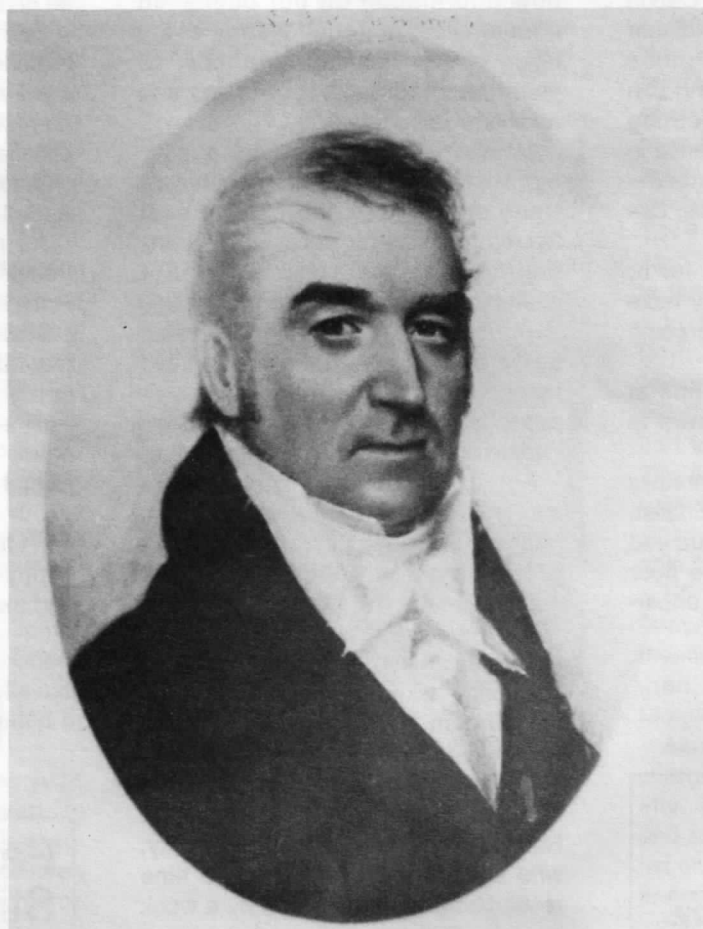


Rathbun-Rathbone-Rathburn
**FAMILY
HISTORIAN**



'Merchant John' Rathbone
1751-1843

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

Letter from the Editor

This issue marks a milestone! In it, we complete our recording of the sixth generation of our family in the United States. It has taken nearly eight years.

Most of the mail I received on the question of starting the seventh generation was strongly in favor, so the next issue will launch the seventh generation, as in the past, covering only the male lines.

I was strongly influenced by comments sent by an old friend, Calvin Dewey, who quoted Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971), a German religious philosopher: "Nothing worth doing can be achieved in a lifetime—Nothing true, beautiful or good makes sense in any immediate context of history—Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone."

My friend urged me to "go for it, even though someone else may have to finish it." So, we are indeed, going for it!

Our membership roster stands at 550, with only five new members to report this quarter.

Only a few members expressed interest in a possible second English "Roots" tour, so we will not pursue that idea at this time. I am sure the poor state of the economy and the uncertain future are big factors.

We have received one more donation for the Block Island Lighthouse Fund—and a big one. Mrs. Darleen Boyle sent us \$200 for the fund in memory of all her Rathbun women ancestors. Her generous donation pushed our Association's total contribution to \$2,032 dollars, a significant amount indeed.

Some new members have questioned our policy on corrections and new information on our published genealogical material. Nearly every issue of our Historian for almost 12 years has had such corrections and additional information.

Members and others who are using our Historian to record their family trees should look through all past issues to check possible corrections and/or additional information. For example, after printing some families in the Historian, using only estimated dates of birth, we have found bible records giving complete and authenticated birth dates. These have been printed under the headline "New Data."

Sometimes, we have discovered that incorrect information has been published, and we then print the proper data under the headline "Corrections."

The compilation of a complete family history is a never-ending task. I have frequently asked members to help by sending in data, and many have responded.

My most regular and dependable contributor, however, is Robert B. Rathbun of Bowling Green, Kentucky, who spends much of his spare time researching in libraries. Rarely a week goes by that the mail does not bring something from Rob. At present, he is laboriously copying all the Rathbuns, Rathbones and Rathburns from the recently released 1920 Federal Census. We all owe Rob a big round of thanks.

The Block Island Historical Society has a special summer exhibit this year. Entitled "Manisses: prehistoric Block Island," the exhibit features an ancient Indian village discovered by an archaeology team from the University

of Connecticut. The village, dated to 500 B.C., lies near the Great Salt Pond. The Manissean Indians inhabited the island for hundreds of years before the arrival of white settlers, including our ancestors, and called it Manisses.

Bob Willis, treasurer of the Historical Society, also reported that unique computer-enhanced pictures of Block Island as it looked centuries ago will be on display.

Bob also tells us that many of the Historical Society's Board of Directors are Rathbun descendants—including himself, President Lydia (Rathbun) Littlefield; Secretary Pam Gasner, and directors Josephine Dugan and Martha A. Ball.

As most of you know, the U.S. Postal Service has approved the Elvis Presley memorial stamp. Our long-standing request for a stamp honoring Captain John Peck Rathbun is still being ignored. It is a sad story, but perhaps a good indication of our nation's sorry moral character at this pivotal point in history.

But maybe things will get better. I don't think they can get worse. On that happy note, best wishes from Hazel and me.

Frank

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Frank H. Rathbun

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Not All American Cousins Descend from 'Our' John

Although the vast majority of American Rathbuns, Rathbones and Rathburns are descended from our ancestors John and Margaret Rathbun of Block Island, there are a few who descend from English emigrants in the 1800s. Most, if not all, were probably distant cousins of our English ancestors. This is the first in a series of articles on these latter-day immigrants and their descendants, for the benefit of future historians who might confuse them with our branch of the family.

James H. Rathbun (he apparently adopted the Rathbun spelling when he came to America), was born August 6, 1806, in Yorkshire or Oxfordshire, England, and came to the United States as a young man, probably in the 1830s. His ancestry is not known.

He was apparently living by 1836 in Albany, N.Y., with a wife whose maiden name was Jane Nobel. They were probably married in New York, but no record has been found.

In the 1850 Federal census, James was listed alone in New Haven, Conn., aged 43, called a laborer. His wife may have died, or they were separated or divorced.

He was married the following year, on May 8, 1851, in New Haven, to Anna Marie Waters, born in January 1814. They had at least three children who died in New Haven. A son, name unknown, died aged 3 on Aug. 27, 1853, of cholera. A daughter, name unknown, died Sept. 16, 1852, aged seven months, of dysentery. A daughter, Louisa Ann, died Sept. 20, 1855, aged four days.

James was listed in the New Haven city directories of 1853-1855 as a gardener. He died Jan. 3, 1868, in New Haven, and Anna Marie died Aug. 22, 1868, both of typhoid.

By his first wife James had a daughter, Mary Jane Rathbun, born

Dec. 22, 1836, in Albany, according to a descendant, but in Ireland according to the birth certificate of her youngest daughter. She does not appear with James in the 1850 or 1860 censuses, but was married in New Haven on June 4, 1867, to Richard C. Kay, a carriage maker, born in England. Mary Jane had two daughters, Jane Elizabeth, born April 2, 1868, and Lucy, born April 26, 1872.



James Rathbun, English immigrant, pictured about 1861 in New Haven, Conn., aged about 55 years.

Most of our data on this family comes from a descendant, Mary Jane Duda of Waterbury, Conn., who provided the picture of James which accompanies this article.

John Rathbone was born about 1815 in Liverpool, England, and came to the United States as a young man, possibly the John Rathbone aged 24

who arrived in New York City in April 1842 on the ship Casper Hauser. (Records at St. Peter's Church in Liverpool show the baptisms of a Jonathan Rathbone on May 10, 1815, and a John Rathbone on July 12, 1818, sons of James and Eliza Rathbone. Either could be this John.)

John was married April 19, 1846, in New London, Conn., to Almira Bailey, born in Connecticut about 1825. They appear in the 1850 Federal census in New London. John was 34, a blacksmith, and Almira was 25. They had four children—John Jr. born in June 1846 or 1847; Susan, born about 1851; Martha, in 1853, and Josiah M. in 1855.

In July 1860, John filed for divorce from Almira, charging that she had "deserted and abandoned him" four months earlier. He also stated that he had been blind for seven years and that Almira had "treated him with great rudeness and disrespect, violently struck him and rendered his life miserable."

For two years, he added, she had "stayed out late, attended spiritualist meetings and kept company with other men, in particular a Fernando Morgan."

Almira responded with a countersuit, charging him with misconduct and cruelty. The court granted the divorce, and awarded custody of the three oldest children to John, and the youngest to Almira.

In the 1870 census, both Josiah and Martha were living with Almira and her second husband, Henry Tryson, in Suffolk County, N.Y.

John Rathbone died January 1, 1877, in New London, of "debility." Almira's death date is not known.

There is no further record of the three youngest children, but John, the eldest, was married about 1869 to Harriet N. Crawford, lived briefly on

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'Merchant John' Rathbone Family's First Millionaire

This is the story of "Merchant John" Rathbone of New York City, one of the most remarkable men in the early history of our family. Born in 1751, he lived into his 92nd year and became one of the wealthiest and most influential men of his day. In terms of today's dollars, he was our family's first millionaire. Unfortunately, he left but few records of his activities, but from these we have sketched his life's story.

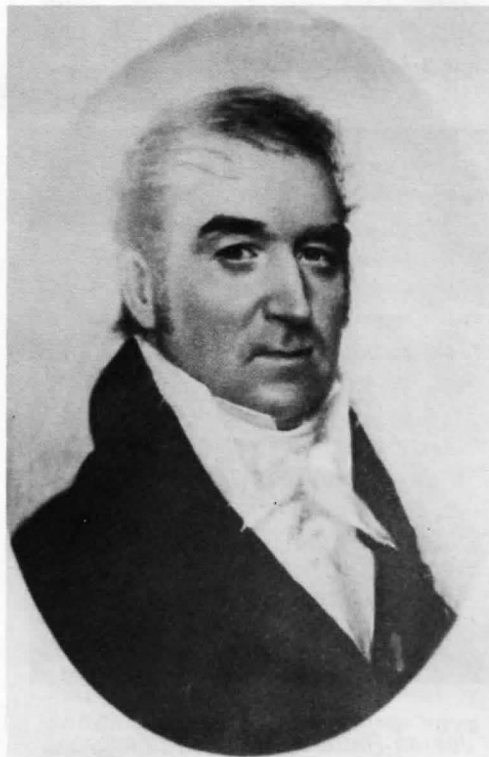
John Rathbun (he adopted the Rathbone spelling late in life) was born Oct. 20, 1751, in Stonington, Conn., the first child of Rev. John⁴ Rathbun (Joshua³ John²⁻¹) and his wife Content Brown. A picture and story of Rev. John appeared in our first Historian of January 1981. (We called him Rev. John Rathbone, as listed by Cooley, but further research indicates that he probably retained the Rathbun spelling.)

The Rathbuns lived on Stonington Long Point, a small peninsula which juts south into Block Island Sound, just west of the Connecticut-Rhode Island border.

Rev. John was a merchant as well as Baptist minister. An order for goods he purchased in 1770 is still preserved in the Connecticut State Library. In it, he asked for "10 sets of white stone tea dishes, six cases of knives and forks with white bone handles, ten pounds of pepper, six padlocks, four packages of pins, six pounds of shoe bindings," and various amounts of buttons, nails, wire, sugar, tea and nutmeg.

John Junior went to work in his father's store at an early age, and soon became the driving force behind the business. Early court records show him bringing charges in 1775 against "Abigail, an Indian woman," for stealing cloth from his store, and against Mehitable Parks, who was convicted of a similar theft.

That was the year the Revolutionary War began, and in September Stonington came under a heavy naval bombardment from a British ship. Captain James Wallace of HMS Rose chased an American vessel into



This exquisite picture of "Merchant John" Rathbone, which also appears on our front cover, was copied from an ivory miniature painted about 1800 in New York City. The original was owned in 1892 by one of Rathbone's Goddard grandchildren, but its whereabouts today is not known. This copy was provided by Juliet Pantel, a descendant of John Rathbone.

Stonington Harbor on the evening of August 31, and anchored off shore for the night. In the morning, he opened fire on the little town with his ship's cannon.

A contemporary writer described the bombardment a few days later:

"The inhuman wretch (Capt. Wallace) fired on this defenseless place from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., ceased for lunch, began again, and fired until near night."

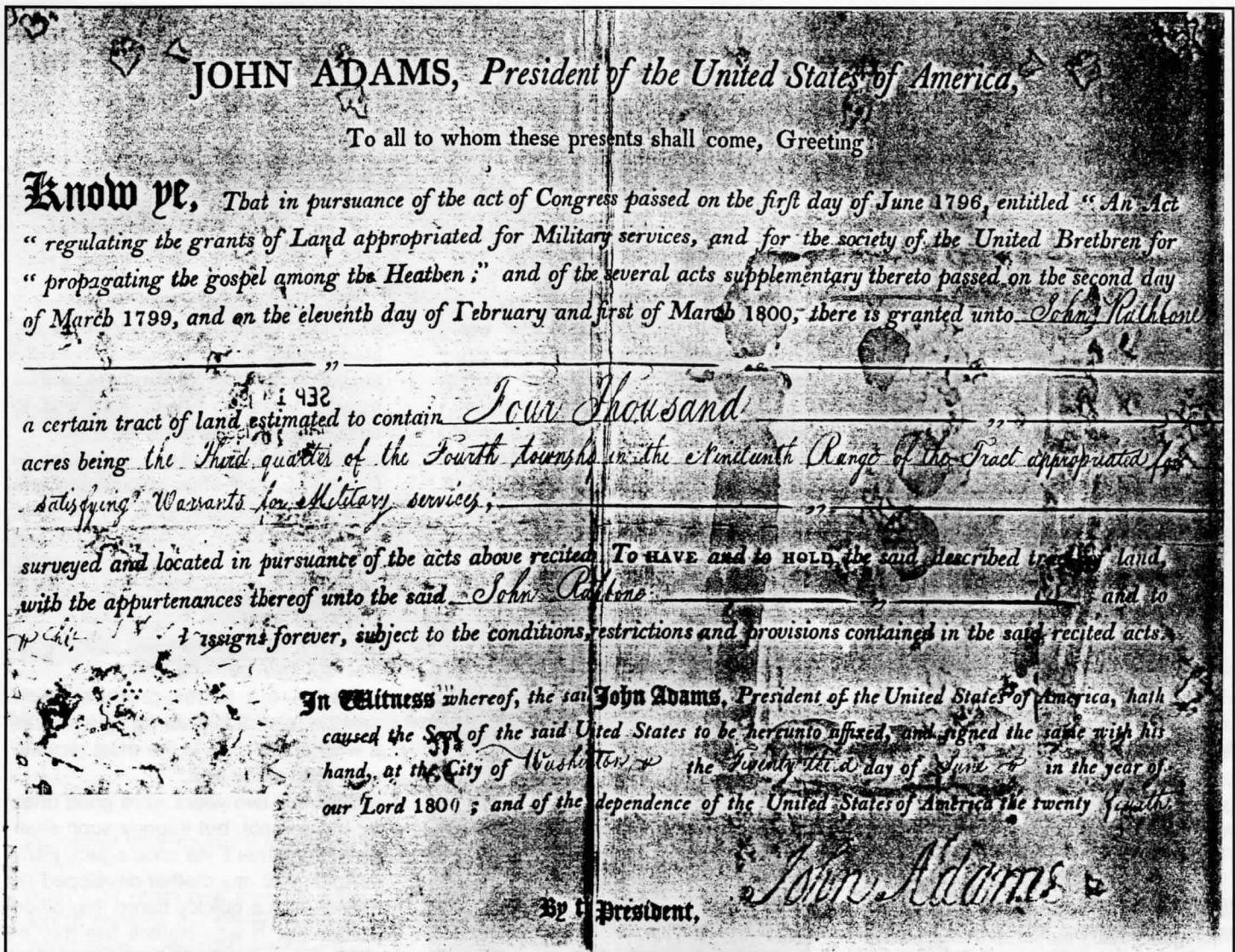
Stonington Point had some 60 houses at that time, and many of them sustained some damage, including that of Rev. John Rathbun. An itemized appraisal of the damage estimated the loss to "John Rathbun's house, shop and goods" at one pound, 10 shillings.

Young John soon took revenge on the British. In August 1777, his schooner, the Humbird, was commissioned with a "Letter of Marque" to capture English merchant ships. The schooner carried a crew of 10 men and two cannons. John Rathbun Jr. was a ship owner at the age of 26.

The few surviving records of that era also show that in April 1779, he shipped 107 bushels of corn from Hartford to Stonington, where the residents were in great want. In May 1780, he brought 66 barrels of flour and 24 bushels of wheat to Stonington from Pittsfield, Mass. The grain was probably purchased from one or more of his three uncles who had settled in the Pittsfield area—Valentine, Daniel and Amos Rathbun.

The Revolutionary War ended in the early 1780s, and brought widespread inflation and economic turmoil to the new United States of America. Little Stonington, which depended on ocean commerce for its existence, was hit particularly hard. Rev. John moved to Ashford, Conn., to take charge of a Baptist church there, and John Jr. was the last of the Rathbuns still in Stonington.

He had been married just before the war, in 1774, to Eunice Wells, and by 1790 they had seven children. The following year, at the age of 40, John decided to "pull up stakes" and seek



Land warrant signed by President John Adams on June 23, 1800, granting John Rathbone 4,000 acres of land.

his fortune in the growing metropolis of New York City. Cooley, in his 1898 Rathbone Genealogy, reported that he left Stonington with more than \$30,000 to invest.

In New York, he opened a whole-sale merchandising operation at 96 Front Street, concentrating at first on the import and resale of salt, which was then in great demand for preserving pork, fish and other foods in a day when there was no refrigeration.

He soon branched out into other commodities, and began shipping groceries, dry goods and other items to retail merchants in the area. Among his many customers were Rathbun and Rathbone cousins in Albany and Oxford, N.Y.

It was about this time that he changed the spelling of his name from Rathbun to Rathbone, possibly due to contact with the prominent Rathbone merchant firm in Liverpool, England. Some of his brothers and cousins went along with the change, convinced that Rathbone was the "correct" English spelling.

John Rathbone became one of New York City's financial and mercantile leaders. In 1799, he was one of the original stockholders of the Manhattan Company, later to become the Bank of Manhattan.

In keeping with his growing wealth, Rathbone had his daughters educated at the fashionable Moravian Academy in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where

many of the East Coast's prominent families sent their daughters for schooling. A descendant kept a letter Rathbone wrote to his daughter Clarissa at Bethlehem, telling her not to buy any spring clothing until she returned to New York. He wanted to make certain that she was dressed in the latest fashions!

Rathbone's son, Thomas, was educated at Columbia University in New York City, where he was graduated in 1800. The oldest son, John Jr., may also have attended Columbia, but there is no record of it. A third son, James went to sea as a young man.

John Jr. joined his father as a young man in the family business, and in

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More Tragedy Fills Life of Frank H. Rathbun Sr.

In our last issue, we covered the early life of your editor's father, Frank Hugo Rathbun Sr., from his boyhood days on the family farm in Michigan, through the deaths of his brother, father and sister, a tragic love affair, his 18 years in the Navy, the death of his son, and his battle with alcoholism. Then, in 1924, when he was 50, his wife, Florence, 39, announced that she was pregnant.

I have no idea how my parents reacted to the prospect of a baby at their ages—whether with delight, despair, or mixed emotions. But that fall, on Oct. 3, 1924, they became parents again. The baby (your editor) was big (10 pounds) and healthy. He was named for his father, Frank Hugo Rathbun, Jr.

Ten months later, in August, my father wrote to his brother Charles in Michigan: "Baby Junior is the grandest baby that ever was, has eight teeth, stands alone and can say a few words. Flo has not been very well all summer (and) I think it is on account of the baby. He is so big and strong that he keeps her tired out."

That year, my parents moved from their three-room flat at 4701 Haverford Avenue in Philadelphia, and rented a six-room house at 1442 Corliss Street. They bought all new furniture and went into debt, with payments of \$50 a month for a year.

Dad also got his first "real" job since leaving the Navy. He became a night watchman for Lit Brothers, then one of Philadelphia's major department stores. He also stopped drinking—"cold turkey"—and spent all his spare time at home.

Life had suddenly become good again. But there were problems—of health and finance. He had to borrow \$100 from his brother Charles.

"I was home sick for ten days," he wrote Charles. "Had the doctor every day, and that helped put a crimp in my bankroll. Then I had stomach trouble—caused by defective teeth and now I am up against a \$75 dental bill. And I am still paying on my furniture. But that will all be paid up by December 1 and I will be riding high again... I would greatly appreciate a loan of \$100."



Frank H. Rathbun Sr., pictured on his 50th birthday in 1924, about the time he learned he was to become a father.

By early 1926, my parents were out of debt and things were looking up. Dad had been promoted to night superintendent at Lit Brothers, with a handsome pay raise, and put in charge of nighttime security.

But another surprise was in store. In February, my mother announced she was pregnant again. She was 41 and he was 52. Again, I do not know their reaction, but on September 30, 1926, my sister was born. She was named Margaret Leversa for her two grandmothers, and was called "Versie" at first, but then became Peggy.

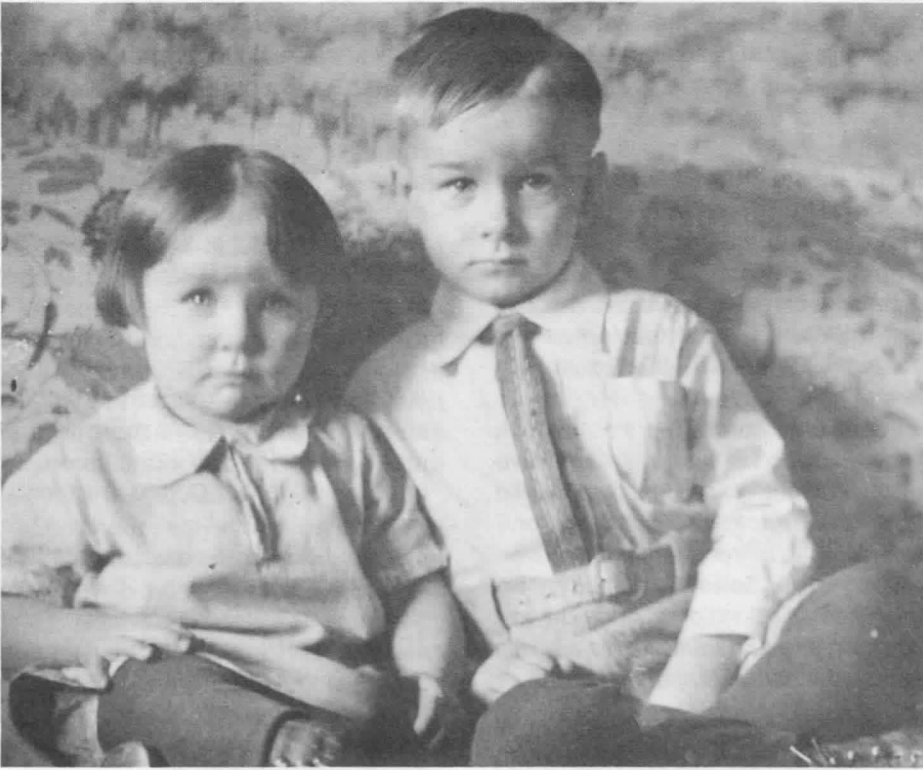
Dad wrote to his mother a few months later: "Little Junior is smart as a whip and Versie is the most remarkable child of the age."

The next two years were good ones for my parents, but tragedy soon shattered my father's life once again. Early in April 1928, my mother developed an abscess which quickly flared into blood poisoning. It was before the day of antibiotics and nothing could be done. As her condition became worse, she was hospitalized, and she soon realized she would not recover.

As the end drew near, her final thoughts were of her two children. She sobbed to her mother one day, "What will become of my babies?"

She died at 1:35 a.m. on April 23, 1928 at Penn Hospital, after two weeks of suffering. My father literally collapsed in grief, and my brother Art, then 20, wired to Dad's sister, Louise McCrath in Michigan, asking her to come. She left that day, taking the train to Philadelphia.

My "Aunt Lou" many years later told me how she arrived at our house. She picked me up and I told her somberly, "My Mommy's gone to Heaven and she's never coming back." When she told me the story, it sparked a long-forgotten memory in my subconscious—a three-year-old boy trying to



My sister Peggy and I, pictured about the time of our mother's death in 1928.

understand why he no longer had a mother.

Aunt Lou remained several days, trying to console my father and trying to bring some order back into our lives during those difficult days. But she finally bid us a tearful goodbye and returned to her own family of six children in Michigan.

My father, helped by my brother Art, started rebuilding his shattered life. But only a week after his wife's funeral came word from Aunt Lou that their mother had died at the age of 79.

Dad had always felt close to his mother, and this second loss was almost unbearable. He turned for comfort to his old nemesis—the bottle. Art wired his grandmother in Massachusetts (our mother's mother) and asked her to come and help.

She stayed for a month, until my father seemed able to cope. That summer, Art was married. The date had been set before our mother's death, and Dad told him to go ahead with his plans, that she would have wanted it that way.

Left alone that fall, with two little children (I was four, Peggy was two), Dad hired a housekeeper who came each morning and stayed until he returned from work each night. She cleaned the house, cooked our meals, and took care of Peggy and me.

It worked for only a few months. Then my father came home one night to find his children alone, and his house stripped of everything moveable. The housekeeper had really "cleaned house," taking all his silverware, china, linens and kitchen utensils.

At that point, my father just gave up. He sold his furniture, packed up what little he had left, and set off with Peggy and me for the home of his sister Louise in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Aunt Lou, overwhelmed by her brother's misfortunes, told him that he and his children could stay with her, but she soon realized that it would not be possible. She was 50 years old, and had four children still at home, the youngest a boy of seven. Two more young active children were far more than she could handle.



Florence Rathbun, pictured a few years before her death in 1928 at the age of 43.

My father was now drinking heavily, and was in no condition to help her decide what to do. She had just about resolved to call an orphanage when the problem was suddenly resolved.

Her oldest daughter Charity had been married two years earlier to Goldie Slater, and they had moved to Detroit. They came to Aunt Lou's for the Christmas holidays, and after seeing the situation, they decided to take Peggy and me home with them. My father happily agreed to pay them enough to cover our food and clothing.

It proved to be a stroke of unbelievable luck for my sister and me. "Mother" Charity and "Daddy" Goldie gave us as much loving care as any parents could have done.

My father returned for a while to Philadelphia, moved into a small apartment, and went back to work at Lit Brothers. But he was despondent and in a state of chronic depression. He drank more and more, trying to ease his despair in an alcoholic fog.

In the summer of 1931, hoping to

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reestablish a normal life, he brought Peggy and me back East. Vowing to stop drinking, he moved with us into the home of friends in Collingswood, New Jersey, just across the Delaware River from Philadelphia. The man's name was Eddie. I do not recall his wife's name or their surname. The wife worked, but Eddie was unemployed, and was able to take care of Peggy and me during the day.

Dad paid the couple a large share of his Lit Brothers' salary for room, board and child care, but things worked out well and he hoped his life could get back to normal. It was not to be.

One day, he was called at work and told to come home immediately Eddie had committed suicide—hung himself in the attic. My sister and I had been found playing, alone, one floor beneath his body. I was seven, Peggy was five.

My father was again devastated, and again he turned to his sister, Louise. She came immediately, packed our things, and took us back to Charity and Goldie in Detroit. Dad, completely demoralized by his unending chain of bad luck, returned to the bottle and a few months later lost his job at Lit Brothers. It was in the depth of the Great Depression, and even dependable, sober men had trouble finding and keeping employment.

Dad then said goodbye for good to the East Coast, where he had known so much grief, and returned to his boyhood town of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

For the next few years, he lived in Grand Rapids apartment houses in the winters, and hired out as a farm hand in the summers, working on farms in the Kent County area. He spent the summers of 1932 and 1933 working for his brother Charles on the old family farm.

In 1934 he worked on a farm at Marne, Michigan, and in 1935 at Lake Odessa. Peggy and I spent the summers with him, as well as Christmas vacations.

He resumed a close friendship with his younger brother Eugene, with whom he had trapped muskrats fifty years earlier, and the two became

drinking companions. Both shared a problem with alcoholism.

Then at Christmastime, 1935, came a miracle. I had spent a week with my father at his Grand Rapids apartment, and although only 11 years old, I was sharply aware that something was wrong. He often seemed to act strangely and was often sick in bed (drinking and hangovers!). When it came time for me to leave and go back to the Slaters, I was reluctant to go, worried whether my father could take care of himself.

Years later, he told me that the look I gave him as I left was the incentive he needed to "go on the wagon." To the best of my knowledge, with one exception, he never drank again.

Early the following year, he answered an advertisement for a summer farm job, and found to his amazement that it had been placed by Jessie

Hugo B. Rathbun, son of Frank H. and Florence (McLean) Rathbun, died February 27, 1919, not 1916, as reported in our April issue. The 1916 date was a typographical error.

(Strong) Howland, recently widowed; the former wife of his old greenhouse employer, Harley Strong, and the cousin of Birdie Strong, the girl he had loved and lost 30 years earlier because of her drug addiction.

He went to work as Jessie's hired hand that spring and summer, and for the first time, I did not spend my summer vacation with him. I went instead to a boys' camp.

Dad and Jessie must have spent many happy hours that summer, renewing old memories and telling one another about their lives since they had last met. Jessie had been twice widowed, and had raised two sets of stepchildren, but never had children of her own.

By the end of the summer, they decided to get married. Dad was 62; Jessie a year younger.

They were married on Sept. 26, 1936, in Ionia, Michigan, and it was soon decided that I would live with them on the farm. My sister Peggy stayed with the Slaters. She had been

stricken a few years earlier with rheumatic fever, and her doctor did not think she was up to farm life.

Jessie was only part owner of the 90-acre farm where they lived, sharing the title with her second husband's children. Pooling their resources, she and Dad bought out the rights of her stepchildren, and at the age of 62, my father had a wife, a farm and his son living with him.

(I had planned to finish my father's story in this issue, but there was so much material, the conclusion will have to wait for the October Historian.)

English

(Continued from page 35)

Long Island, and then moved to New York City. Both died sometime after 1900.

They had six children—John, born in 1870; Henry Bailey, born July 3, 1871; Charles Fox, born July 6, 1873; Harriet, born in 1876; Annie in Nov. 1884, and Frank S. in Dec. 1886.

Henry Bailey Rathbone attended Colgate University and became a prominent newspaperman and educator. He began his career with the Associated Press, then United Press, and finally joined the Hearst Newspapers. He was a reporter for the New York American and city editor for the New York Evening Journal. He later worked for the Chicago American, the Chicago Examiner and the San Francisco Examiner.

He returned to New York City and worked successively for the Press, Sun and Evening Sun until 1924, when he became a professor of journalism and chairman of the Department of Journalism at New York University. He retired in 1941 and died in 1945.

Henry married Floy Pearl Langworthy, and had three children, including one son, John Hollum Rathbone (1903-1983), who was a prominent physician. His son, John Rathbone, is a member of our association.

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1804, at the age of 27, became a partner. An early New York newspaper reported: "Their operations were upon such an immense scale, and conducted with such sagacity and prudence, as to yield the two partners a handsome fortune."

About 1805, the Rathbones established their home at 45 Dey Street, in one of the most fashionable areas of the city. By 1812, they had an even bigger residence at No. 10 LeRoy Place, in a section of the city where only the richest could afford homes.

Looking for ways to invest his growing fortune, John Rathbone, and others, saw limitless possibilities in the vast "Northwest Territory," created by Congress in 1787. It was an area which included the present-day states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and part of Minnesota. It was almost all undeveloped, public-owned land.

The territory had been divided into townships six miles square, each divided into 36 sections of 640 acres. The land was offered for sale to interested settlers or investors, and veterans of the Revolutionary War were given "warrants" entitling them to free land—100 acres for privates and up to 300 acres for officers.

The Federal government hoped to use the income from sale of the lands to help retire the national debt, which was substantial at the time.

For several years there was little interest on the part of either settlers or investors, due to Indian unrest in the western lands. Few veterans showed any interest in their land warrants.

The situation changed in 1794, after the Battle of Fallen Timbers, when the Indians were decisively defeated, and began their migrations to the west. There was a sudden interest in western settlement, and speculators realized that land prices were bound to rise.

John Rathbone, among others, saw the opportunity for profit. The quickest way to obtain large acreage was to buy up veterans' land warrants. The going rate was \$2 per acre, but hard-pressed veterans willingly sold their rights much cheaper.

Advertisements appeared in newspapers throughout the East, offering to buy veterans' land warrants. John Rathbone was among the most successful. By early 1800, he owned the rights to seven entire townships in Ohio—some 28,000 acres! He had purchased the land rights of several hundred veterans.

Early Ohio land records show John Rathbone as a major property owner in the counties of Franklin, Knox, Licking, Fairfield, Tuscarawas, Muskingum, Cohocton and Fairfield. There are no records to show just what he had paid for the land, but it was surely well below \$1 an acre.

In May 1804, he sold 1,500 acres in Tuscarawas County for \$1,500—\$1 an acre—and he obviously made a profit. Five years later, he gave an adjoining 2,000 acres to his daughter, Content, and her husband Robert Chesebrough. They sold it in 1835 for \$6,000.

The typical veteran probably received \$50 or less for his rights to 100 acres. At that time, an ordinary laborer earned about 50 cents a day, so \$50 was a considerable sum.

John Rathbone also made land investments in other areas. In 1801, he and two partners paid nearly \$96,000 for two entire townships (12 square miles!) in Lewis County, N.Y.

To gain some control over his Ohio land investments, Rathbone offered large tracts to his sons and daughters if they would move onto the land. Some of them did so.

In 1805, he sold property in Licking County to a group of settlers in Granville, Mass., and his son Thomas accompanied them to Ohio that year. He remained in Ohio for a short time as a schoolteacher and lay minister, but then moved south to Kentucky. (See our Historian of January 1988, page 12).

John Rathbone himself made several trips to Ohio. An 1889 history of Granville, Licking County, related:

"Mr. Rathbone, visiting Granville on land business, used to stop at Judge Rose's hotel. Sitting at a table, he would receive payments in specie (gold coins) and deposit it in his saddlebags until they grew very heavy. The judge used to indulge his humor with strangers as they came into the room.

"Sitting on the other side of the room, he would ask the newcomer as a favor to hand him his saddlebags. The accommodating man would stoop to comply, but the leather bags seemed glued to the floor. Taking both hands, he would try to discover what held them down and it generally took the loud laugh of bystanders to convince the man that he was the subject of a practical joke."

Tragedy hit John Rathbone's family in 1810 and 1811. On January 27, 1810, his second daughter, Eunice, was married in New York City to Hezekiah Goddard. John's wife, Eunice, then 52, went to embrace her daughter after the ceremony, and suddenly collapsed. She died an hour later. The following year came word that John's youngest son, James Manning Rathbun, aged 22, had died somewhere in the West Indies while on a cruise.

John Rathbone was married again in 1813, when he was 62, to Mary Sheffield, then about 45. Descendants later reported that "she was an excellent woman and beloved by her stepchildren."

An old letter preserved by descendants tells that John and Mary, with two of his unmarried daughters, spent the winter of 1815-16 in Ohio, visiting his older married daughters in Zanesville, Granville and Worthington. John, then about 65, was described as being "full of fun and anecdotes."

John and Mary made another trip to Ohio by coach and horses in 1828 (when he was 77!), again visiting children and grandchildren.

By this time, Rathbone had apparently turned the family retailing business over to his son, John Rathbone Jr. The two Rathbones were ranked near the top of New York City's financial establishment. Their names led the list of the city's war bond purchasers in 1813—at \$20,000. Like most western land speculators, they were strong supporters of the War of 1812.

They were also enthusiastic backers of the Erie Canal, built in the early 1800s and opened in 1825, which John Sr. considered the greatest event of the century.

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(Continued from page 41)

Little is known of John Rathbone's later years. His second wife, Mary, died July 14, 1840, in New York City, and he died there on March 13, 1843, seven months before his 92nd birthday. He left a lengthy will disposing of his large estate, but the entire probate file disappeared a few years ago in the New York County Surrogate Court's office—lost, stolen or misfiled, no one seems to know.

Loss of the will and other papers deprive us of a wonderful opportunity to look at John Rathbone's financial situation, in its size and diversity.

(Special thanks to Mary Anne Cummins and Julia Pantel, both descendants of "Merchant John" Rathbone, for supplying information on his family, and several pictures. In our next issue, we will cover the career of John Rathbone Jr. and his eight sisters, all of whom married interesting and prominent men, and left many talented descendants.)

Although little is known of John Rathbone's private life, or of his personality and character, a great deal is revealed in the following letter written by him in 1799 to his younger brother Joseph Avery Rathbun. (The letter was printed in the old Rathbone Historian of October 1892.) John had apparently just returned from a visit to Joseph, who was then living in western New York. He had gone into debt to purchase a large tract of land, and was obviously in financial trouble.

John's letter, full of brotherly advice, shows him as a caring brother, a well educated and skillful writer, a cautious investor, and a wise businessman with diversified interests. It was dated Jan. 3, 1799, and addressed to "Mr. Joseph A. Rathbun, Township 4, Eleventh Range, Near Comisted Settlement, State of New York." (Joseph was one of John's brothers who did not adopt the Rathbone spelling.)

"Dear Brother," it began. "Scarcely a day has passed since I left you, without reflecting on the situation I found and left you in, with anxious concern for your present and future welfare.

"If I recollect right, you were in possession of between sixteen and

seventeen hundred acres of land for which you were indebted, rising of \$3,000, part of which already began to draw interest. There was due to you from Mr. Dana, \$1200, which debt you looked upon to be doubtful. The interest, my brother, on so large a sum is a mischievous thing, unless a person has an income sufficient, punctually, to discharge it. There is no prospect, in my opinion, of lands rising again very soon, and should your land ultimately rise in value on account of settlements being actually made, I much fear that the time will be so far distant that the interest being added to the first cost of the land will over balance the price that it will then fetch.

"With this view of the subject my advice to you is by all means to compromise the matter with Col. Williamson and, if possible, prevail on him to take part of the land back again. Also, the note which you hold against Mr. Dana in payment, that you may be released from paying interest. I sincerely wish that you would get rid of the land altogether and would realize one-half the sum you supposed yourself to be worth when you left Wilksbarre; say \$600, because I think your prospects of acquiring property would be much better than they are now. I am unwilling that you should spend your days in a wilderness deprived of many of the comforts of life, without being in a situation to acquire property.

"If you were in circumstances to add to your property rapidly, it would be some compensation for depriving yourself of the society of your friends and many conveniences which are only to be obtained in an old settled country. Having gone thus far I will venture to suggest two plans for your consideration, either of which, if adopted by you, I think, will be much to your advantage. The first is to come to New York; the second is to go into the Northwestern Territory. "Move to New York!" (say you), "What shall I do there?" Don't be frightened brother Joseph; there are many advantages in this city which the country people know nothing of.

"There are a multitude of people here whose abilities, either natural or acquired, do not exceed yours, and a great proportion of them are far inferior

to you in point of knowledge; yet these people live and the principle part of them live very comfortably. If you were here with \$1,500 in cash, I have no doubt that with industry and a common blessing, you might treble your property in seven years, and maintain your family. I have known some people in this city who have purchased a large quantity of wood, say several hundred cords, in the summer season and sold it out in the winter for double the money it cost them. We have a recent instance of it this winter and it has been the case heretofore since I have lived in this city. I could mention many other advantages or chances of acquiring property but shall not have room.

"I have lately had an offer of one-half of a brewery. The gentleman who owns it is an Englishman and is going to Europe; his partner who lives, and will remain here, is a very steady man, understands the business and wishes me to buy it. If you was here I believe I should (whether you had any money to advance towards it or not) put you into business. The profit issuing from the business (I am told) is generally about seven or eight hundred dollars a year. He seemed to be desirous that I would buy and that you would come and help him carry on the business, etc.; besides it is my opinion that you might get a living here by teaching music for a time, until something better offered.

"I now come to the second proposition, viz: the Northwestern Territory. I am, at present, the proprietor of 3,400 acres in the military tract in that country and am in daily expectation of seeing an advertisement in the papers requiring all the holders of military warrants to bring them to Philadelphia for the purpose of being registered. The advertisement is to be continued for nine months at the end of which the proprietors are to draw for priority of location; he who is so fortunate as to draw the first number is to take his first choice and so on in succession until all of the proprietors or holders of warrants have drawn and the remainder (which it is supposed will amount to one-fourth or one-third of the whole tract surveyed for this purpose) will belong to the United States.

"One of the surveyors of the tract has paid me a visit, who informs me

that there is a great difference in the quality of the land, some parts of it are excellent and some are very poor. It will therefore be necessary for me, by some means, to obtain the needful information, that I may be able to make a judicious choice when my turn comes. If you will go into that country and spend the coming summer in exploring the land and keep a journal or minutes of each quarter township so as to enable me to choose the best land, I will give you one thousand acres for your services which shall be equal in goodness with my lands generally, and if you settle there will make you my agent to sell out the remainder of my land to settlers.

"Several members of congress are largely concerned in this tract of land whose interest it will be to use all their influence to promote the settlement of it, and it is generally expected it will settle fast as soon as it is drawn for. Then there is already a chain of settlements from Marietta up the Muskingum almost to the line; and I am further informed that a considerable number of families intend to move onto the tract as soon as their lands are designated.

If you should incline to explore the country I will give you a letter of introduction to my friend in Marietta, and I have no doubt I shall be able to find one or more persons that will accompany you in your business. Indeed it is my opinion that there will be twenty or thirty men out on the land next summer for the express purpose of finding out where the most advantageous situations are. I would suggest the propriety of your keeping the matter a secret if you intend to leave your present situation for perhaps you cannot make so advantageous a settlement with Col. Williamson if it is known that you are about to leave the country.

"I should have sent you some clothes but have had no opportunity; nevertheless if you can come and see me you shall not go away empty. With love to your dear wife and family, I am,

Your Brother,
JOHN RATHBONE."

"P.S. — Pray write to me as soon as possible after you receive this and inform me particularly how your affairs are; whether you found your cow that was missing when I left you, etc."



The Rhode Island Chapter of the Rathbun Family Association placed a hand-made wreath on the Rathbun monument in the Block Island Cemetery on the Memorial Day weekend. Shown after she placed the wreath is Mary (Rathbun) Champlin, whose mother, Helen Rathbun, is president of the Rhode Island group. The wreath had to be securely anchored to survive the island's harsh winds. The banners carried the names Rathbun, Rathbone and Rathburn.

Rathbuns Made Early Radio Dial

Robert R. Rathbone of Ossipee, N.H., has a hobby of collecting, restoring and selling antique radios. His specialty is radio sets from the 1920s.

Recently, he purchased an unused tuning dial, produced and sold in that era by the Rathbun Manufacturing Company of Jamestown, N.Y. It was called a "Rathbun Vernier Dial."

Can anyone identify the Rathbuns who operated that company?

If any of our members share Bob's enthusiasm for old radios, and happen to have any old Rathbun radio parts (or any pre-1940s radios), he would appreciate a note. His address is RD #1, Box 127, Ossipee, N.Y. 03864.

If he could collect enough parts, Bob would assemble a complete "Rathbun Radio" for display at our reunion next year.

Tombstone Tip for Genealogists

Your editor has just learned of a foolproof and effective way of determining birth dates from tombstones, when the deceased person's death date and exact age are given.

For example, if the tombstone reads, "Died May 6, 1889, aged 71 years, 7 months and 9 days," here is the formula to use:

Take the figure 18890506 (year, month and day of death), and subtract 710709 (age at death). From the resulting answer (18179797), subtract 8870 (a constant figure), and you get 18170927 (1817, ninth month, 27th day)—the dead person was born September 27, 1817.

This valuable tip for genealogists comes from the Freeborn County (Minn.) Tracer, a genealogical magazine.

Genealogy: The Sixth Generation in America

401. SAMUEL⁶ RATHBUN (James⁵ Walter⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born in June 1791 on Block Island, and married there about 1823 Mary (Mitchell) Honeywell, born June 23, 1795, daughter of Jonathan and Mary (Dickens) Mitchell, and widow of John Mott Honeywell. Samuel lived on Block Island all his life and died there Dec. 5, 1840. Mary died Sept. 29, 1873, in Providence, R.I.

CHILDREN

MARIA, born about 1824; married Samuel G. Mitchell Nov. 21, 1842.

THOMAS, born Aug. 3, 1826; married Susan B. Mitchell.

SON (name unknown), born about 1828; no further information.

SAMUEL, born about 1832; married Abigail L. Sprague.

JAMES HENRY, born Oct. 22, 1833; married Abigail Frances (Ball?).

WAITY LOUISE, born Sept. 13, 1826; married Stephen A. Burdick on March 6, 1854.

402. WALTER⁶ RATHBUN (James⁵ Walter⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born Feb. 22, 1794, on Block Island, and married there about 1827 Sarah Dickens Rose, born Oct. 22, 1806, daughter of Daniel and Lydia (Dickens) Rose. They lived on Block Island all their lives. He died there March 11, 1865, and Sarah died Dec. 22, 1883.

CHILDREN

HANNAH RAY, born May 17, 1828; married Benjamin Littlefield on Jan. 15, 1844.

403. NATHAN JAMES⁶ RATHBUN (Benjamin⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born August 15, 1795, probably in New York City, but may have returned to Connecticut after his father's death in 1795. He served in the War of 1812

from Connecticut, as a private and later a corporal. He was married Feb. 17, 1819, possibly in New York City, to Phoebe Wood, born about 1801, daughter of William and Mary Wood. Cooley reported that he went to New York in 1822, and was in the fish and dry goods business there for 38 years. He died Oct. 7, 1860, and Phoebe died August 19, 1876 (possibly 1866). Both are buried in Yonkers, N.Y.

CHILDREN

ELIZABETH, born July 21, 1821; married J.B. Sherwood in October 1845.

NATHAN JAMES, born Nov. 11, 1822; died August 16, 1836.

WILLIAM B. born Feb. 26, 1825; married Mary Elizabeth Smith.

MARY, born Jan. 5, 1828; died Oct. 24, 1829.

CAROLINE FRANCES, born Jan. 10, 1834; died Oct. 12, 1849.

LUCY ADELAIDE, born June 1, 1836; married Francis Turner on Jan. 17, 1855.

CHARLES FREDERICK, born April 19, 1842; died Nov. 16, 1861, at sea.

404. BENJAMIN⁶ RATHBUN (Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born May 8, 1802, at Groton, Conn., and married there Oct. 3, 1824, Eliza Latham, born June 30, 1802, daughter of William and Sabrina (Ashbey) Latham. He went to sea as a boy and became a captain as a young man. He was lost at sea on Dec. 16, 1832, on his way home from a cruise to Jamaica. Eliza died Oct. 26, 1852, at Groton.

CHILDREN

ELIZA JANE, born July 5, 1826; married Captain James Winthrop Douglas on June 4, 1848.

FRANCES SABRINA, born Sept. 9,

1827; married Captain Harlem Baker on March 24, 1850.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, born May 6, 1829; married Sarah Park.

WILLIAM GADSON, born July 22, 1832; married Lavinia L. Baker.

405. JOHN SAWYER⁶ RATHBUN (Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born Nov. 21, 1803, at Groton, Conn., and married there on Sept. 7, 1825, Lucy Ann Packer, born in December 1803, daughter of Elisha Packer. They moved in the 1830s to New Haven, Conn., where he was in the coal business. They returned by 1870 to Groton, where Lucy died Sept. 4, 1874, and John on Aug. 22, 1885.

CHILDREN

LUCY ANNA, born Oct. 11, 1828; died Feb. 22, 1829.

ABIGAIL, born July 29, 1830; died Feb. 11, 1832.

JOHN EDWIN, born Nov. 2, 1832; married Rebecca Bowns.

ROLLIN NEAL, born March 11, 1835; married Helen Packer.

EVELYN W., born March 11, 1837; died June 7, 1838.

ROBERT HENRY, born April 17, 1840; married Louise Doremus.

406. LUTHER MORGAN⁶ RATHBUN (Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born Sept. 8, 1805, at Groton, Conn., and married there Oct. 22, 1826, Henrietta Potter, born July 9, 1804, daughter of Thomas and Lurena (Fitch) Potter. She died June 7, 1835, and he was married on July 3, 1836, to Mary Chipman, born March 16, 1805, parentage unknown. Luther was a fisherman for many years, and in 1850 was captain of the *Isabella*. Mary died at Groton on April 29, 1879, and he died there July 2, 1889.

CHILDREN

By Henrietta

NATHAN WARREN, born Sept. 10, 1827; married (1) Amelia Burroughs, and (2) Sarah Maria Barnes.

LUCY ANN, born Oct. 6, 1829; married Gilbert Wilcox.

ISABELLA B., born Dec. 28, 1831; died August 7, 1883, apparently unmarried.

HENRIETTA H., born Sept. 11, 1834; married Charles Murphy on Aug. 23, 1853.

By Mary

EDWIN, born Oct. 14, 1838; married Abigail Kelly on July 9, 1860, at Shelburne, Nova Scotia. No known children.

ALVIN, born Jan. 1, 1842; married Mary H. Kelly.

PRUDENCE B., born Aug. 14, 1844; married William Forsythe on Feb. 11, 1869.

407. LATHAM⁶ RATHBUN (Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born Dec. 8, 1809, at Groton, Conn., and married there Oct. 12, 1835, Eleanor Jane Wilbur, born June 2, 1819, daughter of William and Sarah (Ingham) Wilbur. He went to sea as a boy and was a captain in his early 20s. On April 14, 1850, his fishing smack the D.W., Manwarren was lost at sea off St. Georges Bank in the North Atlantic. His widow, Eleanor, died Dec. 17, 1880.

CHILDREN

ELLEN JANE, born March 14, 1838; married Webster Park on Nov. 26, 1863.

LATHAM J., born June 16, 1839; married Anna King.

HORATIO NELSON, born March 6, 1843; married Lucy B. Miner.

SARAH W., born May 24, 1845; married Richard Leake on Dec. 25, 1880.

GEORGIANNA, born Aug. 15, 1847; died Oct. 14, 1847/8.

408. WILLIAM ORRIN⁶ RATHBUN (Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born Dec. 4, 1811, at Groton, Conn.,

and married there Feb. 17, 1833, Harriet Rice, born Feb. 11, 1816, parentage unknown. Like his brothers, he went to sea and became a ship owner and captain. Harriet died August 16, 1872. On Dec. 22, 1889, at the age of 78, he committed suicide by morphine poisoning, his wife and six of his nine children having died.

CHILDREN

HARRIET E., born in 1833; died Nov. 11, 1841.

MARY, born Feb. 23, 1836; married Peter B. Davis on Oct. 24, 1854.

WILLIAM HENRY, born about 1838; drowned Aug. 3, 1847.

CHARLES, born about 1840; died March 30, 1842.

ELIZABETH, born in 1842; married Moses Latham on Sept. 14, 1858.

JAMES WINTHROP, born Oct. 11, 1845; married Charlotte Boose.

EMMA J., born in February 1848; died Dec. 18, 1872.

WILLIAM HENRY, born in February 1853; died Jan. 30, 1874.

CHARLES, born May 30, 1855; married Selina Preas about 1880 and died childless on Oct. 20, 1884.

409. SAMUEL⁶ RATHBUN (Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born May 8, 1813, in Groton, Conn., and married there on Nov. 1, 1835, Phoebe Packer, born Sept. 19, 1816, daughter of John and Phoebe (Packer) Packer. He was a sailor, and in 1863 enlisted in the Union Army during the Civil War. He died in August or September, 1864, in an Army hospital at Philadelphia. His widow later married his cousin, Griswold Packer Rathbun, and died Sept. 26, 1898.

CHILDREN

SAMUEL ORRIN, born Sept. 10, 1836; married Mary Ellen Fitch.

JOHN ALDEN, born March 12, 1839; married Hannah Ashley.

PHOEBE ANN, born in November 1840; died March 11, 1842.

CHARLES H., born about 1842; married Honora Latham.

JOSEPHUS P., born in August 1844; died Feb. 18, 1847.

PHOEBE ANN., born May 11, 1846; died July 13, 1874.

SYDNEY, born March 18, 1848; married Abigail Brooks.

WALTER PACKER, born June 6, 1850; married Emeline Plant Potter.

410. CALVIN⁶ RATHBUN (Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born Dec. 16, 1819, at Groton or Noank, Conn., and was married Jan. 3, 1841, in Stonington, Conn., to Rebecca Prentice, born March 9, 1825, daughter of Joshua and Mary Ann (Bennett) Prentice. He went to sea with his father at age 15 and as a young man became captain of his own ship. In 1840, he was master of the Sea Flower. In the last years of his life, he was engaged in the lobster trade. Rebecca died Dec. 25, 1885, and he died Feb. 10, 1893.

CHILDREN

CALVIN, born April 16, 1842; married Elizabeth A. Perry.

ALBERT, born March 20, 1844; married Harriet A. Davis.

LEONARD, born Jan. 9, 1846; died Oct. 8, 1847.

LEONARD, born Feb. 15, 1848; married Lucy Belle (Beckwith) Neal.

WARREN PRENTICE, born April 24, 1850; married Isabella Murdock.

MARY A., born Nov. 27, 1851; married John W. Chapman on March 20, 1870.

ABIGAIL, born Aug. 25, 1854; married John Meister.

NANCY B., born Nov. 27, 1856; married Walter R. Penn on Sept. 17, 1874.

GEORGE B., born Nov. 29, 1858; died unmarried Nov. 16, 1935.

HELEN PACKER, born March 20, 1861; married William J. Parlow on Dec. 31, 1878.

EMMA JUDSON, born Dec. 5, 1862; married John Collins on Jan. 1, 1881.

SAMUEL, born April 10, 1866; married Susan Palmer.

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(Continued from page 45)

See Corrections 14-3 p 45

411. ELISHA⁶ RATHBUN (Elisha⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born Oct. 6, 1805, in Groton, and married there August 18, 1830, Wealthy Ann Wolf, born about 1810, parentage unknown. He was a sailor and left on a cruise shortly after their marriage. He died three months later on Nov. 11, 1830, of yellow fever in Key West, Florida. Wealthy was married again on Nov. 28, 1833, to Daniel G. Bailey. Elisha and Wealthy had **no children**.

412. GRISWOLD PACKER⁶ RATHBUN (Elisha⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), born July 25, 1810, in Groton, and married there Oct. 3, 1830, Eleanor Ashby Packer, born Dec. 27, 1811, daughter of John and Phoebe (Packer) Packer. She died Aug. 7, 1869, and on March 6, 1871, he was married to her sister, Phoebe (Packer) Rathbun, widow of his cousin Samuel Rathbun. Griswold was a sailor as were most of his brothers and cousins. He died Aug. 23, 1890, at Groton. Phoebe died Sept. 26, 1898.

CHILDREN

ELISHA, born Oct. 2, 1832; married (1) Emeline Fish, and (2) Abigail Baker.

IRA STEWART, born June 3, 1834; died Oct. 2, 1853.

ELLEN, born Jan. 8, 1836; married Thomas Edwin Miner on June 8, 1864,

JOHN GRISWOLD, born Oct. 31, 1838; married Sarah Frary.

LUCRETIA, born Oct. 27, 1840; married John Elkington on August 1, 1863.

JULIA STODDARD, born March 26, 1845; married Samuel P. Latham on August 31, 1862.

WILLIAM HENRY, born March 17, 1849; died Oct. 2, 1849.

GEORGE PACKER, born Sept. 15, 1853; married Louise Barnhart.

413. JAMES⁶ RATHBUN (James⁵⁻⁴⁻³ Samuel² John¹), born Feb. 7, 1781, in Dutchess County, N.Y., and married about 1803 Polly Crane, born April 4, 1783, parentage unknown. They moved to Cayuga County, N.Y., soon

after their marriage, living in Dryden and then in Mentz. In the 1820s, they moved to Eden, Erie County, N.Y., where Polly died April 5, 1848. He was married about 1850 to Elizabeth _____, born about 1793, surname and parentage unknown. James was deacon of the Baptist Church in Boston, N.Y., during the 1830s, and was the first postmaster of Eden. He died at Eden on Nov. 11, 1865, and Elizabeth died in Hamburg, N.Y., on March 17, 1873.

CHILDREN

All by Polly

ELIZA R., born Dec. 28, 1804; married Alfred Chaffee on Sept. 13, 1835.

HANNAH, born Sept. 24, 1806; married Alanson Hicks.

HILA ANN, born Sept. 14, 1808; married Ezra Chaffee, possibly on Sept. 13, 1835 (double marriage with sister?).

MARTHA MARIA, born Nov. 19, 1810; married Ayer Putnam.

STEPHEN CRANE, born Dec. 27, 1813; married Harriet C. Adams.

EMELINE, born April 14, 1815; married Eli Pound on April 11, 1844.

CHARLES S., born Aug. 25, 1817; married (1) Harriet Newell, and (2) Amy Dean.

JAMES H., born July 3, 1819; married Harriet Porter.

HARRIET L., born July 26, 1823; married Hiram Holt on Dec. 27, 1852.

LOUISA A., born Dec. 26, 1825; married Sanford Irish.

414. JOHN⁶ RATHBONE (?Samuel⁵ James⁴⁻³ Samuel² John¹), born about 1792. This family was not covered by Cooley and data is sketchy. The ancestry is not proven. John went to sea as a boy, reportedly served in the War of 1812, and then moved to Brooklyn, N.Y., where he was a mariner. He was married about 1818 to Eliza _____, surname and parentage unknown. He was known as "Captain Jack Rathbone," and was active in the trans-Atlantic trade. In 1831, he was master and owner of the ship Nashville, a three-master 131 feet long. He later sailed for the Black Ball

Lines, and was captain of the Oxford in the late 1830s. The Oxford was lost at Liverpool in an 1839 hurricane, and in the 1840s, the ship Columbus was built especially for him. She was 169 feet long, 37 feet wide and had a draft of 21 feet. Early Brooklyn directories show his home at 56 and later 81 Hester Street, and later at 78 Joralemon. He was washed overboard from the Columbus on January 13, 1847, during a storm. His widow, Eliza, died in Brooklyn on Oct. 18, 1851, aged 50.

CHILDREN

DAUGHTER (name unknown), born about 1818; no further data.

DAUGHTER (name unknown), born about 1820, possibly the Eliza Rathbone, aged 50, living in Brooklyn in 1870.

?EUNICE E., born about 1822; married Christopher Bacon on March 1, 1847.

SILAS H., born about 1826; married Mary Blunt.

JAMES J., born about 1828; he was a doctor and was living as late as 1852. He could be the unidentified James Rathbun, age 32, born New York, living in San Francisco in 1860.

DAUGHTER (name unknown), born about 1830; no further data.

GEORGE CLINTON, born in Oct. 1833; died Feb. 24, 1841.

CAROLINE A., born about 1835; died in October 1836.

JOHN TAYLOR, born in January 1838; died Aug. 14, 1838.

FLORENCE, born about 1840; died in November 1842.

415. THOMAS WORTHINGTON⁶ RATHBONE (Jonathan⁵ Coggeshall⁴ Abraham³ Samuel² John¹), born Sept. 21, 1824, in Clermont County, Ohio. He was married there Dec. 2, 1846, to Martha Wyatt, born March 22, 1830, daughter of Jonathan and Matilda (Marsh) Wyatt. Thomas had a fascinating career, and we are planning a separate story on him. He died Nov. 29, 1908, in Long Beach, California, and Martha died two weeks later on Dec. 15.

CHILDREN

DWIGHT WASHBURN, born July 6, 1849; married Mary Shafer.

MARY ADELINE, born March 5, 1853; married George T. Brown

EDWARD EVERETT, born June 18, 1855; married Louisa Simmons.

ELIZABETH BUNKER, born July 31, 1857; married Henry Collord.

SARAH MATILDA, born Dec. 19, 1860; married Charles Schilling.

LENA LOVENA, born Oct. 4, 1865; married Julius Potter.

FRANCES MAUD, born Dec. 1, 1872; died in 1961, unmarried.

(This concludes the sixth generation of our family in America, covering all the male lines. It is our plan to begin the seventh generation in the next issue.)

America's most famous family of naval heroes—the Perrys of Rhode Island—trace their lineage to a sailor who began his career under the command of Captain John Peck Rathbun, one of the most underrated officers in the Revolutionary Navy.

Christopher Raymond Perry (1761-1818) enlisted as a seaman in 1779 aboard the frigate *Queen of France*, then commanded by Captain Rathbun. The *Queen* was part of a naval squadron trapped by the British in Charlestown Harbor, S.C., and was deliberately sunk to help block the harbor entrance.

In 1781, Perry enlisted again under Rathbun on the privateer *Wexford*, and was captured with Rathbun when the ship was taken by the British. Perry later escaped, but Rathbun died at Mill Prison (see our *Historians* of Oct. 1982 and January, April and July of 1983).

Perry returned to the sea after the war as a merchant captain, and in 1799 was commissioned a captain in the U.S. Navy and served for two years. He was the father of Commodores Oliver Hazard Perry and Matthew Calbraith Perry, famous naval heroes of the early 1800s, and the ancestor of a whole dynasty of American naval heroes reaching into the present century.

Obituaries

DIED—May 13, 1992, at Las Cruces, N.M., Raymond C. Rathbun, 74, son of Charles Raymond⁹ (Woodward) Rathbun (Charles⁸ James⁷⁻³ Samuel² John¹). An Air Force veteran of World War II, he is survived by his widow, Ione Brown Rathbun; an adopted son Van Rathbun; three grandchildren, and two brothers, Robert Lee Rathbun, a member of our Association, and Dr. Speed R. Rathbun.

DIED—May 23, 1992, John A. Rathbun, 96, at Waterford, Conn. He was the son of Harry⁹ Rathbun (Alban⁸⁻⁷ Asa⁶ Abel⁵ John⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹). He is survived by a son, Roger W. Rathbun; a daughter, Edna H. Connell; eight grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren, and 12 great-great-grandchildren.

DIED—Nov. 28, 1991, Julia P. Rathbun, 86, of Olean, New York. She was the daughter of Howard⁸ Rathbun (Josiah⁷ Philetus⁶ Henry⁵ Thomas⁴⁻³ Samuel² John¹). She was the last survivor of their five children. A retired school teacher, she was never married and is survived only by nephews and nieces.

DIED—May 12, 1992, Pearl E. (Pike) Rathbun, 77, at Central Falls, R.I. She was the widow of Woodrow W.⁹ Rathbun (George⁸ Nathaniel⁷⁻⁶ Nathan⁵ Simon⁴ Thomas³ John²⁻¹). Survivors include two sons, David W. and Paul A. Rathbun; three daughters, Linda Wood, Joan Tetreault and Carol Voisin; 15 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren, and a brother.

DIED—April 20, 1991, Evelyn H. (Rathbun) DeMars 68, of Herkimer, N.Y. She was the daughter of Lorenzo Dow⁹ Rathbun (George⁸ Thomas⁷ John⁶ Thomas⁵ John⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹), and the wife of Robert DeMars. Other survivors include two sons, a daughter; two grandchildren; two brothers and a sister.

DIED—May 22, 1992, Grace (Rathbun) Carr-Matteson, 91, at Attleboro, Mass. She was the daughter of Robert⁸ Rathbun (John⁷ Robert⁶ John⁵⁻⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹). She was married first to Allen C. Carr and then Ray C. Matteson, both of whom died. She is survived by a daughter, Effie Snow; a sister, Mae E. Stringer; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

DIED—May 20, 1992, Alice M. (Saunders) Rathbun, 93, at Warwick, R.I. She was the widow of Raymond Allen⁸ Rathbun (Amy⁷ Olney⁶ Joshua⁵ Anthony⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹). She is survived by three daughters, Avis Cormier, Ruth Grantmeyer and Mattie Renahan; three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Her son-in-law, Richard G. Renahan, died four days earlier.

DIED—Dec. 1, 1991, Mabel J. Rathbun, 79, at Mountain Home, Idaho. She was the wife of Arthur Leroy⁹ Rathbun (Carl⁸ Lorenzo⁷ Elon⁶ Alfred⁵ Job⁴ Benjamin³ Joseph² John¹). In addition to her husband, she is survived by a son, M. Dean Wilson; two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; a brother and a sister.

WE THANK the following members who have sent in family data, pictures, clippings and other materials: Rob Rathbun, Helen M. Rathbun, Gloria McKie, Louise Marsh, Dan Rathbun, Evelyn Abernathy, Jean H. Walker, Betty Stevens, Eugene H. Rathbone, Edison J. Rathbone, Lauren Landis, Dr. Donald Rathbun, Jim Chivers, Muriel Mercer, John Bowen, Larry Trask, Beverly Gillette, LaVerne Rathbun, Robert Rathbone, Kitty Kopke, Fred C. Rathbun, Robert L. Rathbun, Helen Heyart, Dorothy Hladik, Viola McLeod, David R. Rathbun, Mary Champlin, Nikki C. West, Dale Rathbun, Joy Baker, Mary E. Vincent, Bettye E. Rathbone, Dorothy Mueller, Joan Byers, Dorothy Danks, Ed Rathbone, Darleen Boyle, Gerald Reeser, Rosalie Rathbun, Ellen Gardner Brown, Phyllis Wingerack and Jeanne Chubbuck.

People

CARL RATHBUN was recently elected to the city council in Fort Pierre, S.D., by the narrow margin of three votes. He is the son of Raymond¹⁰ Rathbun (Elzie⁹ Henry⁸ William⁷ Gideon⁶ Job⁵ Gideon⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹).

DALE RICHARD RATHBUN II was valedictorian of his June high school graduating class in Monroe, Michigan. He is the son of our members Theresa and Dale¹⁰ Rathbun (Keith⁹ Howard⁸ Valentine⁷ Horace⁶ William⁵ Daniel⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹).

ELLEN RATHBUN was valedictorian of her June high school graduating class in DeForest, Wisconsin. We do not know the names of her parents. Can anyone help?

RICHMOND J. RATHBONE, age 85, did not let his age stop him from making a trip to Washington early this year to attend a dinner featuring speeches by President George Bush and his wife Barbara. Rathbone, a contributor to the Republican National Committee, said his two-day trip was "fast and furious." A long-time member of our Association, he now lives in Southfield, Michigan. He is the son of Richmond⁸ Rathbone (Arthur⁷ Laurin⁶ Daniel⁵⁻⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹).

ALLIE A. (RATHBONE) LABAUME won an Easter rabbit in the Fresno (California) Easter Bonnet Parade in April. She wore a bonnet which she inherited from her mother's side of the family many years ago. Mrs. LaBaume, who does not reveal her age, is the only living daughter of Rufus⁸ Rathbone (George⁷ Rufus⁶ Daniel⁵ Valentine⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹).

CAROLE RATHBUN and John Pacheco were married March 27, 1992, at Providence, R.I. Carole is the daughter of Charles and Carole Rathbun of North Providence. We do not know the identity of this family. Can anyone help?

Our New Members

Martin Brusso
LeRoy, N.Y.

Donna Gallimore
Pierre, S.D.

Bruce L. Rathbun
Pensacola, Fla.

Dorothy A. Retzke
Ellenton, Fla.

Lilyan Thacker
Vienna, W.V.

Our Name Ranks Low in Numbers

There are thousands of Rathbuns, Rathbones and Rathburns in the United States, but our name ranks far down the list in terms of numbers.

A survey of American names several years ago revealed, to no one's surprise, that Smith is the nation's far most common surname. Next on the list were Johnson, Williams, Jones and Brown.

After them, came Miller, Davis, Anderson, Wilson, Thompson, Moore, Taylor, White, Thomas, Martin, Cook, Jackson, Harris, Walker and Young.

Rounding out the top 30 were Lewis, Hall, Robinson, Allen, Nelson, King, Baker, Wright, Hill and Adams.

Our family does have one distinction that bearers of the more "common" names do not have. With few exceptions, all American Rathbuns, Rathbones and Rathburns can claim direct descent from one set of ancestors—John and Margaret (Acres) Rathbun of Block Island

Births

BORN—Jan. 11, 1992, Nathaniel Benjamin Rathbun, son of Franklin and Mary Rathbun, and grandson of our members Rosalie and Benjamin¹⁰ Rathbun (Benjamin⁹⁻⁸ William⁷ Benjamin⁶ Samuel⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹), all of Noank, Conn.

BORN—April 12, 1992, Kaleigh Christian Best, daughter of Captain Michael R. and Deborah A. Best of Vandenberg Air Force Base, Cal.; granddaughter of our members Dr. Raymond H. and Nikki C. Best of Littleton, Colo., and great-granddaughter of our member Beverly Stone, who is a granddaughter of George T. Brown and Mary Adeline⁷ Rathbone (Thomas⁶ Jonathan⁵ Coggeshall⁴ Abraham³ Samuel² John¹).

BORN—March 18, 1992, at Coventry, R.I., Erin Lindsay McCulley, daughter of John H. McCulley Jr. and Cheryl A. (Champlin) McCulley. Cheryl is the daughter of Mary E. (Rathbun) Champlin, and granddaughter of Helen¹⁰ Rathbun (Ernest⁹ Charles⁸ Seneca⁷ John⁶ Joseph⁵ Joshua⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹), both members of our Association. Helen is the widow of Edward¹⁰ Rathbun (George⁹ Raymond⁸ Amy⁷ Olney⁶ Joshua⁵ Anthony⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹).

HAZEL RATHBUN, front desk clerk at Day's Inn, Ledgewood, N.J., was featured in a recent issue of "The September Days Club." Mrs. Rathbun, age 71, was praised for her "genuine smile and friendly chatter," and for dedicated service. We do not know her identity.

JASON RATHBUN is a young baseball star in Austin, Texas. Early this year, he pitched a six-hitter for the Baylor Bears, earning the Bears their eighth straight win. He allowed only one extra-base hit. We do not know his identity.