 1, 1803, in Lisbon, Conn., and moved with his parents as a boy to Luzerne County, Pa. He moved to Elmira, N.Y., and was married about 1840 to Caroline Hunter, born April 16, 1820, parentage unknown. They moved sometime after 1860 to Lowmanville, in Chemung County, N.Y., where he died Dec. 13, 1864. His widow died Jan. 25, 1894.

CHILDREN

HULDAH, born about 1841; no further data.

SUSAN, born in June 1843, married Van Campen.

ARTHUR, born in August 1845; no further data.

EDNA, born about 1847; married (?) Bigga.

392. JOHN 5 RATHBUN (William 4 Thomas 4-3 Samuel 2 John 1), born about 1815, probably in Elmira, N.Y., and married there about 1839 Mehitable Carpenter, born about 1816, parentage unknown. He was a stone mason in Elmira until his death about 1876. Mehitable’s death date is not known.

CHILDREN

ARCHIBALD J., born Aug. 9, 1840; married Letitia Searles.

BETHIA (or PORTIA), born in 1842; possibly married a Reynolds.

JAMES R., born about 1845; died Jan. 13, 1876, in Brooklyn, N.Y. No known marriage.

ANN, born about 1847; no further data.

JOHN B., born about 1850; married Sarah Ostrander.

ROBERT CARPENTER, born May 18, 1855; married Mary C. Conover.

393. GEORGE W. 6 RATHBUN (William 5 Thomas 4-3 Samuel 2 John 1), born about 1818 in Elmira, N.Y. He was married about 1839 to Ann Eliza, born about 1823, surname and parentage unknown. They lived in Elmira until the early 1850s, when they moved to nearby Big Flats, where they were living in 1855 and 1860. Nothing more is known of them.

CHILDREN

ELIZABETH ANN, born in May 1841; died March 15, 1851.

SARAH (or SOPHIA), born about 1851; alive in 1880; no further data.

HARRIET S., born about 1864; no further data.

ELIZA A., born about 1857; no further data.

394. WATERMAN B. 6 RATHBUN (William 5 Thomas 4-3 Samuel 2 John 1), born about 1821 in Elmira, N.Y. He was married about 1847 to Sarah, born about 1827, surname and parentage unknown. She died by 1860 and he was married to Lydia, born May 4, 1807, surname and parentage unknown. She was about 14 years older than him. He was a stone mason and lived in Dryden, Tompkins County, later in Southport, N.Y., and finally in Wellsburg, N.Y., where Lydia died Dec. 14, 1874. He survived her, but his death date is not known.

CHILD

DELINDA, born about 1847; possibly married a McQuade.

(A Polly Rathbun, 23, born in Vermont, was listed in his household in the 1860 census, but was too old to be his daughter. She may have been a servant and her surname was perhaps erroneously listed as Rathbun.)

395. NEHEMIAH 5 RATHBUN (Henry 4 Thomas 3-3 Samuel 2 John 1), born about 1805 in Lisbon, Conn., and moved as a boy with his parents to Luzerne County, Pa. He was married in the 1830s to Clarissa J., born about 1804, surname and parentage unknown. They moved to Wells Township, in Bradford County, Pa., by 1850, where Clarissa died. He was married by 1860 to Anna M., born about 1804, surname and parentage unknown. They moved to Mosherville, Tioga County, where she died in 1879 and he died in 1883.

CHILDREN

All by Clarissa

ELIZABETH, born about 1840; alive in 1850; no further data.

ISAAC, born in 1844; married Sarah

WILLIAM, born in January 1846; married (?) Sarah

396. PHILETUS P. 6 RATHBUN (Henry 5 Thomas 4-3 Samuel 2 John 1), born about 1811 in Luzerne County, Pa., and moved with his parents as a boy to Tioga County, Pa. He was married about 1837 to Abigail Rowley, and moved to Southport, N.Y. He was a farmer and shoemaker, and served in 1868 and 1869 as postmaster of Southport. He died there on July 28, 1882. Abigail died there Dec. 31, 1889.

CHILDREN

JOSIAH T., born in December 1838; married Julia A. Hovey.

(continued on page 28)
397. WILLIAM C. Rathbun (Henry5 Thomas4-3 Samuel2 John1), born Oct. 23, 1816, in Tioga County, N.Y. He was married about 1852 to Sally Ann Jackson, born about 1833, parentage unknown. He was a shoemaker in Tioga County most of his time after 1865, and he was married to Mary E. Schrist, born in November 1840, a widow whose parentage is not known. They were both living in 1910, he was 93 and she 69, but their death dates are not known.

CHILDREN

All by Sally
CHARLES, born in 1858; died in 1863.
HELEN, born about 1860; married George Fremont Taber on May 29, 1881.
HENRY, born in 1865; died in 1871.

398. HENRY6 Rathbun (Henry5 Thomas4-3 Samuel2 John1), born about 1822 in Tioga County, N.Y. He was married about 1843 to Matilda J., born about 1823, surname and parentage unknown. They moved to Chemung, N.Y., where he was a miller and died in the 1860s or 1870s. Matilda moved to Cedar Mills, Meeker County, Minn., where she died in the late 1890s.

CHILDREN

GUY, born about 1844; probably the Corporal Guy Rathbun who died Jan. 25, 1865, in South Carolina, while serving with the Union Army in the Civil War.
LUMAR LEWIS, born in September 1847; married Emma Grindell.
ELLIS, born about 1850; alive in 1880, no further data.
FRANK B., born in April 1853; married Elizabeth Wendorf.
EDWARD R., born in September 1855; married Francis A.
HARRIET, born about 1859; alive in 1880, no further data.

399. JEDEDIAH L. Rathbun (Baldwin5 Thomas4-3 Samuel2 John1), born July 30, 1817, in Lisbon, Conn., and moved as a boy with his parents to North Kingston, R.I. He was married there about 1840 to Emeline Greene Tourgee, born March 30, 1823, daughter of William N. and Sarah C. (Reynolds) Tourgee. He was a mason and moved in the 1860s to Providence, R.I., where his wife died July 21, 1877, and he died April 17, 1881.

CHILDREN

HENRY ALLEN, born Oct. 27, 1841; died Nov. 1, 1842.
PHILANDER, born Nov. 30, 1843; married Sarah E. Potter.
PHILENA (twin), born Nov. 30, 1843; married Charles M. Baker on Nov. 1, 1863.

400. HENRY BALDWIN6 Rathbun (Baldwin5 Thomas4-3 Samuel2 John1), born about 1822 in North Kingston, R.I. He was a stone mason and in the 1850s went to California, probably in the great gold rush of 1850-51. He was in business at Sacramento in 1861, lived for a time in San Francisco, but returned to Sacramento, where he died of consumption on Oct. 6, 1870. He may have been married; a Mrs. H.B. Rathbun, widow, was living in San Francisco in the 1880s, but there were no known children.

New Data

In our Historian of July 1987 (page 46), we reported that John7 Rathbun (Elijah5 Elias4 Joshua3 John2), married Lucy M. Pratt. He also had an earlier marriage, on June 3, 1871, at Palmer, Mass., to Angie H. Duncan, who died three years later.

Aaron Henderson Rathbone, son of Aaron5 Rathbone (John4 Joshua3 John2), married his first wife, Caroline Regally, on January 8, 1856, at Boston, Mass. She was the daughter of Michael Regally. (Historian of April 1988, page 28). Our thanks for this and the previous item to Rob Rathbun, who has been researching Massachusetts marriages.

Sarah Carr, wife of Charles Brown5 Rathbun (Anthony4 Samuel3 Thomas2 John1), was the daughter of Samuel and Frances ( Eldred) Carr.

Amanda Rathbun, born about 1838, daughter of Lewis5 Rathbun (Amos5 Thomas4-3 John2), was probably the Sarah A. Rathbun who married George W. Woodlin about 1864 in Mercer County, Ohio. (History of Van Wert and Mercer Counties, Ohio). Her older brother, whose name looks like Ruel in census records, may have been Reed. There may also have been another sister, Malvina, born about 1840.

Block Island, the home of our ancestors, has been named one of the "Last Great Places" in America.

The Nature Conservancy, a national organization devoted to preserving America's natural heritage, chose Block Island along with 11 other sites in both North and South America.

Working with interested islanders, the Conservancy has already helped set aside more than 20 percent of Block Island as a refuge for wildlife.

The organization's goal is to show that environmental protection and economic development can go hand in hand.
1839, again in 1843, and then in 1847, not bothering to get divorces between marriages. By 1850, he was serving in the Ohio State Prison at Columbus. In January 1851, he was released on a "writ of error" (perhaps he had the same lawyer), but was arrested only a few days later for stealing a horse and cutter. He was soon in the county jail serving a term for larceny.

His activities for the next few years are not known, but the 1860 Federal Census shows him back in the State Penitentiary for horse stealing.

By this time he was about 40, and apparently gave up his criminal ways. He was married in 1865, divorced, and married again in 1876. Nothing more is known of him.

In Rhode Island, Calvin Wheatley Rathbun (1831-1911), son of John Rathbun (John 3-1), was in the State Prison for burglary when the 1850 census was taken. He was described as a cigar-maker.

He was released by 1854, when he married the first of his five wives. He served in the Army during the Civil War, and lost a leg at the Battle of Fredericksburg in 1862. He was pensioned, returned to Rhode Island, and lived a respectable life until his death. He had no children by any of his wives.

In Michigan, the 1850 census showed a Daniel Rathbun, 40, in jail at Adrian, serving time for larceny. Living in nearby Ogden was a Sarah Rathbun, 40, possibly his wife. We have been unable to identify them.

In Connecticut, an Anna Maria Rathbun was convicted in 1900 in New Haven of murdering her husband, whose name we have not ascertained. He drank a cup of poisonous coffee which she claimed to have prepared for a boarder in their home. She was sentenced to life imprisonment, but was pardoned in 1917. The pardon, rather than parole, might indicate that there was some doubt of her guilt.

Her unfortunate husband may have been William Adams Rathbun, born in 1830, son of William Rathbun (Jonathan 6-1). He was living in New Haven about that time, and his wife Emma had died in 1895. We do not know the date of his death.

A close cousin of William Adams Rathbun was convicted of murder in Stonington, Conn., in 1892. He was Charles Irving Rathbun (1856-1937), son of Asher Rathbun (Christopher 6 Jonathan 5 Isaiah 4 Jonathan 3 John 2).

Charles was married in 1881 when he was 25 to 16-year-old Emma Donnelly. She was apparently a very pretty young woman, and a few years later attracted the attentions of a neighbor, Daniel F. Chesebro, 28-year-old bachelor and member of a prominent Connecticut family.

Chesebro reportedly "visited" Emma while her husband was at work as a farm laborer. Rathbun became aware of the situation, and warned Chesebro to keep away from his wife.

On the evening of February 15, 1892, Chesebro was killed in the Rathbun home with a bullet from Rathbun's gun. What happened is a matter of dispute.

Press accounts of the shooting say that the Rathbuns were having a noisy argument, and Chesebro went next door to calm things down. Rathbun went upstairs to get his gun, and Emma warned Chesebro to leave. As he turned toward the door, Rathbun came down and shot him in the back. The newspaper accounts say that Rathbun "had a mean disposition and on the day of the shooting had been drinking considerable cider and was in a quarrelsome mood."

Family members dispute this account, and said that Rathbun came home and found Chesebro with his wife. He was using his gun only to force Chesebro to leave, and the gun was fired accidentally when Rathbun tripped over a clothes-horse.

Most of the neighbors sympathized with Rathbun, and openly said that Chesebro had "got what he deserved."

Rathbun was arrested, convicted of murder, and sent to the Connecticut State Prison at Wethersfield. He was a model prisoner and soon became a trusted. He was allowed occasional visits to his family.

We do not know the length of his sentence, or how long he served. He was still in prison eight years later when the 1900 census was taken.

Emma obtained a divorce, and remarried. Charles, when he was released, returned to his home town and lived to be 81 years old. He never married again, and was reportedly held in high respect by his neighbors.

Two unidentified Midwest cousins ran afoul of the law during the late 1800s.

A Charles Rathburn was indicted for murder in Miami County, Indiana, in 1873. We know nothing more of him or the outcome of the case.

A "C. Rathburn," age 38, was in jail in Madison County, Montana, in 1870, but again we have no more information.

Moving into the present century, we find the story of a Rathbone who broke out of jail with his family's help just before he was to be hung.

Charles Ernest Rathbone, born in 1874, was the son of Cornelius Rathbone (Edmund 5-4 John 3-2-1). In the early 1900s, the family was living in Mooland, Idaho, where Charles was arrested for horse stealing, convicted, and sentenced to be hung.

The night before the scheduled hanging, his father and brothers broke into the jail and helped him escape. He fled to Canada where he reportedly married and had three sons. Nothing more is known of him.

In more recent years, a John Rathbun of North Carolina was arrested in Michigan in 1973 as a major player in a "pyramid" sales scheme which bilked gullible persons in several states. Rathbun and his men used the corporate name "Dare to Be Great!"

Clients were persuaded to put up money—often $2,000 or more—with the promise of huge profits if they could find others to do the same.

Rathbun and the others were charged with fraud, but later pleaded guilty to a reduced count involving the use of an unauthorized corporation. They were fined $150 each and placed on two years' probation.

Even more recently, in 1987, a Brooklyn police officer named Robert Rathbun was arrested in a corruption scandal involving 13 policemen. He was sentenced to prison for 3 1/2 to 10 1/2 years for stealing money and narcotics from drug dealers.

In our last issue, in the box listing the price of past Historians, we incorrectly gave the cost of all issues from 1981 to 1990 as $170. It should read from 1981 through 1991. Our thanks to new member Russell Love.
Corbin

(continued from page 24)

was 61, nearly 25 years her senior, but the two were attracted to one another, and were married two months later.

Jennie was described as beautiful but shy, with "golden hair and dark, dove-like eyes" A newspaperman described Corbin as "very tall, somewhat slender, stooped slightly, with grey hair and brown eyes."

Of all the politicians and lobbyists swarming around the new President seeking cushy jobs, political favors and inside connections, Corbin walked off with the biggest prize of all—he married into the President's family!

Abel and Jennie settled down in his elegant, five-story, brownstone mansion on West 27th Street in New York City, and became leaders in the city's social life. Corbin, styling himself as a retired diplomat, lawyer and journalist, began speculating in real estate and the stock market.

He and Jennie regaled in the endless rounds of dinner parties, nights at the theatre and outings to Saratoga and other fashionable resorts. As the president's sister and brother-in-law, they were considered a "real catch" for ambitious hostesses, and fellow socialites drooled at the prospect of being dinner guests when the President and Mrs. Grant visited the Corbins.

Jay Gould, railroad magnate and financial wizard, was already acquainted with Corbin, but he now made himself a personal friend. The Presidential connection opened some profitable ideas in Gould's greedy mind. His attempt to use the Corbins in his plot to corner the gold market was covered in our earlier article.

After the Black Friday crash and Corbin's downfall, he and Jennie moved to New Jersey, first living in Elizabeth, then in Jersey City. President Grant eventually forgave Corbin for his role in the gold scandal, and even called on Corbin for advice during his second term as president.

Corbin died March 28, 1880 (not 1881 as we reported), at the age of 72. Jennie lived another 33 years. She later moved to East Orange, where she died in June 1913.

Rathbun

(continued from page 23)

camp. He resigned after a short time, when he realized that his job was primarily to curtail labor-union organizers.

He then worked briefly as a salesman for the Pennsylvania Sugar Company, then for his old employer, the National Biscuit Company. He and my mother, with Arthur, were living in a small, rented house in Philadelphia, and he was still drinking heavily, causing dissension at home, and probably difficulty at work.

Then, early in 1924, just after his 50th birthday, my mother, aged 39, informed him that she was pregnant! The news was to make a drastic change in his life.

(to be continued)

Rathbun Barber
Offered Haircuts for Fifteen Cents

An interesting Rathbun item was found in an 1878 Missouri newspaper by our member Jeanne Chubbuck. It reads "NEW BARBER SHOP—Mr. Isaac Rathburn has opened out a new barber shop on the west side of the public square, and he solicits a share of the public patronage. Hair cutting, 15 cents."

The advertisement was in the August 8, 1878, issue of the Grant City (Missouri) Star. Isaac, who spelled his name Rathbon, was born in 1842 and died in 1924, the son of Edmund Rathbon (Gideon Edmund John 3-2-1). He later moved to a farm near Moore Prairie, Kansas, and in 1911 found himself rich when oil was discovered on the farm.

Isaac, the grandfather of our member Victor Mastin, was a sergeant and later captain in the Union Army during the Civil War. He was wounded at the Battle of Antietam.

Corrections

The surname of Martha and Susan, first two wives of Albert Rathburn (Benjamin Anthony Samuel Thomas John 1) was Himes, not Hines, as reported in our Historian of January 1990, page 14. They were daughters of Wanton and Susan (Northrup) Himes.

Lucretia Packer, wife of Elisha Rathbun (Elijah Samuel John 1), was the granddaughter, not daughter of John and Hannah (Avery) Packer. Her parents were John Packer Jr. and Hannah Gallup. (See our Historian of July 1985, page 46.)

The U.S. Navy announced early in February that the frigate USS Rathburne, launched in 1969 and commissioned in 1970, is to be decommissioned and taken out of service.

The Rathburne is the second Navy ship named for our famous cousin, Captain John Peck Rathbun. The first, commissioned in 1918, was erroneously named Rathburne when someone in the Navy Department made an error.

The mistake was soon discovered, but when the second ship was launched, it too was named Rathburne, apparently to follow tradition and avoid confusion.

Our Association has a written promise from the Navy that when and if another ship is named for Captain John Peck Rathbun it will be correctly called "Rathburne."

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All issues, 1981-1991 ....... $170
All issues, 1981 ............ 22
All issues, 1982 ............. 20

All issues for any single year from 1983 to 1991 are available at $15 per year. Single copies of any issue are $4 each, but some early issues are available only in xerox unless ordering a complete back set.
Obituaries

DIED—March 13, 1992, at Modesto, Cal., Ellen Lenora (Sharp) Coates, 70, a charter member of our Association. She was a granddaughter of Samuel Cline and Lucinda Ellen Rathbun (Jacob 7 Eden 6 George 5 Job 4 Benjamin 3 Joseph 2 John 1). Survivors include her husband, John; two children, Gary Coates and Rosemary Jacques; three grandchildren; five sisters, and three brothers.

DIED—Jan. 4, 1992, at Flint, Mich., Kenneth Perry Rathbun, 79, a son of Emmet 6 Rathbun (George 5 Vortimer 7 Lucius 5 Jonathan 4 John 2-1). Survivors include his wife, Lillian; a son, Kenneth, and a daughter, Gail; three brothers, Ferris, Lisle and LaVerne, a member of our Association, and two sisters, Janetta Crosslin and Virginia Willett.

DIED—Jan. 23, 1992, at Beatrice, Neb., Dr. Sanford M. Rathbun, 80, a son of Grove 6 Rathbun (Heman 5 Nathaniel 7 Gideon 6 Paris 5 Gideon 4 John 3-2-1). He was a physician for 42 years until his retirement in 1984. Survivors include his wife Lillian; two sons, Kirk and John Rathbun, and a daughter, Mary Rathbun. He was the uncle of our member, Grove Rathbun.

DIED—Jan. 16, 1992, at Westerly, R.I., Herbert W. Rathbun, Ill., 43, a son of Herbert 6 Rathbun (Herbert 5 Warren 7 Calvin 6 Samuel 5 Elijah 4 Samuel 3-2 John 1). He is survived by his wife, Lois; a daughter, Kristin, and two brothers, Laurence and David, a member of our Association.

DIED—Dec. 19, 1991, at Great Bend, Kans., Mildred Hester Benedict, aged 82. She was a daughter of William 6 Benedict (Daniel 5 William 4 John 3-2-1). She was married first to Kermit V. Engle, who died in 1968, and then to Ben Benedict, who died in 1984. Survivors include a son, daughter, three grandchildren, two-great-grandchildren, and a brother Harlan Rathbun, a member of our Association.

Births

BORN—March 4, 1992, Melissa Kimiko Rathbun, daughter of Ray and Carin Rathbun and granddaughter of our members, Bruce and Suzue Rathbun of Gustine, Cal. Bruce is the son of William 9 Rathbun (Daniel 8 William 7 Daniel 6 William 5 Daniel 4 Joshua 3 John 2-1).


BORN—March 4, 1992, Jordan Michael Williams, son of Walter and Pamela Williams; grandson of Donna (Rathbun) Robison, and great-grandson of Paul 9 Rathbun (Frederick 8 William 7 John 6 Perry 5 Edmund 4 John 3-2-1), of Tecumseh, Neb. Both Donna and Paul are members of our Association.

BORN—Feb. 5, 1992, Calista Marie Upah, daughter of John and Cindy Upah of St. Louis, Mo., and granddaughter of Myron and Fern (Rathbun) Upah, daughter of John and Cindy Upah, a member of our Association.


Obese Rathbun on Drastic Diet 93 Years Ago

Any of our members who fight constantly to keep their weight down will sympathize with this story of a Rathbun cousin nearly a century ago. It is abstracted from the New York Times of July 6, 1899.

"While others make war against the drink habit, the tobacco habit and the opium habit, Milton Rathbun of Mount Vernon, N.Y., appears as the foe of the eating habit.

"He is convinced that the human stomach is the source of most human ills, and should therefore be boycotted. He recently fasted for 28 days, subsisting only on water and his own previously accumulated resources, with a little apollinaris on the side when he felt that he needed a stimulant.

"Mr. Rathbun is 53 years old (actually 55) and an amateur athlete. . . On the first day of his diet, his stomach clamored loudly. The next day it subsided and accepted the situation. Mr. Rathbun hungered no more. . . He drank water copiously and made a hearty meal of a pint of apollinaris at night . . . At the end of 28 days, Mr. Rathbun weighted 168 pounds, having lost 42 pounds. (He must have weighed 210 when he started; unfortunately, we do not know his height.)

"Now he is eating as he formerly did and says he never felt better in his life than while he was starving."

A Times story the following February is not surprising. Rathbun's weight was back up to 207 pounds! He went on another diet, and in 12 days had lost 13 pounds.

That is all we know of Rathbun's fight against fat. But he died less than three years later on September 7, 1902, at the age of 59. It would be interesting to know what he weighed, and the cause of his death.

Milton was the son of Solomon 7 Rathbun (Acors 6 Joshua 4-3 John 2-1). He operated a hay, grain and feed store in New York City.
People

In the People section of our January Historian, we noted that a Robert Rathbun had been named as one of two new radio announcers for the Detroit Tigers, and asked if anyone knew him or his ancestry.

The answer came quickly from Ellen (Rathbun) Kenyon, who knew exactly who he was—her nephew.

Robert is the son of Ellen’s brother, Robert Rathbun (Amos6 Charles5 Amos7 Newman6 Jonathan5 John4-1).

He was born in Rhode Island but raised in Salisbury, N.C., where his father still lives. Now 38, he graduated from Catawba College in Salisbury, then lived for several years in Norfolk, Va., where he was a sports announcer. In 1987, he became a substitute announcer covering the Baltimore Orioles for a cable channel there.

Last year, the Tigers dropped their long-time radio announcers Ernie Harwell and Paul Carey, and began a long search for replacements. After a year-long process, and interviewing nearly 100 candidates, they chose Rich Rizzs, former backup announcer for the Seattle Mariners, and selected Rathbun as his partner.

JOSEPH RATHBUN, a biologist at Grosse, Ile, Mich., conducted a toxicity survey last year of two rivers in Central Nepal, Asia. The project was conducted in cooperation with the Nepal government and the University of Minnesota. On his return to America, he and his brother, Michael, a wilderness ranger in Oregon, vacationed together in the Midwest and visited Rathbun Lake, Iowa. They are the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph10 Rathbun (Bertrand9 Ross9 Francis7 John6 Perry5 Edmund4 John3-2-1).

CRAIG R. RATHBUN and Natalie Rickets were married Dec. 24, 1991, at Melbourne, Fla. Craig is the son of our member, Robert9 Rathbun (Robert8 Clarence7 Guy6 Amaziah5 Job4 Benjamin3 Joseph2 John1).

Our New Members

| Patti Baron                                      | Donald McEdward                      |
| McGuire AFB, N.J.                               | Phoenix, AZ                         |
| Marilyn Flurer                                   | Gloria McKie                         |
| Gridley, Ill.                                    | Galesburg, Ill.                      |
| Michael Harke                                    | Carol Rashall                        |
| Norwalk, Conn.                                   | Missoula, Mont.                      |
| Russell Love                                     | Clarence Patrick Rathbun             |
| Fallbrook, Cal.                                  | Hackensack, N.J.                     |
| Suzanne Mackey                                   | Darrell Craig Rathbun                |
| New City, N.Y.                                   | Colonia, N.J.                        |

KIM MARIA RATHBUN of Chetek, Wisc., was named to the “Who’s Who of American High School Students” for her scholastic and extra-curricular achievements in high school. She plans to attend the University of Wisconsin next fall, pursuing business and accounting. She is the daughter of our member Max D.10 Rathbun (Gathern9 George8 Jonathan7 Thomas6-5 John4 Samuel3 Thomas2 John1).

ROBERT WEATHERFORD, former mayor of Independence, Mo., was awarded the 1992 Harry S. Truman Public Service Award by a special commission in Independence. Weatherford, 80, was mayor from 1950 to 1958, and was a personal friend of Truman. He now lives in Phoenix, Az., with his wife, LaPrella, a daughter of Virgil8 Rathbone (Albert7 Amos6-5 Thomas4-3 John2-1). Past recipients of the Truman Award have included Astronaut (now Senator) John Glenn and former U.S. Surgeon-General C. Everett Koop.

PHILIP RATHBUN, city manager of Reed City, Michigan, has been named by Michigan Governor John Engler to a special Task Force on Children’s Justice. Rathbun was formerly Reed City’s police chief. He is the son of Yale10 Rathbun (Lewis9 Isaiah8 James7 Isaac6 Daniel5 Valentine4 Joshua3 John2-1).

JERRY K. THORUSEN, a Coast Guard lieutenant-commander, received a special Achievement Medal recently for superior performance of duty at Clearwater, Fla. He is a specialist in radar equipment. Jerry is the son of our member Blanche Weirum, a great-granddaughter of Jerusha6 Rathbun (Job5 William4 Job3 Joseph2 John1). He was recently sent to Alaska to investigate the near crash of a C-130 aircraft which lost a motor but landed without casualties.

MACON RATHBURN of DeRidder, La., at the age of 74 has begun a hike of the 1,000-mile Appalachian Trail. An Air Force retiree, Rathbun plans to make the march in five months—2,144 miles from Georgia to Maine. An estimated 1,200 people attempt the entire hike every year, but only a dozen or so succeed. Rathbun expects to make it, and also expects to walk off about 17 pounds. He is gathering pledges for each mile he walks, with the proceeds earmarked for a Methodist Children’s Home. We do not know his ancestry.

BORN—Feb. 28, 1992, Zachary Lee Rathburn Ellis, son of Mrs. Regina (Rathburn) Ellis; grandson of Ronald Lee Rathburn, and great-grandson of our member, Forrest Lee10 Rathbun (Howard9 Charles8 William7 Raymond6 ?Stephen5 Gideon4 John3-2-1). The ancestry from Raymond back has not been definitely established.