

Rathbun-Rathbone-Rathburn

FAMILY HISTORIAN



Captain Luther Rathbun
(1805-1889)

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

Letter from the Editor

With this Historian, you are receiving registration forms and detailed information for our Sixth National Family Reunion to be held Sept. 7 through 11 in Williamsburg, Virginia. Hazel and I have planned what should be an interesting and exciting four days.

We are looking forward to a big turnout for another successful reunion, and our first in America's Southland. Previous reunions have been in Rhode Island (2), Iowa, South Dakota and Illinois.

Details of our September reunion program are outlined in a story on the next page.

As I write this, in late March, our membership roster has climbed back up to 520, a sizeable drop from last year's 559, but enough to keep us solvent for 1993. I have reluctantly abandoned my hopes to reach 600. Our peak was 583 in 1991.

Block Island's Southeast Lighthouse was scheduled to be moved this month (April), climaxing a long but successful drive to save the 120-year-old landmark. A New York firm has agreed to do the work for \$1.9 million.

Our Association made another contribution to the lighthouse fund last month, when Edison and Polly Rathbone sent a \$50 check in memory of their cousin, LaPrelle Rathbone

Weatherford, one of our members, who died in December. Their generous gift brought our Association's total contribution to \$2,082. We can all be very proud of our role in helping to save the old lighthouse.

Our obituary section this month is larger than usual, and records the deaths of several Association members or their loved ones. Our sympathy to all the bereaved families.

Please keep in mind that we are always on the lookout for interesting stories and pictures of Rathbuns, Rathbones and Rathburns, past and present. Several members sent us clippings about the Rathbuns who won \$15,000,000 in the Washington state lottery, and it was much appreciated. The story did not appear in newspapers in this area.

Early pictures are especially needed. Look through your old albums and trunks and see what old photos you have—family houses, farm buildings, stores, weddings, reunions, antiques, etc., but primarily people. I am looking for old pictures (pre-1930) of our family members at work, at play, on horseback, in uniform, and also good, clear head-and-shoulder portraits.

Send me xerox copies of your old photos, and I will let you know which ones would be suitable for use. We will reimburse you for having photographic copies made of those we choose.

Our long-delayed Spring has finally arrived, and I can look out the window and see daffodils, crocus and hyacinth in bloom. The sun is shining, and it is a lovely sight—a welcome relief from what I think has been the worse six months, weatherwise, that I have ever known.

Hazel and I send our best wishes to you all and are hoping to see many of you in Williamsburg.

Frank

Rathbuns Win \$15,000,000 State Lottery

A Rathbun family in Washington won \$15,000,000 last January in the Washington State Lottery.

The lucky cousins were Charles and Gladys Rathbun and their children, who live in the Bremerton area of Washington. We have been unable to make contact with them, so we do not know to which branch of our family they belong. If anyone can help, please let us know.

According to newspaper accounts, Charles Rathbun is 73 years old and a retired shipworker at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. His wife is 67. Their children are Kenneth C. Rathbun, Jana B. Rathbun, Linda Johnson, Marc R. Fretwell and Brian R. Fretwell, the last two apparently Mrs. Rathbun's by a previous marriage.

The entire family had agreed among themselves several years ago that they would share any lottery winnings. The resulting payoff to seven persons, rather than one or two, will mean a sizeable tax savings. They will receive a total of \$540,000 a year, after taxes, for 20 years. The parents will receive just under 16 percent each, and the children 13.33 percent each.

Charles Rathbun bought the winning ticket at a supermarket. He usually buys only \$3 worth, but this time invested \$5. The winning numbers were on the fourth ticket.

It was the second biggest payoff in the state's lottery history. In 1992, a record \$20,000,000 prize was shared by three claimants with identically numbered tickets.

Newspaper accounts reported that Mrs. Rathbun planned to use her first check to replace her nine-year-old car, which has 190,000 miles on the speedometer. One of the sons said he would buy new tires for his pickup truck and another said he would take his family to Disneyland.

The entire family drove to the lottery's regional office in March, riding in style in two stretch limousines.

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Plans Are All Completed for Williamsburg Reunion

Plans have been completed for our Sixth National Family Reunion to be held in Williamsburg, Virginia, next September 7 through 11. Registration forms and information are being sent with this Historian. If you plan to attend, please read the instructions carefully and return the proper forms and your checks by the specified deadlines.

Our headquarters will be the Fort Magruder Inn, a charming four-star hotel just outside the restored area of Colonial Williamsburg.

This will be our first reunion held in an area without historical family connections. Our theme instead will be a look back into three eras of American history—the Colonial Period, the Revolutionary War and the Civil War era.

The four-day program will begin Tuesday, Sept. 7, with early evening registration, a get-acquainted party and a buffet dinner at the inn.

The next morning, chartered buses will take us into old-town Williamsburg and a look at colonial America of the middle 1700s. We will spend the day there, exploring the charming village and its multitude of restored old homes, shops and other buildings.

The Williamsburg restoration was planned and financed by members of the Rockefeller family, whose goal was to re-create Williamsburg exactly as it looked two centuries ago.

Many of the old buildings, shops and homes are open for inspection, with guides dressed in colonial costumes to conduct tours and answer questions.

For those who have never been to Williamsburg, it will be a delightful step back in time. Even for those who have seen it before, Williamsburg is always fascinating.

On Thursday, Sept. 9, we will take busses to nearby Jamestown, the first English settlement in America, and to

Yorktown, site of the final battle of the Revolutionary War.

At Jamestown, we will explore the restored 1600s fort, an old Indian village and full-size replicas of the three ships which brought the first settlers from England. It will be a realistic look at what America was like in its very earliest days.

At Yorktown, we will walk over the restored battlements and trenches where combined American and French troops defeated a powerful British Army headed by General Charles Cornwallis. On Oct. 19, 1780, the English soldiers lined up to turn over their muskets, and Cornwallis was so nonplussed he ordered his bandsmen to play a popular tune of the day, "The World Turned Upside Down."

Also at Yorktown is one of the finest Revolutionary War museums in the country.

That night, back at the inn, we will gather for an outdoor dinner, weather permitting, with a Civil War Theme. Confederate soldiers in uniform will spend part of the evening with us.

On Friday, we will begin the day with our traditional display of family heirlooms and memorabilia. Be sure to bring along some of your favorite items to share with your cousins. In the past, we have had old Bibles, pictures, letters, documents, firearms, swords, tools, lamps and even clothing and small items of furniture.

Also that morning, we will conduct a genealogical seminar, including a presentation by our member Lauren Landis on the proper preservation of old photos and papers.

In the afternoon, we will board the buses again for a trip to nearby Carters Grove, an authentic southern plantation of the 1800s, with an imposing house, barns, slave quarters, gardens and orchards.

The official reunion program will end that evening with a colonial dinner at the Fort Magruder, with waitresses in period costumes serving homestyle meals of typical colonial dishes.

We will also pay tribute that night to special guests, including the oldest, youngest and longest-married cousins in attendance.

As in the past, we will be offering reunion T-shirts at cost. See your information sheet for details on ordering.

Williamsburg is easy to reach by auto, bus or train, but one of our members, Dorothy Schilling, has made a novel suggestion. How about cousins in given areas getting together to charter a bus? It would be cheaper, easier and a lot more fun. Why not try to organize a group trip for cousins in your area?

In our Historian of January 1986, we reported that there was a rare disease known as Rathbun's Syndrome, and asked for help in determining for whom it was named.

The answer has come from our member Dr. Earl Antes, who checked through medical journals and learned that it was named for Dr. John Campbell Rathbun, a Canadian physician. He was the son of John⁸ Rathbun (Herbert⁷ Hugo⁶ Edward⁵ Amos⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹). See our Historians of April 1986, page 22, and July 1986, page 46.

Dr. Rathbun reported that he had treated a baby boy who died Jan. 21, 1947 of a disease he had never before encountered. He called it "Hypophosphatasia—A New Developmental Anomaly."

The disease is characterized by low levels of alkaline phosphates in body tissue and serum, by stunted growth and soft bones. It is still extremely rare and is not treatable.

Rathbuns of Noank, Conn. Mariners for Two Centuries

The little seaside village of Noank, Connecticut, has been the home for nearly 200 years of a Rathbun family branch whose men for generations have "followed the sea"—as sailors, fishermen, lobstermen, ship captains and ship owners. In Noank today is a Rathbun who is an eighth-generation mariner.

The founding father of Noank's seafaring Rathbuns was Captain Elijah Rathbun (1740-1825), son of Samuel³ Rathbun (Samuel² John¹). Elijah was born on Block Island, where his father was a fisherman; moved as a young man to Groton, Conn., and was married there in 1763 to Elizabeth Ann Burroughs.

Elizabeth died in 1777 of smallpox, leaving Elijah with five small children. He was married again about 1780 to Desire Walworth, a young widow. They moved to Guilford, Vermont, for several years, but by 1790, with three more children by his new wife, Elijah returned to Connecticut and settled in Noank. He was a ship's captain for a number of years, and died at Noank in 1825.

Two of Elijah's three sons also went to sea—Samuel, son of his first wife, and Elisha, son of the second. His oldest son, Benjamin, moved to New York City and died there aged 29 in a yellow fever epidemic.

Elijah's son Samuel married Abigail Burroughs who bore him 11 children, including seven sons, six of whom became seamen. We will return to him later.

Elijah's son Elisha, born in 1782, became a prominent citizen of Noank. He was a sea captain, but also a doctor, church deacon, carpenter and major land owner.

He went to sea at 18, became a captain two years later, and followed the sea until he was 60 years old. For many years, he commanded a packet ship between Mystic, Conn., and New

York City. He was so popular that many people planned business and pleasure trips just to sail with him. Friday was his "lucky day," and he made it a point to leave and arrive in port on that day of the week.

In more than 40 years as a captain, he never lost a man or ship—a remarkable record. He became a skilled physician, and was able to successfully treat his men for yellow



Captain Luther Morgan Rathbun (1805-1889), the earliest of the Noank Rathbuns whose likeness has survived.

fever, which claimed the lives of many sailors in those days.

There are few records of his seafaring, but records show that he was captain and co-owner between 1824 and 1837 of the sloops Eliza, Hero and Mystic, and the schooner Emeline. He made trips up and down the East Coast, including several journeys to New Orleans. A local historian in 1905 reported that his "old account book" was still owned by descendants, but its whereabouts today is unknown.

Elisha's home in Noank, known as Pilgrim's Tavern, was a favorite stop-

ping-off place for travelers passing through Noank, and he was known as a genial host. He was also a master carpenter, and was frequently called upon by neighbors to help in building houses, barns and other structures. His descendants today still have a written contract he made on March 8, 1821, agreeing to build a barn for Sanford Stark, a neighbor.

The barn was to be 22 by 18 feet and built of "good materials and in a workmanlike manner." Elisha was to be paid \$75 "when the barn is finished and which is to be in season to receive hay this summer."

Elisha was a deeply religious man and at the age of 43 became deacon of the Fort Hill (Second Baptist) Church in Groton. He held the position until his death 33 years later. His lengthy obituary related that "sometimes as he rose among his brethren to lead in the songs of Zion, his voice trembled with feeling and his eyes moistened in gratitude as he recognized the presence of the Saviour."

He had extensive land holdings along the Noank harbor and was recognized as one of the village's most prominent citizens. He retired from the sea about 1842, and died in 1857 aged 75. His wife, Lucretia Packer, died six months later.

During their 53 years of marriage, they mourned the deaths of five of their six sons who died at sea as young men.

The oldest, Elisha Jr., married just before his 25th birthday, left for sea a few days later, and died of yellow fever at Key West, Florida, less than three months after his marriage.

The next son, Griswold, born in 1810, sailed for many years, retired, and lived to be 80 years old. None of his sons went to sea.

The third son, Alden H. Rathbun, born in 1816, was married in June 1838 and drowned nine months later age 22 in the Mississippi River near

New Orleans. He was captain and co-owner of the schooner Frances Ashby.

Charles Rathbun, the fourth son, was captain of the schooner Hudson when he died Sept. 5, 1841, of yellow fever at St. Marks, Florida, a month before his 21st birthday.

The youngest son, Simeon Rathbun, was lost at sea in 1852, aged 21.

In Elisha's obituary, the writer commented: "He had known and drank deeply of the cup of affliction. Five noble sons, following the vocation of their father, died in the vigor of manhood, far from home. Yet as blow after blow fell upon the stricken parents, and they bent beneath successive strokes, no murmur against God's dealings was heard to rise, for it was in him alone they sought and found their refuge in times of trouble."

Descendants still have a letter which must have been one of Elisha's most cherished possessions—written to him from New Orleans on Feb. 23, 1839, by his son Charles some 18 months before Charles died.

"Honoured Parents," the letter begins. "I now take my pen in hand to inform you of my health which is good at present and hope these few lines may find you and all the rest of the folks enjoying the same."

"We have not yet got any freight nor no likelihood of any, the river (Mississippi) being low. The Fox is here and the Sarah, Hero, Hudson, and the Emeline is loading for Galveston and expects to sail in two or three days. The Frances Ashbey lays over to Slaughter House Point, layed up. Simeon (his brother) was on board yesterday and brought his letter. I was extremely glad to hear from home as I have not had any letters from home since I left and think it strange you have not wrote before this time."

"I expect there has been a great alteration in Mystic since we left. I have nothing of importance to write but thought I would write a few lines to let you know how we are getting along in this part of the land. Simeon is well and Alden and I have not seen a sick moment since we left home. (Alden drowned exactly one month later in New Orleans.)

"I expect we shall be home pretty early, the times being so dull. Give my love to grandmother and all inquiring friends. I have wrote but a short time since and it is the only pleasure I can take, but shall not write any more until I get a letter from home as I have wrote three letters and have not received any yet."

"It is late and I am sleepy. You must excuse the bad writing. As for spelling, there is no excuse, so I close by subscribing myself your ever dutiful son until death. Charles Rathbun."

In the last days of Elisha's life, he told his grieving family: "If the Lord



Gravestone of Captain Samuel O. Rathbun (1836-1870), one of the many Rathbun markers in the old Noank Cemetery.

should give me to choose whether I shall live or die, I would submit the case back to him, for he knows best."

After the death of Elisha, the seafaring tradition was carried on by descendants of Samuel Rathbun, eldest son of Elijah Rathbun, founder of the Noank Rathbun branch. As we noted earlier, six of Samuel's seven sons went to sea.

The oldest, Captain Benjamin Rathbun, born in 1802, married Eliza Latham, had four children, and was lost at sea in 1832 on a return trip from Jamaica.

The second son, John Sawyer Rathbun, born in 1803, was the only one who did not go to sea. He became a merchant in Groton and later New Haven, Conn.

Luther Morgan Rathbun (1805-1889) was the third son. His picture appears on our front cover and with this story. He is the earliest of the Noank Rathbuns whose likeness has survived.

On April 14, 1850, as captain of the fishing sloop Isabelle, Luther joined four other ships on a trip to the fishing grounds off Nantucket Shoals. Among his fellow captains was his younger brother, Latham Rathbun, commander of the D.W. Manwarren.

That night, the five ships anchored near one of their favorite fishing spots off George's Bank, and all hands went to bed early, ready to begin fishing in the morning. The day had been bright and sunny and the evening sea was calm.

Early the next morning, Luther went on deck and looked around him on the quiet sea. To his amazement, only three of his four companion ships were to be seen. There was no sign of the D.W. Manwarren, his brother's ship. There was no floating wreckage, no indication whatever to explain what had happened. Captain Latham Rathbun, his ship and crew had simply disappeared.

To this day, the incident remains a mystery. In the Noank Cemetery is a marble slab with the simple inscription: "Latham Rathbun who it is supposed was lost on George's Bank April 14, 1850." Latham was 41 years old and left his widow Eleanor with four young children."

Luther Rathbun lived to be nearly 84 years old. His eldest son, Captain Nathan Warren Rathbun, followed in his father's footsteps and became a sailor. We will record his interesting career in our next issue.

The next son of Samuel Rathbun was William Orrin Rathbun (1811-1889), a sea captain and ship owner. In 1859, he was listed as "master and owner" of the 53-foot sloop L.A. Macomber. In 1889, after the death of his wife and the deaths of six of his

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A Tale of Two Sisters— Like Mother and Daughter

This is the story of two Rathbun sisters—the oldest and youngest in a family of 10 children—who were 25 years apart in age. The oldest raised the youngest after their parents' death, and the youngest then cared for her older sister in the final years of her life. They were more like mother and daughter than sisters. Both were married to interesting and prominent men.

Mary Maria Rathbun, the oldest, was born Dec. 11, 1790, in Troy, N.Y., the first child of Amos⁵ Rathbun (Amos⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹) and his wife Mary (Polly) Williams. The youngest was Sarah Frances Rathbun, born Dec. 5, 1815, in Scipio, Cayuga County, N.Y., where the family had moved about 1799.

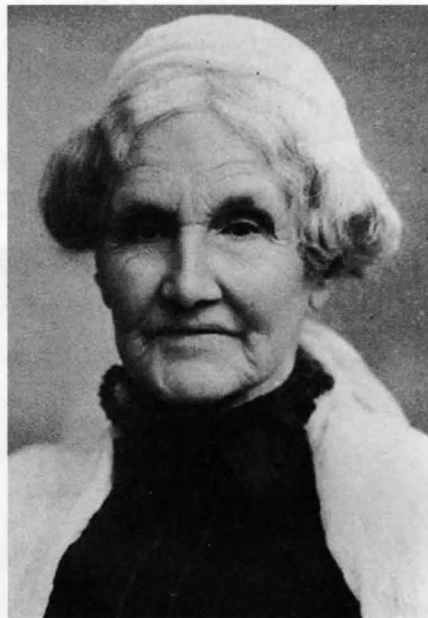
Amos Rathbun died Sept. 22, 1823, leaving Polly with six children still at home, ranging in age from Sarah, at seven, to Judah, at 22. (See our Historian of January 1984, page 12, for the entire family).

Seven years later, Polly died at the age of 60, and her daughter Sarah went to live with her oldest sister, Mary Maria, then the wife of Thomas Yardley How, living in Brownville, N.Y.

Mary Maria, also known as Polly, had been married since 1820 to How, a prominent lawyer and theologian who had earlier served as personal secretary to Alexander Hamilton.

How was born about 1776 to Elias and Mary How in Sussex County, N.J. He was educated at Princeton University, where he earned a master's degree in 1794. A few years later, he moved to western New York State with his friend and Quaker schoolmaster, Jacob Brown. With a group of other settlers, they founded what became the village of Brownville in Jefferson County.

How returned to New Jersey about 1799 and was admitted to practice law



*Sarah Frances Benedict
(1815-1902)*

in the state that year. It was also the year that Alexander Hamilton entered his life.

Hamilton (1755-1804) had been a member of George Washington's staff during the Revolutionary War and had risen to the rank of colonel. He served in the Continental Congress several years in the 1780s and in the Constitutional Convention of 1787. When Washington became President in 1789, he named Hamilton as the new nation's first secretary of the treasury.

Hamilton resigned the treasury post in 1795, and became a leader of the Federalist Party. In 1798, as a war with France seemed inevitable, he was commissioned a major-general and appointed Inspector General of the United States Army. George Washington, ex-president, came out of retirement at Mount Vernon to become Lieutenant-General and the Army's commander in chief.



*Mary Maria How
(1790-1885)*

Hamilton tried several young men as secretaries, but soon decided that he needed a superior type individual to serve as his personal secretary. He asked his friends to look for a suitable candidate.

In June 1799, a recommendation came from an old friend in New Jersey, Colonel Aaron Ogden, commander of an army regiment and later to be a New Jersey senator and governor.

"I have been casting about for a suitable candidate for your secretary," Ogden wrote Hamilton, "and beg leave to mention Mr. Thomas Y. How of Trenton as a candidate well worthy of your consideration.... Mr. How has received a liberal education at Princeton College and has lately been admitted to the practice of law in New Jersey."

Hamilton had apparently received other recommendations for How, and on July 3 offered him the appointment. He also suggested that How be

named a lieutenant in Ogden's regiment as a way of augmenting his salary.

How eagerly jumped at the opportunity and on July 18 wrote Hamilton: "I have the honour to inform you that I am in readiness and wait your orders." He also accepted "with pleasure," Hamilton's suggestion of an army commission.

Hamilton immediately wrote to James McHenry, Secretary of War (and an old friend from his days on Washington's staff), to arrange How's commission. McHenry sent a recommendation to President John Adams, who gave prompt approval.

How, now a second lieutenant, joined Hamilton that month as personal secretary, at a salary of \$40 month, plus another \$25 monthly for his lieutenant's pay. He also received allowances for rations and "forage" (to cover the cost of feeding his horse).

How was 23 years old, and Hamilton was 44. The two men were together night and day for the next 12 months, and struck up a warm friendship. When the war with France failed to develop, Washington and Hamilton returned to civilian life, and How went back to New Jersey. He wrote Hamilton a warm letter of thanks on July 2, 1800:

"I should do violence to my feelings if I neglected to express to you my respect and gratitude. During the year which I have been so happy as to spend in your military family, your conduct towards me has been uniformly delicate and tender. It has excited to my heart an attachment that may never be effaced. With sincere affection and respect, I am dear sir your obedient servant. Thomas Y How."

How went into law practice at Woodbridge, N.J., and Hamilton threw himself back into national politics. A leader of the conservatives, he became an arch-enemy of liberal Aaron Burr, and helped defeat Burr for the presidency in 1801 and for the governorship of New York in 1804. There were harsh words, and Burr challenged Hamilton to a duel.

Hamilton, his honor at stake, had no choice but to accept, and on July 11, 1804, he was killed by Burr in an early-morning duel in New Jersey. Oddly, Hamilton's oldest son, Philip,

had been killed three years earlier in a duel at the very same spot.

Many years later, Hamilton's youngest son, John, wrote a biography of his famous father. The first volume was published in 1834, covering the first part of Hamilton's life. The son then began plans for a second volume, and in 1840 wrote to How asking for help.

"I find a great want of personal anecdote, recollection of opinions ... things that mark a man in his daily intercourse ...," he wrote How. "Your intimacy (with him) will enable you to supply this want."

Hamilton asked How to comment on his father's habits, his choice of books, his character, his opinion of Washington, Jefferson and Burr, "and the impression he made upon you when you first saw him."

"You can fill a chapter that no other man can," he wrote How. "And I am sure you will spare some hours to the memory of a man you loved."

If How answered the letter, there is no known record of it. Nor is there any indication that Hamilton ever published a second volume of his father's life.

Thomas Y. How was married in 1806, but his wife died five years later in childbirth, leaving him with two young children. Her death devastated him, and apparently led to his enrollment that year at Kings College (now Columbia University) to study religion. He was awarded a master's degree in theology in 1812.

In 1813, he was married again, and again his wife died after five years, leaving him with three more children. He decided to leave the area that had brought him so much tragedy, and about 1819 moved to Brownville, N.Y., where he had lived briefly 20 years earlier.

At Brownville, he renewed his friendship with Jacob Brown, now an Army general and prominent citizen. (Brown had become famous as a general in the War of 1812. See our Historian of April 1987).

General Brown had married Pamela Williams, whose sister Mary had married Amos Rathbun—father of Mary Maria and Sarah Frances. The Rathbuns lived in Cayuga County, not far from Brownville, and the two fami-

lies stayed in close touch. It was probably at a Rathbun-Brown family gathering that Thomas Y. How met Mary Maria, or Polly as she was called.

The two fell in love and were married at General Brown's home on August 13, 1820, and they settled down in Brownville. Polly was 29, he was 44. Polly had inherited five stepchildren—three boys and two girls, ranging in age from three to 13. She proved to be a good mother, and her stepchildren came to love her dearly. One of the boys died in 1824 aged 11, but the rest grew and prospered under her care.

Their household grew in 1830, after the death of Polly's mother. She and How took in her young sister, Sarah, then 14, and two older brothers, Nathan and Alfred Rathbun, also moved to Brownville to study law with Thomas How. Under his tutelage, both became attorneys.

By the late 1830s, How gave up his law practice to become an Episcopal minister. From that time on, he was known as the Rev. Thomas Y. How. He and Polly remained in Brownville, although they lived for at least a while in the frontier village of Tecumseh, Michigan, which had been founded in 1834 by a group of settlers from Brownville. They were living there in 1840 when John C. Hamilton wrote How about his father's biography.

At Brownville, How became very active in Episcopal Church affairs, and at one time was a leading candidate to become bishop of New York. Little is known of his later years. He died at Brownville on May 9, 1855, aged 79. His obituary called him "a Christian gentleman and scholar, venerable and highly respected."

Polly How remained in Brownville for some years, but became a lonely woman. Her stepchildren and her brothers and sisters had all left the area. Sometime in the late 1870s, she moved to Cleveland, Ohio, to spend her final years with the sister she had helped to raise—Sarah Frances, then the wife of George A. Benedict.

Sarah was then in her sixties, and Polly in her late eighties. Family members later told how close they were to

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one another, more like mother and daughter than sisters.

A niece from Michigan attended school in Cleveland for a year, and lived with her elderly aunts. She related how "Aunt Polly" went shopping one day and brought home a "new winter dress."

"But Auntie," the niece exclaimed. "It is exactly the same as last year's dress. How will you tell them apart?"

"My dear," replied Aunt Polly, "it's quite simple. I will just hang them on different hooks!"

Aunt Polly died at sister Sarah's Cleveland home on Dec. 28, 1885, shortly after her 95th birthday. Sarah nursed her tenderly during her final illness and carried out Polly's wish to be buried by the side of her husband in Brownville.

We now move back in time to pick up the story of Sarah Frances, the younger sister, who survived a tragic childhood—losing her father when she was seven, and her mother when she was 14.

A letter has survived which Sarah wrote to her mother on January 7, 1830. The mother was apparently in poor health, and was staying with relatives in Aurora, N.Y. Sarah had spent the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays in 1829 with her uncle, Nathan Williams, a judge in Utica, N.Y., and was still there in January. She was probably attending school in Utica.

The letter gives an interesting insight into the everyday life of that era. It also shows that Sarah, just past her 14th birthday, was a remarkably literate and self-confident young lady.

(The letter was addressed to "Mrs. Mary Rathbone, Aurora, Cayuga County, N. York," and signed "S.F. Rathbone." Although Amos, the father, always used the Rathbun spelling, several of his children about this time adopted the Rathbone version).

The letter (somewhat edited) reads as follows:

"As I promised to write you once a month while I remain here, I will do it with pleasure.... As for news, I have but little. I will commence by describing the holidays. I ate Thanksgiving

dinner at home and attended a concert in the evening.

"Christmas I spent at Uncle Nathan's and was at another concert in the evening. The church was beautifully dressed and well lighted. There was a large choir of singers and four different instruments, the organ, piano, two violins and a number of flutes. The ladies sung without their bonnets which made a fine appearance.

"New Years I spent at home. Aunt Maria (Williams) presented me with a prayer book, Cousin James with some engravings and Cousin Joseph with a salmon-coloured dress handkerchief. I thought I had as good luck as if I had hung up my stocking. Sister Mary sent me a Christmas cake by Uncle Nathan when he returned from court. She mentioned that it is almost time for me to be thinking about purchasing my piano as Spring will soon be here.

"I have not received any word from (brother) Jacob since he left. Joseph had a letter not long since saying that Jacob had not procured a place (job) yet. We supposed him to have had one in view when he started from Brownville. I expect he must be homesick by this time for nothing makes him more so than to be idle.

"I purchased myself a hat for this winter. It is a pea-green Gros de Fou (Anyone know what that means?). It is fixed with tabs and ribbons so that the green shade is taken off by the colours. You know green is my favorite colour, although I cannot wear it next my face without relief.

"I had a letter from (brother) Alfred last evening. He says they are all well, except sister Mary has a sore throat. We have fine sleighing and sleighs run briskly, for this is the first snow we have had this winter.

"I had a letter from Mary Shepard (a Williams cousin) a few days ago. She said they were all well and the baby is very handsome. I suppose she is very proud of her title 'aunt' but for my part I have been 'aunt' so long that I do not once think of being proud of the title.

"My best love to Aunt's family and all other friends. It being Saturday night and quite late, I shall close without filling up my paper. Your affectionate daughter."

Sarah was very close to her brother Jacob, who was five years older than she. He lived for a while with the Hows, but in 1829, aged 19, he set off for New York City to seek his fortune. He became a successful merchant, and was described as the "second handsomest man in New York." (His picture appeared in our Historian of October 1982, page 59). Jacob made his will in 1835, naming sister Sarah co-executor. He died in New York, unmarried, in 1850.

Eight months after Mary wrote her letter, her mother died, and Sarah apparently made her home from that time on with her sister Mary.

In the late 1830s, she met a young lawyer, George A. Benedict, who had studied law at nearby Watertown and began practicing law there in 1834. In 1835, he moved "west" to Cleveland, Ohio, where he joined a law firm.

Family tradition says he told Sarah he would come back and marry her when he "made good." He kept his word. They were married June 12, 1839, at the How home in Brownville, with sister Mary filling in as "mother of the bride" and Thomas Y. How as "father."

They then returned to Cleveland, where George Benedict was to have a highly successful career. He was named city attorney in 1840, served two years, and then became president of the Cleveland city council. From 1848 to 1853 he was clerk of the city's Superior Court, but then left the legal profession to follow a new career—he purchased a major interest in the Cleveland Daily Herald, and became its associate editor.

He moved up rapidly to editor and then editor-in-chief, a post he held until his death. He used his newspaper position to give strong support to President Lincoln during the Civil War. In 1863, when Lincoln gave his famous address at the dedication of Gettysburg National Cemetery, Benedict was one of the favored few who joined the president on the speakers' platform.

After Lincoln concluded his speech, Benedict turned to a friend and declared, "That man is the salt of the earth!"

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nine children, he committed suicide at the age of 78 by taking morphine.

His brother, Samuel Rathbun Jr. (1813-1864), was also a sailor, about whom little is known. In 1863, he joined the Army during the Civil War and died in 1864 at a hospital in Philadelphia, aged 51, leaving six children.

The oldest, Samuel Orrin Rathbun (1836-1870), was a sea captain and ship builder. He died of "swamp fever" (probably malaria or yellow fever) contracted in Florida. Another son was John Alden Rathbun (1839-1911), who went to sea at 13 and sailed for about eight years. He then operated a furniture store and funeral parlor, and served as Noank's postmaster. As a soldier in the Civil War, he was twice wounded, promoted to sergeant, lieutenant and finally captain.

The youngest son of Samuel Rathbun was Calvin (1819-1893), who went to sea with his father at the age of 15. They fished together for many years, their favorite spot being off Montauk, Long Island. In later years, Calvin became a lobsterman.

By the early 1900s, many of the Noank Rathbuns were turning away from the sea to earn their livings. They were becoming farmers, tradesmen and shopkeepers. Many left Noank to find jobs in larger cities.

One branch of the family, however, clung to the seafaring tradition set by the early Noank Rathbuns.

We earlier mentioned Captain Benjamin Rathbun, son of Samuel, who was lost at sea in 1832. The inventory of Benjamin's personal estate gives an interesting picture. It totaled just over \$1,000, including \$128 owed by his brother Latham Rathbun; his Bible, clothing, linens, furniture, and a "bill of labor" for \$11 against the owners of the schooner Phoenix.

He also left a two-family house which was sold—half to William Chester for \$4,055, and the other half to Henry Latham for \$3,000. Henry was his wife's brother, and possibly bought it for his sister. Rathbun's will specified that his widow was to have the east half of the house, the southern part of the cellar, and one-half of the porch.

Among his most valuable personal possessions were six silver teaspoons and a silver watch.

His widow was left with four children, all under six years old—two boys and two girls. The boys both became seamen and the girls both married sea captains.

The youngest son, William Gadson Rathbun (1832-1913) became a prominent Noank sea captain and land owner, known to his friends as "Bill Gad Rathbun."

He went to sea as a boy, serving first as a cook on the Seaflower, commanded by his uncle Captain Calvin Rathbun. He interrupted his sea career to head for California in the Gold Rush days of the late 1840s, but returned after two years and spent the rest of his life at sea.

On January 30, 1860, as captain of the fishing smack J.D. Latham, with a three-man crew, Bill Gad Rathbun joined several other ships for a fishing trip off Block Island. One of his fellow captains was his cousin, Samuel Orrin Rathbun, commander of the Wanderer.

The little fleet anchored its first night in "Money Pond Bay" on Fisher's Island. The bay had been given its name because it was a favorite hide-out of the infamous Captain Kidd, who supposedly had buried some of his treasure there.

Early the next morning, the ships left for Block Island and by daylight were anchored a few miles southeast of the island. After a busy and successful day of fishing, they prepared to head back home.

But Bill Gad was worried. The sun had sunk into a dark, threatening cloud bank; the wind was rising, and the temperature was falling. He foresaw trouble, and he was right.

As they sailed toward the mainland, the temperature plunged to nearly zero and a gale roared in from the northwest. Water froze as it hit the decks, ropes and sails, and the ships were encased in ice.

The captains became separated, and Rathbun had difficulty staying the course. Then a huge wave washed away the Latham's compass, and he found himself "sailing blind." Moments later, the ship crashed onto a reef, hung there for a short time, then was

swept off into the raging sea again. Unable to maneuver his ship, Rathbun dropped anchor to await daylight.

By dawn, the wind had died down, but it was bitterly cold and snowing heavily. Rathbun and his little crew, suffering greatly from the cold, managed to get the Latham into Noank.

One of the other ships also made it back to Noank, and two others rode out the storm in the shelter of Block Island. The fifth, the Herald, was blown ashore on Fisher's Island. Her captain, Peter Baker, died a few days later from shock and exposure.

Bill Gad Rathbun survived this and other harrowing experiences at sea, eventually retired, and in the 1890s served several years as Noank's postmaster. He died in 1913 at the age of 81.

His son, Benjamin Franklin Rathbun (1869-1909) carried on the family's seafaring tradition, followed by his son, Captain Benjamin Franklin Rathbun Jr. (1896-1959).

Benjamin Jr. sailed a charter fishing boat for many years, and became "dean" of the ocean fishermen in the Noank area. In 1929, he launched a new ship and named her the Anna R after his wife, Anna (Johnson) Rathbun.

His son, Benjamin Franklin Rathbun III, born in 1928, decided as a boy that he would go to sea. His mother wanted him to become a dentist, but Ben (a member of our association) recalls: "I knew in grammar school what I wanted to do. I wanted to go fishing with my father."

He worked with his father part time while in high school, and then full time after completing high school in 1946. He took over the business when his father died in 1959.

For the next 30 years, Captain Ben ran a busy charter-fishing business, using a ship he built himself from a basic lobster boat hull. He followed family tradition by naming her the Anna R.

History repeated itself in the 1970s, when Ben's son Frank, born in 1955, began working part time for his father, and then full time when he finished high school. They expanded the business, adding a second ship, the

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Noank Rose, for chartered sailing trips.

After nearly a half-century sailing in the North Atlantic, Captain Ben has now retired, and young Frank has taken over the family business—the eighth generation in his family to “follow the sea.”

There have been many changes, of course. The Anna R today carries an electronic device to help locate schools of fish, and a radio to keep in touch with family and with other vessels. And Captain Frank doesn't have to rely on sails and a brisk wind to keep the Anna R moving. He uses a diesel engine.

Frank and his wife Mary already have two sons, now aged six and two. Maybe one or both of them will become the ninth generation of Rathbun sailors in Noank.

(Our thanks to Bill Hosking and Frank Rathbun Wright for providing much of the information for this story. Both are descended from the Noank Rathbuns. Some of the information also comes from a marvelous book, “Noank,” published in 1970 by the Noank Historical Society. Our next issue will continue the saga of the Noank Rathbuns with the story of Captain Nathan Warren Rathbun, one of Noank's most noted sea captains.)

New Data

Mary Rathbun, daughter of Ebenezer⁴ Rathbun (Ebenezer³ William² John¹), apparently had two husbands (See our Historian of July 1982, page 46). She probably was married first to Elisha Kenyon about 1815, and then to Joseph Cross by 1850. Her son by Kenyon, James Amos Kenyon, born in 1817, married her niece (his cousin) Frances Rathbun, daughter of Christopher Rathbun. Mary's sister, Fannie, married as her second husband Joseph (not Enos) Burdick. Our thanks to Bill Wright.

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It was probably his support of Lincoln that led to Benedict's appointment as Cleveland's postmaster in 1865. He held the post four years, then declined reappointment. He had decided that newspapermen should not hold political office.

The Benedicts had three children—a son and two daughters. The son, George, was killed in 1871, aged 31, in a railroad-car collision near Albany, N.Y., while returning from a business trip to New York City. He was head of the Herald's advertising department, and was expected to eventually take over his father's position as editor-in-chief.

His death was a terrible shock to the parents, and the father's health began to fail rapidly. He died five years later, on May 10, 1876, at the age of 69. It was probably about that time that sister Polly How came to live with Sarah.

Sarah Francis Benedict died in 1902 at the age of 87. A Cleveland historian wrote of her: “During her 63 years of continuous residence in Cleveland, she was closely identified with the city's social, religious and charitable life. Probably no other woman of this city had as many friends, acquaintances and well-wishers as Mrs. George A. Benedict.”

Susannah Durham, wife of Tibbetts H.⁶ Rathbun (Tibbetts⁵ John⁴⁻³ Thomas² John¹), was the daughter of Simeon Durham and Lois (Howd) Durham. (Historian of April 1990, page 29).

Lovica Rathbone, daughter of Edmund⁵ Rathbone (Edmund⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹), married Onatus Chaffee on Sept. 24, 1818, in Crawford County, Illinois. (See Historian of April 1983, page 29). Our thanks to Rob Rathbun.

Births

BORN—Nov. 18, 1992, in El Paso, Texas, Morgan Nichole Melton, daughter of Ted and Rita Rae (Rathbun) Melton, and granddaughter of our member Jerrold L.⁹ Rathbun (Fred⁸ Erastus⁷ Edwin⁶ George⁵ Job⁴ Benjamin³ Joseph² John¹).

BORN—Dec. 4, 1992, in Dallas, Texas, Chaelene Mia Yu, daughter of Kyon Chae Yu and Hope Ellen (Littlejohn); granddaughter of Peggy Rathbun, and great-granddaughter of our member Fred⁹ Rathbun (Fred⁸ Erastus⁷ Edwin⁶ George⁵ Job⁴ Benjamin³ Joseph² John¹).

BORN—Nov. 24, 1992, at Kennewick, Wash., Victoria Raelynn Carter, daughter of Mathew Duane and Laura (Rathbun) Carter, and granddaughter of our members Mildred and Wayne⁹ Rathbun (Clark⁸ John⁷⁻⁶ Alfred⁵ Job⁴ Benjamin³ Joseph² John¹).

BORN—Nov. 13, 1992, Lindsey Koren Curtis, daughter of James and Sharon Curtis, and granddaughter of our members Louie Curtis and Juanita¹¹ Rathbun (Amory¹⁰ Charles⁹⁻⁸ William⁷ Alfred⁶ Wait⁵⁻⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹).

BORN—Nov. 10, 1992, Samuel Thomas Waldusky, son of Karie (Rathbun) Waldusky, and grandson of our members Sheila and G. Rex¹⁰ Rathbun (Gathern⁹ George⁸ Jonathan⁷ Thomas⁶⁻⁵ John⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹).

In our April 1991 Historian, we omitted the three youngest children of Orrin⁶ Rathbun (Russell⁵ Job⁴ Benjamin³ Joseph² John¹). In addition to the five we listed, they also had ORRIN EUGENE, born June 5, 1841; married (1) Harriet Ann Smith, and (2) Harriet Cadette; JAMES KNOX POLK, born Dec. 12, 1845; married Margaret Warner, and CHARLES MARSDEN, born Jan. 5, 1848; married Hannah (Bradshaw) Marsden.

Genealogy: The Seventh Generation in America

36. HENRY REED RATHBONE⁷ (Jared⁶ Samuel⁵ Joshua⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born July 1, 1837, in Albany, N.Y. He was married July 11, 1867, to Clara Hamilton Harris, born Sept. 9, 1834, daughter of United States Senator Ira Harris and his wife Louise (Tubbs) Harris. Henry was an officer in the U.S. Army and in 1865, as a major, was with President Abraham Lincoln when he was assassinated at Ford's Theatre in Washington. (See our Historian of Oct. 1981 and later issues for details of his tragic life). He murdered his wife Dec. 24, 1883, in Germany, and spent the rest of his life in a German mental hospital, where he died Aug. 15, 1911.

CHILDREN

HENRY RIGGS, born Feb. 12, 1870; married Laura Lucille Harney on Dec. 22, 1903, in Oshkosh, Wisc. They had no children. He died July 15, 1928. Laura died Feb. 25, 1954. He was an attorney and U.S. Congressman. (See story and picture in our Historian of Jan. 1991).

GERALD LAWRENCE, born Aug. 26, 1871; married Gertrude G. Josselyn on June 30, 1908. They had no children. He died Sept. 25, 1936, in New York City. Her death date is not known.

CLARA PAULINE, born Sept. 15, 1873; married Dr. Buckner M. Randolph.

37. JARED LAWRENCE⁷ RATHBONE (Jared⁶ Samuel⁵ Joshua⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born Sept. 28, 1844, in Albany, N.Y. He was married Feb. 20, 1871, to Marie Atherton, born about 1844 in Chile, parentage unknown. They had no children. (See our Historian of April 1990 for his picture and biography). He died May 2, 1907, in San Francisco, Cal. She died Nov. 19, 1913.

38. CLARENCE⁷ RATHBONE (Joel⁶ Samuel⁵ Joshua⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born Nov. 17, 1844, in Albany, N.Y. He was married on Sept. 11, 1866, to Angelica Bogart Talcott, born Feb. 24, 1846, daughter of General Sebastian V. and Olive Maria (Shearman) Talcott. (See our Historian of Jan. 1989 for a sketch of his life.) He died April 23, 1916, at Albany, and she died Feb. 2, 1938, at New York City.

CHILDREN

ALBERT, born July 27, 1868; married Emma Marvin Olcott.

JOEL, born Sept. 12, 1869; married Josephine Norwood.

ANGELICA TALCOTT, born March 15, 1871; married (1) Charles Hopkinson on June 14, 1893, and (2) Dr. Charles R. L. Putnam on Dec. 25, 1899.

ETHEL, born Dec. 11, 1877; married Jean Marty on March 14, 1907, in Paris, France

39. GEORGE W.⁷ RATHBUN (Truman⁶ Ashley⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born May 15, 1820, in Sullivan, Madison County, N.Y. He moved as a young man to Michigan and was married there in Marshall on Oct. 10, 1839, to Aurelia Hopkins, born about 1820, parentage unknown. He was a farmer many years in Oakland County, Michigan, where Aurelia died in March 1892, and he died in 1900.

CHILDREN

JOSEPHINE HORTENSE, born June 29, 1841; married Charles Crawford.

LAURA EVELYN, born Feb. 8, 1843; married George Warren Morgan on Nov. 13, 1861.

AURELIA, born about 1846; died young

CORLISS, born about 1850; died young.

ORR, born in Nov. 1857; married Isabella Outweight.

40. ISAIAH S.⁷ RATHBUN (Isaiah⁶ Ashley⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born May 12, 1825, in Cicero, Onondaga County, N.Y. He went to Michigan with his parents as a boy, and was married Sept. 14, 1850, to Clarinda Fox, born about 1830, parentage unknown, who died on July 15, 1851. He was married again on Feb. 19, 1854, to Electa M. Perkins, born about 1837, parentage unknown. He joined the Union Army in 1864 and was wounded May 6, 1864, at the Battle of the Wilderness. He was captured, one leg amputated, and died July 18, 1864, at Libby Prison. His widow was married April 27, 1869, in Lapeer County, Michigan, to Lewis Hancock.

CHILDREN

JOSEPH ALMOND, born Jan. 29, 1857; married Nellie A. Parmeter.

SARAH ELLEN, born April 30, 1862; married John A.L. Morey on July 4, 1889.

41. CHARLES⁷ RATHBUN (Isaiah⁶ Ashley⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born Oct. 28, 1828, at Cicero, N.Y. He went to Michigan with his parents as a boy, and was married there about 1865 to Gloria (or Laura) Deyo (or Deyer), born about 1848, parentage unknown. He died May 11, 1866 (or 1868). There were no known children. His widow was married on April 6, 1870, at Hamburg, Mich., to Asa Whitehead.

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42. RILEY⁷ RATHBUN (Isaiah⁶ Ashley⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born August 27, 1830, at Cicero, N.Y. He went with his parents to Michigan and was married there about 1856 to Julia Fenner, born about 1838, daughter of Alden and Eunice Fenner. They lived in Oakland County, Mich., where he died June 13, 1868. Nothing more is known of Julia.

CHILDREN

MEDORA M., born about 1857; married John W. Moore on Oct. 6, 1878.

JAMES OTIS, born in May 1859; married Esther Sutton.

43. HORATIO G. SPAFFORD⁷ RATHBUN (Isaiah⁶ Ashley⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born April 16, 1834, in Cicero, N.Y. He went with his parents to Michigan and was married there about 1856 to Ella Miller, born about 1840, parentage unknown. Little is known of his life. He apparently had a second wife, Mary, who was living in Detroit in the 1890s, called a widow. She died sometime after 1902.

CHILDREN

JUSTINE, born about 1857; married Robert Morris Bird on Dec. 10, 1873.

CASSIUS, born about 1859; no further data.

NELLIE, born about 1861; no further data.

EDWARD, born in Dec. 1862; married Jennie _____.

WILLIAM, born about 1865; married (?) Minnie _____.

CLARA, born about 1875; alive in 1902.

44. GEORGE W.⁷ RATHBUN (Isaiah⁶ Ashley⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born Feb. 2, 1836, in Cicero, N.Y. He went with his parents later that year to Michigan, where he was married Feb. 2, 1859, in Oakland County, to Azurah Lawrence. She was born Oct. 31, 1839, daughter of Rev. Russell R. and



The 1859 wedding picture of George W. Rathbun and Azurah Lawrence. (Thanks to Ivan and Rosemary McPherson).

Lucinda (Thompson) Lawrence. He died July 30, 1914, at Rochester, Oakland County, and Azurah died two years later on April 2, 1916.

CHILDREN

ADA, born May 24, 1861; married George Hency on Sept. 30, 1896.

IDA (twin), born May 24, 1861; died unmarried on May 19, 1931.

FRANCES, born July 17, 1863; married Hiram Elmer Hadden about 1884.

MINNIE FLORA, born May 23, 1869; married Charles Cole.

EVA A., born in 1871; married John C. Lawrence.

45. CHAUNCEY O.⁷ RATHBUN (Isaiah⁶ Ashley⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born Feb. 21, 1837, in Oakland County, Mich. He was married there on Dec. 27, 1861, to Mae E. Higley, born April 12, 1843, parentage unknown. They moved about 1875 to Stephenson County, Illinois, and later to California, where he died in 1900.

Mae returned to Illinois and died there Feb. 17, 1918. They had no children of their own, but adopted two.

CHILDREN

SARAH A., born Oct. 22, 1860; married Elias D. Miller on Sept. 25, 1892.

EZRA G., born in August 1863; married Mary Green.

46. WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON⁷ RATHBUN (Isaiah⁶ Ashley⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born May 16, 1840, in Oakland County, Mich. He was married there Dec. 24, 1860, to Clarissa E. Potter, born in Oct. 1842, daughter of _____ and Mary Potter. They lived a number of years in Hazelton, Shiawassee County, Mich., and in the 1890s he moved to San Francisco, Cal., and died there some time after 1900. Clarissa apparently stayed in Michigan and was living there in Battle Creek in 1900.

CHILDREN

EWING ADELBERT, born in March 1862; married Emma J. Shafer.

CORA E., born about 1868; no further information.

MYRTLE, born about 1878; no further information.

47. RUSSELL C.⁷ RATHBUN (Isaiah⁶ Ashley⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born May 17, 1842, in Oakland County, Mich., and married Feb. 12, 1873, in neighboring Macomb County to Sarah C. Andrews, born about 1848, parentage unknown. They lived in Clayton, Genesee County, Mich., where both died between 1910 and 1920.

CHILDREN

CLIFFORD V., born in June 1874; married Zelna _____.

ELIZABETH, born in 1879; married (?) John L. Prining on March 24, 1898.

48. MYRON COBB⁷ RATHBUN (Isaiah⁶ Ashley⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born Sept. 11, 1847, in Brandon, Oakland County, Mich. He enlisted in the Union Army toward the end of the Civil War and was injured when he fell 18 feet while shingling a barracks roof in Murfreesboro, Tenn. He was described as five feet six inches tall, with brown hair and blue eyes. After the war, he was married Sept. 22, 1867, in Ortonville, Mich., to Susan Losina Wilson, born Oct. 13, 1842, daughter of Daniel T. and Losina (Servis) Wilson. They lived in Tuscola County, Michigan, where he died Dec. 26, 1886, of consumption (tuberculosis). Susan was married on Aug. 6, 1899, to Jay Porter, and moved to Wisconsin.

CHILDREN

SYLVANUS TABOR, born Jan. 15, 1869; married Marian LeLonde.

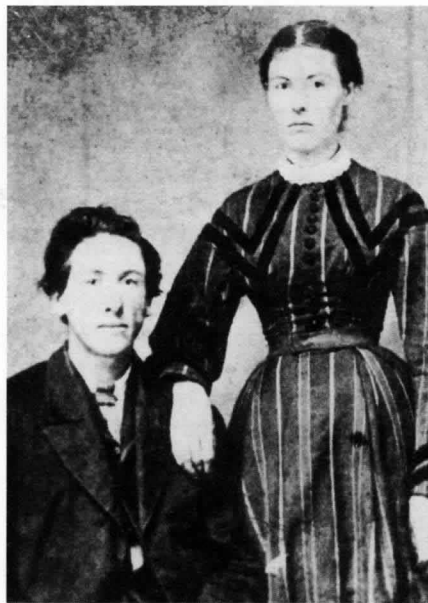
ELLA EVOLA, born June 5, 1873; married Charles McLeod on Dec. 27, 1892, in Bay City, Mich.

49. OSCAR J.⁷ RATHBUN (Ashley⁶⁻⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born about 1827 in Onondaga County, N.Y. He moved to Michigan with his parents and was married Aug. 6, 1853, at Farmington, to Marinda Palmer, born in April 1826, parentage unknown. He enlisted in the Union Army in 1865, but was mustered out six months later with chronic diarrhea, and died on Oct. 10, 1865, a week after returning to his home in Handy, Livingston County, Mich. Marinda lived another 46 years, and died Feb. 12, 1911.

CHILDREN

FRANK A., born Sept. 14, 1856; married Addie Harman.

FRED A., born July 31, 1859; he was mentally retarded, lived with his mother until her death, with his brother Frank until his death, and then went to a mental hospital where he died March 14, 1930.



The 1867 wedding picture of Myron Cobb Rathbun and Susan Losina Wilson. (Thanks to Viola McLeod).

ALICE B., born Aug. 16, 1862; married (?) St. John Sherman on Aug. 10, 1881, in Ingham County, Mich.

CHARLES J., born Feb. 6, 1865; married Gertrude _____.

50. DAVID HENRY⁷ RATHBUN (Ashley⁶⁻⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born March 28, 1830, in Saline, Onondaga County, N.Y. He moved to Michigan with his parents and was married there, in Saginaw County, on July 2, 1857, to Cynthia Morse, born about 1841, parentage unknown. He served in the Army during the Civil War, returned in poor health, and died Oct. 25, 1875. Cynthia was married on Nov., 24, 1879, to William Brown.

CHILD

HARVEY E., born April 19, 1862; married (1) Nellie Woolston, and (2) Margaret _____.

51. HARVEY⁷ RATHBUN (Ashley⁶⁻⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born about 1836 in Michigan. He served throughout the Civil War in the 14th Michigan Infantry, rising to the rank of first sergeant. He was described as more than five feet 11 inches tall, with

light hair and blue eyes. After the war, he was a bartender in the Saginaw area. He never married, and died March 29, 1899, in the Soldiers' Home at Grand Rapids, Mich.

52. DEMING LAMPHERE⁷ RATHBUN (Jonathan⁶⁻⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born July 1, 1824, probably in New York City. He was married Dec. 29, 1848, at Albany, N.Y., to Emily R. Edick, born about 1827, parentage unknown. He was a hatter and lived in Brooklyn most of his life. Both he and Emily died sometime after 1870, when their names appeared in the Federal Census in Brooklyn.

CHILD

TILLIE (Matilda?), born about 1845; no further data.

53. JONATHAN ASHLEY⁷ RATHBUN (Adams⁶ Jonathan⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born June 2, 1812, in Stephenstown, N.Y. He was married Aug. 18, 1836, in Conway, Mass., to Amanda Foote, born March 18, 1806, daughter of David and Betsey (Minor) Foote. They lived in or near Peru, Mass., where he died Feb. 4, 1876, and Amanda died April 30, 1890.

CHILD

LUCY ELLEN, born July 1, 1842; died April 20, 1848.

54. HERBERT DEMING⁷ RATHBUN (Adams⁶ Jonathan⁵ Isaiah⁴ Jonathan³ John²⁻¹), born April 16, 1816, probably in Colchester, Conn. He was married on July 2, 1846, to Joanna M. Turner, born about 1828, parentage unknown. They lived at Montville, Conn., where Joanna died in Sept. 1874, and Herbert on Sept. 30, 1881.

CHILD

WILLIAM HERBERT, born Aug. 1847; married Mary E. Strong.

Wisconsin Cousin Drowns Trying to Rescue Woman

One of our cousins in Wisconsin died a hero's death last January 8, when he and a companion drowned after trying to rescue a woman who had plunged through the ice in a snowmobile in Camp Lake near Kenosha.

David Lee Barhyte, 31, and Edward Gurenczy both plunged into the water when they saw what happened. Their bodies were recovered later in seven feet of water. Ironically, the woman in the snowmobile was saved by other rescuers.

David was the son of our members, Lee and Donna Barhyte. Donna is the

daughter of Ruth Alice⁹ Rathbun (Roswell⁸ David⁷ Lewis⁶ David⁵ Edmund⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹) and the late Donald McPherson.

A rescue squad worker at the scene commented: "These two guys were heroes. They went out to save a life, but it's tragic that they lost their own."

The Barhytes lost another son, James, three years ago in a snowmobile accident.

In addition to his parents and grandmother, David is survived by a daughter, Amber Rose; two brothers, Donald and Bill, and a grandfather, Lee Barhyte.

Rathbun Homes Cited in Iowa

Three early Rathbun homes in Iowa have been cited by the State Historical Society as "Century Homes," having been occupied by the same family for more than 100 years.

One is the Ida Grove residence of William Rathbun (1863-1924), son of William⁶ Rathbun (Job⁵ Gideon⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹).

The second was the home of William's brother John Oscar Rathbun (1856-1934), and the third was first occupied by Walter Francis Lee Rathbun, born in 1866, a stepbrother of William and John, who took the Rathbun name. Both are in Correctionville. All three houses are still owned by descendants.

Our thanks to Darleen Boyle, a descendant of another brother, Henry Rathbun (1861-1935).

In our October 1992 Historian (Obituaries), Roy W. Rathbun was a veteran of World War II, not World War I.

DIED—Feb. 18, 1993, Minnie L. (Danforth) Arnold, 86, of Fort Lauderdale, Fla. She was the widow of Hobart E. Arnold and had earlier been married to a Rathbun. Survivors include a son, Leslie B. Rathbun of Mansfield, Mass.; a daughter Virginia Bogle; five grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; a great-great-grandchild, and two brothers. She was a native of Tiverton, R.I., and formerly lived at Exeter, R.I. We do not know the identity of this family. Can anyone help?

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Rathbun Bible Commemorated

The Block Island Historical Society is making plans to commemorate one of its oldest and most valuable possessions—the 1725 Bible of Samuel Rathbun, youngest son of our immigrant ancestors John and Margaret Rathbun.

Robert Willis, one of our members and an officer of the Society, said a program is being planned for early September to mark the 250th anniversary of the following entry in the Bible:

"I Samuel Rathbun at my death do leave this Bible to my son Samuel Rathbun and at his death to my grandson Walter Rathbun. I have writ this with my own hand Sept. 4, 1743."

Samuel died 14 years later at the age of 85, and the Bible was handed down to his son Samuel and then to his grandson Walter.

As part of the commemorative plans, Bob Willis is hoping to compile a list of all present-day Rathbuns who are descended from Samuel, with short biographies of their lives. If you are a descendant, you can participate by writing to Robert Willis at 95 Depot Street, South Easton, Mass. 02375.

New Data

Sophia⁶ Rathbun (Gideon⁵ Edmund⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹), was married to Reason Tippie on May 15, 1836, in Athens County, Ohio, not July 4 as reported in our April 1983 Historian. July 4 was the recording date. Our thanks to Marsha Magley.

Laura Brainard Comstock, wife of Levant⁶ Rathbun (Joel⁵ Benjamin⁴⁻³ Joseph² John¹), was baptized Sept. 4, 1794, at Charlestown, Montgomery County, N.Y., the daughter of Erastus and Laura (Brainard) Comstock. (Historian of January 1991, page 13).

Obituaries

DIED—Jan. 3, 1993, Eugene W. Rathbone, 71, of Battle Creek, Michigan. He was the son of Eugene W.⁸ Rathbone (Hugo⁷ Charles⁶ Amos⁵⁻⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹). A member of our Association, he is survived by his wife My Rathbone; a son Vernon Rathbone; several stepchildren, and a sister Kathleen Webb. He was an Air Force veteran of World War II.

DIED—Jan. 27, 1993, James Potter Rathbun, 76, at Charleston, South Carolina. He was the son of Walter⁸ Rathbun (Walter⁷ Samuel⁶⁻⁵ Elijah⁴ Samuel³⁻² John¹). Survivors include his wife Elaine; two sons, Walter L. and James P. Jr.; daughter Mary R. Lennon; two brothers, Walter, a member of our Association, and William, and a sister, Grace Reed, an Association member. He was a retired Marine Corps colonel, veteran of World War II and a member of our Association.

DIED—Dec. 5, 1992, Robert Cameron Rathbone, 69, of Arcadia, California. He was the son of Cameron⁸ Rathbone (Francis⁷ John⁶ William⁵ Wait⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹). A long-time member of our Association, he is survived by his wife, Betty; a son Rodney; two daughters, Vicki Zook and Rachelle Rathbone; three grandchildren, and a brother Byers Rathbone.

DIED—March 12, 1993, at Bristol, Pa., Mrs. Rhoda Durkan, 82, a long-time member of our Association. She was a descendant of John Ellis and Rhoda⁵ Rathbun (Joshua⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹). She was an avid genealogist and had done extensive research on the Middaughs (her maiden name), and the Ostrandens, as well as the Rathbuns. She was a specialist in oral history and had done work for several universities. Survivors include two sons, eight grandchildren and a great-grandson, and a sister, Elizabeth Middaugh who celebrated her 99th birthday on March 31.

DIED—Feb. 14, 1993, Mrs. Bernice Cheney, 89, at Hillsdale, Michigan. She was the former widow of Charles⁹ Rathbun (Alfred⁸ Segester⁷ Isaac⁶ Daniel⁵ Valentine⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹). She is survived by her second husband, Keith L. Cheney; three Rathbun sons, John, James and Eugene, all members of our Association; eight grandchildren; several stepchildren, and a brother.

DIED—Jan. 6, 1993, Jean Melda Taft, 81, of Sacramento, Calif. She was the daughter of James Colburn⁹ Rathbone (David⁸ Nathan⁷ Amos⁶⁻⁵ Thomas⁴⁻³ John²⁻¹). She was the widow of Navy Commander Philip Taft, and is survived by a son, Robert Pike; three grandchildren, and a brother, Robert Rathbone, a member of our Association. Mrs. Taft was an accomplished musician, teaching and playing the violin professionally for more than 65 years.

DIED—Dec. 2, 1992, Mary S. Rathburn, 88, at Athol, Mass. She was the widow of Orson S. Rathburn Sr., her second husband, who died in 1970. Survivors include two sons, Orlando Angelini, a member of our Association, and Anthony Angelini; two daughters, Louise Gaudet and Irene Cusato; two stepsons, Harris E. Rathburn and Orson H. Rathburn Jr., a member of our Association; three stepdaughters, Lorraine Anders, a member of our Association; Bonnie Woodbury, and Louise Anne Angelini, wife of Orlando. There are also 45 grandchildren, 62 great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren.

DIED—Dec. 14, 1992, at Johnstown, N.Y., Mrs. Caroline Ada (Rathburn) Brott, 66. She was the daughter of William⁸ Rathburn (Samuel⁷ Joseph⁶ Samuel⁵ Anthony⁴ Samuel³ Thomas² John¹). Survivors include her husband, William Brott; two daughters, Carol Mancini and Nancy King; two sons, Thomas and Donald Brott; nine grandchildren, and a brother, Gaal Rathburn, a member of our Association.

DIED—Nov. 30, 1992, at Westerly, R.I., Mrs. Esther Littlefield, 86, one of the founding members of our Association. She was a native Block Islander and was descended from three of the six children of our immigrant ancestors, John and Margaret Rathbun. Survivors include her husband Thomas Littlefield; two brothers and two sisters; three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Her daughter, Caroline Stelzner, a member of our Association, died in 1991. Caroline's husband, William Stelzner, and their son Daniel Stelzner, are still members.

DIED—Feb. 5, 1993, Dorothy (Rathbun) Smith, 63, of McPherson, Kansas. She was the daughter of Earl⁹ Rathbun (Richard⁸ William⁷ Daniel⁶ William⁵ Daniel⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹). Survivors include her husband, Alan Smith; two daughters; six grandchildren; two sisters, Wilma Key and Mildred Lundblade, and a brother Howard Rathburn.

DIED—Jan. 1, 1993, William T. White, 71, at Florence, Alabama. He is survived by his wife, Mary Frances, a member of our Association, who is the daughter of John Furness and Mary Jane¹⁰ Rathbun (Edson⁹ Curtis⁸ Ransom⁷ Asa⁶ Daniel⁵ Valentine⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹). He is also survived by a son, Donald, and a sister, Jean Erickson.

DIED—Jan. 26, 1993, Russell F. Rathbun, 43, in Johnstown, R.I. He was the son of Russell and Ruth (Gowdy) Rathbun, and is survived by a brother, Francis, and a sister Frances J. Dessaint. We do not know the identity of this family. Can anyone help?

DIED—Feb. 7, 1993, Charles P. Rathbun, 64, at West Warwick, R.I. He was the son of Walter and Veronica (McGinnis) Rathbun, whom we cannot place. Can anyone help? He is survived by his wife, Estelle (Joyal) Rathbun; two sons, Charles and James, and four daughters, Deborah Etchell, Pamela Ham, Diana Badessa, and Virginia Deschene.

People

ISAAC B. RATHBUN and Lillian C. Rathbun were married Dec. 26, 1992, at Cave Junction, Ore. Isaac, a member of our Association is the son of Ernest⁷ Rathbun (Segester⁶ Daniel⁵ Valentine⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹). Lillian is the widow of Kenneth Perry¹⁰ Rathbun (Emmet⁹ George⁸ Vortimer⁷ Lucius⁶ Jonathan⁵⁻⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹). Among those attending were Lillian's daughter, Gail, and son-in-law Fred Reynolds, who live in Alaska.

DAVID MICHAEL RATHBUN and Keri Ann Kish were married Jan. 2, 1993, in Fort Smith, Ark. David, a member of our Association, is the son of David⁸ Rathbun (John⁷⁻⁶ Alfred⁵ Job⁴ Benjamin³ Joseph² John¹). His brother John Rathbun was best man, and cousin Robert Rathbun was a groomsman.

KIMBERLY LYNN RATHBUN and Nicholas Edward Giefer were married Nov. 21, 1992, at Manhattan, Kansas. She is the daughter of Daniel and Pamela Rathbun of Topeka. We do not know the identity of this family. Can anyone help?

DANIEL R. RATHBUN of Pretoria, South Africa, reports that our family's fame has spread worldwide. He recently met a couple from Zimbabwe and one of them said, "Oh, we saw a big monument on Block Island in the United States with the name Rathbun on it. Are you related to that family?" Of course, he is. Daniel is a member of our Association as is his father Daniel⁹ Rathbun (George⁸ Daniel⁷ Greene⁶⁻⁵ Gideon⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹).

FANNIE (RATHBUN) FRY celebrated her 99th birthday Feb. 15, 1993, in a nursing home at Independence, Iowa. Her sister, Fern Freeman, marked her 96th birthday on March 28, 1993, in Carbondale, Colo. They are daughters of Edson⁹ Rathbun (Curtis⁸ Ransom⁷ Asa⁶ Daniel⁵ Valentine⁴ Joshua³ John²⁻¹).

New Members

Dorcas Jones Hendershot
Mountain View, Calif.

Maureen E. Lewnes
San Diego, Calif.

Herbert L. Morgan
Palo Alto, Calif.

Rev. Robert and Shirley Rathbun
Lowell, Mass.

Sandra Rathbun
Beverly Hills, Calif.

Margaret R. Sheldon
Spokane, Wash.

JANICE RATHBUN BORER is justifiably proud of her three sons. Bennett Borer holds a doctoral degree in chemistry and lives in Amsterdam, Netherlands; Matthew Borer recently earned a doctorate in chemistry and is a senior chemist for the Eli Lilly Company in Indianapolis, Ind. Alan Borer, a member of our Association, has a master's degree in library science and is a librarian in Toledo. Janice is the daughter of Herbert¹⁰ Rathbun (James⁹ Chaplin⁸ Saxon⁷ Chaplin⁶ Jonathan⁵⁻⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹).

RATHBURN VILLAGE condominiums have opened in a subdivision of Columbus, Ohio. They are described as "affordable, luxury, attached homes." Does anyone know how they got their name?

WILLIAM RATHBURN caused quite a stir in January when he announced that he was resigning as police chief in Dallas, Texas, to become security chief for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Ga. Rathburn, 51, is paid \$100,000 as police chief, and will earn \$250,000 in his new post. He is a descendant of the North Carolina Rathbone-Rathburn branch which we have been unable to identify.

WE THANK the following members who have sent in family data, clippings, pictures and other items: Gerald Reser, Fred C. Rathbun, Dr. Earl Antes, Robert Rathbone, Edison and Polly Rathbone, Isaac B. Rathbun, Dorothy Mueller, Ben and Rosalie Rathbun, Bob Weatherford, Ray Martin, Roy and Anna May Rathbun, Dorothy Danks, Glenn E. Rathbun, Betty Rathbone, Katherine Coner, Russell P. Rathbun, Rob Rathbun, Helen M. Rathbun, Michael Rathbun, Bill Hosking, Molly Ledeboer, Wayne and Mildred Rathbun, Daniel Rathbun, Jack Rathbun, Bob Willis, Mildred Rathburn, Helene Rathbun, Anna Angelini, Margaret Sheldon, Janet and Grove Rathbun, Juanita Curtis, Victor and Ruth Streeter, Herbert L. Morgan, Mary Francis White, Darleen Boyle, Dorothy Schilling, Donna Barhtye, Lydia Littlefield, Jim and Maxine Stites.

LYNDA RATHBONE of Manhattan, Kansas, was a campaign worker for President William Clinton, and accompanied him to Washington in January to work in the correspondence division of the White House. She is hoping for a permanent position there. We do not know her identity. Can anyone help?

GABRIELLE RATHBURN, aged 10, of Grant's Pass, Oregon, is a state finalist for the Miss America Coed Pageant. She is the granddaughter of Mrs. Eva Rathburn, widow of Richard F.¹¹ Rathburn (Lisle¹⁰ Emmet⁹ George⁸ Vortimer⁷ Lucius⁶ Jonathan⁵⁻⁴ John³⁻²⁻¹).

In our January issue, page 13, we reported the July 17, 1992, marriage of Kimberli Kai Rathbun and William E. Rauckman. Kimberli is the daughter of Monte and Virginia Rathbun of Kennebec, Wash., but we did not know their identity. We do now! Monte is the son of our members Mildred and Wayne⁹ Rathbun (Clark⁸ John⁷⁻⁶ Alfred⁵ Job⁴ Benjamin³ Joseph² John¹).