

*Gift, Dr. D.W. Backus
July 1966*

THE BACKUS FAMILIES
of
EARLY NEW ENGLAND

by

RENO WARBURTON BACKUS

Reno Warburton Backus

1966

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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Dedicated

To Mother and Dad,

To my loyal life partner,

and the fascinating characters resulting...

*Microfilmed
461,286*

EUROPEAN ORIGINS

The family origin of William Backus of Saybrook, Connecticut, and history of his years prior to 1637, are obscure. He has long been recorded as coming to America from Norwich, England, yet the source of that tradition is likewise uncertain. The earliest statement relative to this found by the present writer is that of William W. Backus in his "Backus Family - a Genealogical Memoir", published in 1889, saying "it appears that William Backus...came from Norwich, England." This observation may have been based on simple tradition only.

Information as to the origin of Francis Backus is even more scanty, but since he is shown by Banks as emigrating to America along with William, it is perhaps fair to assume that they had a common family background.

The name Backus appears rarely if at all in earlier English records. Backhouse does appear with some frequency. Research by R. J. D'Arcy Hart, a London genealogist (Ref. 114, p. 197), among the records of Norwich and environs, and carrying the surname Backhouse, Backhowse, Backouse, and the like, most of them seemingly of English origin, but some of them Dutch (identified as "Duche", "Doycheman", "Douchman", "Dowche", etc.) Of these, four carried the name of William, but of the four, three are shown to have died before 1600, and the fourth was a youth in 1560, obviously antedating William of Saybrook.

Again, a Register of Freemen of Norwich, 1548-1713 (Ref. 143), does list several freemen under the name Backhouse or Backhowse in the early 1600's, and two apprentices, Henry Backhouse and Thomas Backhowse, are listed in 1618 and 1629 respectively, the one a cordwainer, the other a tailor. They came to Norwich from the village of Wroxham, about seven miles northeast of Norwich. But a check of records in the parish church of Wroxham by the vicar in 1962 turned up no vital records available until 1726, much too late to show the ancestry of our William or Francis of colonial times.

Lacking concrete information, therefore, simple speculation on the subject suggests three major possibilities as to the background of the Backuses of early New England:

1. They may have belonged to a branch of the historic Backhouse family of England, which has a long and distinguished history. Old records of the family (Ref. 8) indicate that the founder of the family was a Ranulf de Bayou, born about 1020, "step $\frac{1}{2}$ brother of William the Conqueror, by whom he was enriched with honor in Normandy and England". One list among the family notes continues as follows, suggesting the gradual evolution of the name from the French form Bayou or Bayeux to the English equivalent, Backhouse:

"About 1100	Rannelf de Bayeux m to Nedegreet - daughter of Alan de Lincoln	
	Hugh de Bayeux their son died 1196	
	John de Bayeu his son died without heirs male 1248	
1248 (died?)	Stephen his brother and heir male	
1203	William de Baises	
1205	Susperius de Baises m Matilda	
1295	Robertus de Bayeuse	
1297	Henricus de Bakhows	
1540	Thomas Bakhouse	Lancaster
1640	John Backhouse	Yealand and Lancaster"

After 1200, references to the family became more numerous, though with varying spelling of the name. Joseph Foster's "Descendants of John Backhouse, Yeoman, of Moss Side, Near Yealand Redman, Lancashire, 1894", and his "Wills and Administrations of the Various Backhouse Families" (106, 107), list several branches of the family in the counties of Lancashire, Westmorland, Durham, York, Norfolk, Shropshire, Gloucester, Berkshire, and London. A generation ago, Admiral Sir Roger Backhouse of the Royal Navy and his brother Sir Edmund Backhouse, a writer and authority on China, were men of note in England; members of the family are active in London banking circles today. But a review of the Backhouse family records gives no clue to a William Backhouse or Backus of Norwich in the late 1500's or early 1600's. This does not rule out the possibility that our William could have been a member of a more distant and unlisted branch of the family, yet the assumption seems rather thin.

2. A second possibility is that William came from an entirely different English family, one of less note than the preceding, perhaps more restricted geographically, and with the same or a different spelling of the name. Actually no reference to such a family has been found, and a search of London telephone directories today, for example, reveals numerous Backhouse listings, but few under Backus. Altogether this possibility appears less likely than the first.

3. A third possibility looks more promising. The frequency of occurrence of the name Backhaus or its equivalent in German or Dutch suggests the chance value of a search for a German or Dutch connection. Curiously, an accidental contact of the present writer is worth mentioning. While on shipboard returning from China in May, 1941, I met at lunch an elderly Dutch priest who, on hearing the name Backus, asked about my family origin. On answer that our family roots reportedly run back to Norwich, England, he surprised me by saying "Yes, I know your family. I am from the province of Lemberg in southern Holland. Many of my old neighbors there carry the Dutch form of the name. Part of the family left Holland as a result of religious persecution in the 1500's, and settled in the region of Norwich, England. Your ancestors undoubtedly were among that group." Unfortunately no follow-up of that conversation was obtained. An attempt to confirm his statement has more recently been made through the help of the Netherlands Consulate, but this has failed. However, other curious bits of information come to light from time to time. Correspondence with LeRoy M. Backus, Jr. of Seattle, brings word that "Once many years ago, Theodore Roosevelt and my father attended a meeting of the Harvard Club held in Seattle. Upon being introduced, he commented that the Roosevelts and Backuses had common ancestors in Holland....My grandfather, Manson Backus, determined that the name Backus appeared as Bekhius in Holland. He also determined that many people came from Holland to Norwich to work in the weaving trade that was being established there. Of course there was some intercourse because of the matter of religious beliefs."

Of further interest regarding Dutch emigration is this paragraph from a "History of the City and County of Norwich, 1768", p. 225 (author unlisted): "In 1565, the worsted manufacture being much decayed, the Mayor, sheriffs &c. waited upon the duke of Norfolk at his palace, to consult with him what were the properest steps to be taken on this occasion; when it was resolved to invite hither some of the strangers who had fled from the persecution raised against them in the Netherlands by the duke of Alva, and settled themselves at London and Sandwich, under the Queen's protection; who granted them a license for the making of Flanders commodities of wool in her majesty's dominions. Upon the

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uke's application, and at his own charge, the queen granted letters patent for the fixing here thirty master workmen, with ten servants to each of them, in the whole three hundred and thirty Dutch and Walloons; who immediately on their arrival set up manufactures of bayes, says, arras, mockades, &c. and in a very short time their number increased to three thousand and upwards."

So much for routine sleuthing. For the truly romantic-minded, a number of curious legends have crept into Backus family tradition, which should perhaps be flashed here briefly, then retired to the corner what-not along with the rest of the curios. One cousin writes of an ambitious member "who claimed descent from Baron d'Albine and the Emperor Charlemagne." Another historian traces the family to Egbert, first king of England, from him to Cedric, first king of the West Saxons, and tradition says that Cedric was a lineal descendant of Woden (or Odin), who was supposed to be a descendant of the eldest son of Noah...." (125). Others would have us descend from Alfred the Great. And who knows? With all the cross-breeding over the centuries, most people of European descent probably do descend from half the great characters of Europe by this time!

As for coats-of-arms, crests, and the like, two or three different devices have been claimed by various family members, but it is to be suspected that we have merely appropriated those of the various branches of the English Backhouse family, and without a by-your-leave. I have had some correspondence with a member of that family, and he is too much a gentleman to have his heraldic devices stolen.

So, after this meandering, any Backus kinsman who reads this may, for his ancient lineage, choose between a high-born Norman, a sturdy Dutch tradesman, or still another. After all, each of us, by calculating back ten generations, finds 1024 ancestors in his direct line in that one generation alone, which allows considerable leeway if one wants to be fussy!

As this manuscript is about to set out for the printer, the following news clipping quoting the New Scientist, London, begs for inclusion:

" ANCESTORS FOR ALL

The English celebrations of the 900th Anniversary of the Battle of Hastings 1066 have got off to a bad start, with one paper perpetuating the nonsense about who is and who is not descended from the Norman knights who came over with the Conqueror.

Much snobbery, historical research and, no doubt, money is involved in seeking answers to these questions in individual cases to establish special heredity. Yet, even if we confine ourselves to the small band of 25 knights said to be definitely identified by name, it is easy to compute that over 30 generations since the battle the number of their descendants, if there were no intermarriage, would be more than 25 billion, eight times the present population of the world. The chances of any inhabitant of England not being descended from many of these 25 knights are really quite small, unless he can prove that he is a recent immigrant with no English ancestors.

HISTORY OF WILLIAM BACKUS OF SAYBROOK, AND OF HIS DESCENDANTS

Factual details on the life of William Backus are few. He is usually said to have been born in Norwich, England, but clear proof of this is lacking. He was established in Saybrook, Connecticut, by 1637, shortly after the founding of that settlement in 1635, probably having entered America through a Massachusetts port. Whether a wife and family accompanied him, or whether he married after his arrival, is not known.

Several authors (2, 5, 125, 145) state that he came to this country on the sailing ship Rainbow, 250 tons burden, of which Captain Haskins was Master. Col. Banks, in his Topographical Dictionary (67) gives a list of emigrants from various cities and villages in the several counties of England in that period; among those coming from the county of York appear the names of Francis and William Backus, but without place of origin or any other data. It is assumed that this William is the one who settled at Saybrook. But what relationship did Francis bear to William, - father, brother, cousin? We do not know. (For more data on Francis Backus, turn to p. 116.)

In a memoir of LeRoy Manson Backus, Sr., of Seattle, in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, July, 1949, (the material having been submitted by Mr. Backus himself), an interesting reference to William Backus appears, his year of birth being given as 1589/90.* The present writer has been unable to find any confirmation of that date elsewhere in spite of repeated search. So, for solid ground, we again must return to Saybrook and 1637.

The story of Saybrook is that of a seacoast village, now old, still small, on the Connecticut shore of Long Island Sound, at the mouth of the Connecticut River. Barber (68) gives a fine, succinct account of the settlement and its early history (see Appendix A, p. 139). The actual site of the settlement was a broad peninsula or lip on the west bank of the river, measuring about a mile in length, connecting with the mainland by a narrow neck. Convenient for defense against marauding Indians, it did not lend itself to large development.

Records of the early personal happenings at Saybrook are sparse indeed. There are accounts of John Winthrop, The Younger, first "governor" of the settlement, and references to Lion Gardiner, the engineer engaged by Winthrop to construct fortifications (68, 117, 177). There are references also to the three chief patentees of the land grant, Lord Say and Seal, Lord Brook, whose names are commemorated by the town, and Colonel George Fenwick, who visited the settlement in 1636 and 1639 and remained several years on the latter occasion. Beyond these items, little remains of the early local history. In a town meeting of January, 1648, however, an account is given of plans for development of outlying lands around the original settlement. In this, William Backus is found among twelve men assigned land across on the east side of the Connecticut River, in that area which later became known as Lyme (110). Whether this was William's homestead, or was in addition to a home in the town, is not indicated. There is no reference in the town records to his work, activities, station in life, or

*This double date, like others in the volume, needs explanation. Prior to 1753, according to "Old Style" reckoning, the year began on Lady-day, 25th of March. From 1753 on, under "New Style", the year began on January 1. A person born, for example, in February, 1589, Old Style, was recorded as born February, 1590, New Style. Note that the confusion of double year dating applies only to the time up to March 25. Thereafter, the year is the same for Old and New Style. (103, 179)

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HIS DESCENDANTS

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the New England material having been sent to William Backus. The present writer has been the site of repeated visits and 1637.

old, still small, of the Connecticut settlement and its the settlement was about a mile convenient for defense and development.

sparse indeed. "The son" of the town named by Winthrop was also the site of the town of Brook, whose name, who visited the town on a later occasion.

In a town meeting the development of the town Backus is found on the Connecticut River, his was William's name. There is no record in life, or

Prior to 1753, the 25th of March. The person born, for the month of February, 1590, New London, is usually given as the time of his birth. (103, 179)

when or whom he first married, the dates or order of birth of his children, or when their mother died. Older accounts incorrectly show his first wife to have been Sarah Charles; but Jacobus (119) has demonstrated clearly that Sarah Charles was the first wife of his son William, Jr., not of the senior William. By 1659 William, Sr., had taken as his second wife a widow, Mrs. Anne Bingham, variously recorded by earlier writers as Anne (Stenton) Bingham (121, 183, 149), or as Anne (Stetson) Bingham (49). She was the widow of Thomas Bingham, they having been married July 6, 1631, in Sheffield, England. LeBaron C. Colt of Boston (84) has recently called attention to a record in the "Parish Register of Sheffield, New York, Part 1, Baptisms and Marriages, 1560 to 1634-5", p. 247 (158), under "Fenton", the F being repeated in "Fenton", just as L is repeated in "Lloyd" up to the present time. Mr. Colt further comments: "This same book has a complete index. There you will find many Bingham, p. 257, many Fentons, p. 267, but not a single Stenton. The obvious conclusion is that William Backus had a second wife named Ann (or Anne) (Fenton) Bingham, not Anne (Stenton) Bingham." Thomas and Anne (Fenton) Bingham had a son Thomas, recorded in Saybrook, Connecticut, also confusingly, two children of this stepson of William Backus, Sr., later married grandchildren of William.

The records of Saybrook indicate that the shore-line soil was thin and unproductive. In time, some of the Saybrook settlers became desirous of moving to better ground. An opportunity to improve their lot came in the form of warfare between two of their neighboring Indian tribes. Mohegans under a sachem, Chief Uncas, occupied the valley of the Connecticut. To the east lived the Narragansetts, a related tribe, but one with whom they were frequently on bad terms. During this new conflict, the home stockade of the Mohegan was surrounded and placed under siege for some days. A plea to the English colonists from Chief Uncas for help against the Narragansetts caused a relief party to set out from Saybrook under Lieut. Leffingwell, breaking the siege and turning the tide of battle. For this act, the Mohegans later granted to the English a generous tract of land "nine miles square" around the head of the Thames River. A settlement, first occupied in the fall of 1659, was more firmly settled in the spring of 1660, and became the town of Norwich. Thirty-five families (or thirty-eight according to other authority) moved to the new location as original settlers. (117).

William Backus, Sr., did not long survive the transfer, his share of the new land descending to his younger son, Stephen, presumably just coming of age, while his elder son, William, Jr., had a share in his own right. In this manner the two sons appear on the records among the thirty-some original proprietors of Norwich, but William, Sr., does not. Older accounts show him dying in 1664. Mary E. N. Backus in her excellent history of the family gives good reason for believing he died between June 12, 1661, the date of his will, and August 28 of that same year, since an official record of property transfer indicates that Stephen had already succeeded to his father's estate by the latter date. With the colony still in the early stages of governmental organization, legal matters sometimes suffered delay. It was June 21, 1665, before the will of William, Sr., was allowed in the New London Court. A copy of the will is filed in the records of New London Town, Book 1646-66 (150), pp. 143-4, a transcription of which is:

"This may Certifie whom it may concerne That I William Backus Senior being now alive and in memory Doe ordain this my last will and testament wherein my mynd is Declared concerninge the ordaining (or ordering?) and Disposing of my estate whereunto I Doe hereby constitute and appoynt my trustid and welbeloved sonn

Steevin Backus Heier, Executor and Administrator of my whole estate to Dispose thereof according to the order of my will.

And first of all for my wife who hath beene both loving unto me and carefull of me it is my will to provide as comfortable for her as I can, that after my Decease she might be supplied as may be needfull and convenient for her which I conceive might be best attained by her abydeing with my sonn Steeven in the house and soe to partake with him of the estate soe far as shall be needfull and convenient for her according to what shall arise both from the grounde and stock, but if Steeven and she shall part and the occasion thereof Doe arise from Steeven or then (?) by reason of his undutifull cariage towards her or any other way of Discouragement proceeding from him which may occasion her departing from him, Then my will is that Steeven shall provide for her Twenty bushells of corne a yeere that is Twelve bushells of Indian and eight of wheate as also a Third part of the milke of the cattle and a sixt part of garden stuff as squashes and pumpkins turnips and the like During the tyme of her life if she change not her condition, but if my wife shall volluntarily part from Steeven without any just occasion from him my will is notwithstanding that Steeven should provide for her fowre bushells of wheate and sixe bushells of Indian a yeere Dureing the time of her life as aforesaid if she change not her condition. The which if she shall Doe my will is that Steeven shall be cleere of all these ingagements Also my will is that my wife should have the bed and bedclothes (except one pillo for Steeven soe long as she lives although she stay not in the house provided she stay in the Towne, and at her Decease all shall returne to Steeven except her wearing clothes and one pillo; And concerning my sonn William it is my will that he should have all the tooles belonging to the trade of a smith and cutler and what Ivory there is with the bellows, And concerning all the rest of my children as John Renalds and his wife, and Benjamin Crane and his wife and John Bayly and his wife wth all there children which are now liveing and also Thomas Bingham ~~XXX XXX XXXX~~ (three words crossed out, probably 'and his wife') my will is that they should all have three bushells of Indian corne a peece and this corne to be paid wthin the space of five yeers by the Heire and executor. Last of all my will is that my loveing freinds Thomas Leffingwell and John Birchard should see this my will performed according to the true intent thereof. witness my hand this 12th of June Anno Dom. 1661

Witness. Thomas Tracy
John Poast

The marke ^W of
William ^B Backus

Extracted out of the will as returned under the hand of
William Backus and allowed in New London Court held June 21st 1665
L me Obadiah Bruen Recorder"

An inventory of William Backus' estate, dated June 7, 1664, listed and signed by neighbors Thomas Leffingwell and John Birchard, is filed in the Connecticut State Library at Hartford (87). It too is worthy of presentation, as found in Hartford Probate, v. III, p. 49:

"An inventory of the Estate of William Backus deceased
taken by us Thomas Leffingwell & John Birchard
May 7th Anno Do::: 1664.

The house & homelot with a pcell of Land lying	£	s	D
over the River against the homelot	21	10	0
a pcell of Land in the Little plaine	05	00	0
a pcell of Land in the great plaine	03	00	0
a pcell of meadow at Yantick	02	15	0
another pcell at boggy medow	02	10	0

A pcell of upland me
Two oxen
two Cowes & one Calfe
one steare
Cart & wheelles & plo
for a beetle & wedge
two sithes & two sic
two pease hooks & a
one paire of sheetes
one payer more of st
one sheete more
one sheete more
one table cloath
one pillow beare
one old pillow beare
a remnant of kersy
a chest
a old brass pot
two firkins a barrel
a tub & a hogshead
a chest
one rugg for a bed
a bed tikeing three
fower blankets one s
two spinning wheelles
two kettles a pott &
a frying pan a smoot
one porringer a lamp
one glass bottle & a
bowels trayes & dishe
two sives & a halfe
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The Norwich Vital
of Thomas Bingham, Sr

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Two oxen	14	00	0
two Cowes & one Calfe	08	10	0
one steare	02	00	0
Cart & wheelles & plow & a chaine	02	00	0
for a beetle & wedges howes an axe & a spade & a hatchet	01	06	0
two sithes & two sickles	00	08	0
two pease hooks & a Cart rope	00	05	0
one paire of sheetes	00	14	0
one payer more of sheetes	00	11	0
one sheete more	00	07	0
one sheete more	00	16	0
one table cloath	00	04	0
one pillow beare	00	05	0
one old pillow beare	00	01	0
a remnant of kersy	00	08	0
a chest	00	04	0
a old brass pot	00	02	6
two firkins a barrell & a churne	00	07	0
a tub & a hoghead	00	06	0
a chest	00	12	0
one rugg for a bed	01	10	0
a bed tikeing three blankets a boulster & a pillow	04	04	0
four blankets one sheete & a boulster	04	00	0
two spinning wheelles	00	10	0
two kettles a pott & a skillet	01	05	0
a frying pan a smoothing iron & a skimmer	00	07	0
one porringer a lamp & three spoons	00	05	0
one glass bottle & a stone bottle	00	02	6
bowels trayes & dishes & a basting Ladle	00	07	6
two sives & a halfe bushell	00	07	0
a table leafe & a paile	00	06	0
a gun & a sword	01	16	0
a chest & a trammell	00	09	6
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William's estate was valued at 102 pounds. It is his specific bequest to his son William, Jr., "all the tools belonging to the trade of a smith and cutler", along with a bellows and a stock of ivory, which is of interest as being the first indication we have as to his trade. Beyond this, however, we may assume that the family income was amplified more or less by farming, gardening, stock-raising, and perhaps other pursuits, in accordance with the custom of the time.

The Norwich Vital Records (153, v.1, p. 8) list William's wife Anne, "Mother of Thomas Bingham, Sr.", as dying in May, 1670.

The children of William Backus, Sr., and his unknown first wife (precise order, place, and dates of birth of children likewise unknown) were:
 + 1? William, Jr., m. 1) Sarah Charles ca. 1659. 2) Elizabeth Pratt ca. 1664, (see p. 9).
 2? Sarah, m. John Reynolds of Saybrook, later one of the Norwich proprietors. He was made a freeman, i. e. granted full political privileges, Oct. 1663; he d. July 22, 1702. Their children:
 a. John Reynolds, Jr., b. Aug. 1655; killed by Indians Jan. 1675/6.

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- b. Sarah Reynolds, b. Nov. 1656, d. 1703; m. John Post.
 c. Susannah Reynolds, b. Oct. 1658, d. young?
 d. Joseph Reynolds, b. Mar. 1660; d. Feb. 1, 1728/9; m. Sarah Edgerton.
 e. Mary Reynolds, b. Apr. 1664; d. 1727/8; m. 1) John Edgerton, 2) Sam Lathrop.
 f. Elizabeth Reynolds, b. 1666; d. 1702 or later; m. 1) Jonathan Fowler, 2) -- Lyman.
 g. Stephen Reynolds, b. Jan. 1669; d. Dec. 19, 1687.
 h. Lydia Reynolds, b. Feb. 2, 1671; d. after 1702; m. Benjamin Miller.
 Sarah (Backus) Reynolds d. after 1702. (165)
- 3? Mary, b. say 1633 (121), m. Apr. 23, 1655, Benjamin Crane, who was born in England ca. 1639, d. at Wethersfield, 1693. Their children:
 a. Benjamin Crane, b. Mar. 1, 1656; d. June 20, 1693.
 b. Jonathan Crane, b. Dec. 1, 1658.
 c. Joseph Crane, b. Apr. 1, 1661.
 d. John Crane, b. Apr., 1663.
 e. Elijah Crane, b. 1665.
 f. Abraham Crane, b. 1668.
 g. Jacob Crane, b. 1670.
 h. Israel Crane, b. Nov. 1, 1671.
 i. Elizabeth Crane, b. --
 j. Mary Crane, b. 1673.
- Mary (Backus) Crane d. at Wethersfield July 8, 1717. (91)
- 4? Lydia, b. say 1637 (121); m. before the move to Norwich, John Bailey, who d. at Haddam, Ct., 1696. She was living in 1674, d. before 1696. John Bailey was constable at Hartford; was made freeman, 1657; one of the original proprietors of Haddam, 1662. Their children:
 a. John Bailey
 b. Benjamin Bailey
 c. Nathaniel Bailey
 d. Lydia Bailey, m. -- Spencer?
 e. Susannah Bailey, m. -- Hubbard?
 f. Mary Bailey, m. -- Cornwall?
 g. Elizabeth Bailey, m. -- Clark.
- + 5? Stephen, b. ca. 1642; m. Dec. 1666, Sarah Spencer, (see p. 12).
 6? Samuel, "died young" (reported by two correspondents, 58, 151, but apparently erroneously confused with son of William, Jr.)
- References: (See p. 195) 49; 66; 78; 116; 159; 184.

A glance at social conditions of the time of William, Sr., may be of interest. Palfrey (157) tells us that governmental organization tended to be much the same in all the colonies, quickly developing local order, with little reference to any superior authority in England. "In all of them the freemen were the fountain of power. Suffrage was not universal; in every colony there were numbers of inhabitants who were not freemen. After a body of freemen had been once constituted, admissions to it were accorded by the vote of those who were already comprehended in it." The church was central in the life and discipline of the community. The church order of the English Independents, already practiced and proved in the mother country, was adopted, "introduced into Massachusetts by the congregation of Skelton and Higginson....and carried to Connecticut and New Haven by the founders of those colonies. A church was a company of believers, associated together by a mutual covenant to maintain and share Christian worship and ordinances, and to watch over each other's spiritual condition. Persons so pledged and associated were church members; and they, and no others, were entitled to the Lord's Supper, and to present their children for baptism. Each church was an independent body."

As for social manners and customs, Hollister reports that the hard life of

the colonists alte such that even tho nearly all of the same field with th began to assume it formed....distingu or domestics.....T stood next in rank and they were freq the yeomen were we class."

William Backus named as one of the of Mohegan (later Founders' Monument his majority by th about 1635. If tha no evidence that h as Sergeant, Ensig held in the Norwic distinguish him fr show him confirmed Frances Caulkins (respected and gene simply yeoman".

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the colonists altered the daily habits of the wealthier immigrants for a while, such that even though they had servants, "with the exception of the clergy, nearly all of the original proprietors toiled earnestly...frequently in the same field with the servants." But in time old habits returned, and "society began to assume its old English features, and distinct generic orders were formed....distinguished by the terms gentlemen, yeomen, merchants, mechanics, or domestics.....The term Yeoman was applied to that class of freeholders who stood next in rank to gentlemen...Some of the yeomen bore the title of master, and they were frequently called to discharge important public trusts. Many of the yeomen were well born, and had as much pride of family, as the educated class."

SECOND GENERATION

William Backus, Jr.², son of William, Sr., by his first wife (p. 7), was named as one of the original band of Saybrook men who purchased the townsite of Mohegan (later Norwich) from Chief Uncas in 1659, and is so recorded on the Founders' Monument. (149, 1:315; 49) He is therefore accepted as having reached his majority by that year, perhaps before. Jacobus (121) estimates he was born about 1635. If that is correct, he presumably was born in England, for there is no evidence that his father reached the colonies that early. He is often shown as Sergeant, Ensign, or Lieutenant William, on the basis of the positions he held in the Norwich "train band", or local militia; perhaps this was also to distinguish him from the elder William. The Colonial Records of Connecticut (82) show him confirmed as Ensign in May, 1680, and as Lieutenant in May, 1693. Frances Caulkins (78) notes however that though military titles were highly respected and generally coveted among the colonists, he "styles himself in deeds simply yeoman".

Apparently by 1659 he had taken as his first wife Sarah Charles (see p. 5), born October, 1637, in New Haven, and baptized there in October, 1640. She was daughter of John Charles, a resident of New Haven and later Branford. (See account of the John Charles family, Appendix D). Their first child, William³, was born May 11, 1660, probably in Saybrook, the parents awaiting the birth before moving to the new settlement at Mohegan. (78) Two other children, John and Sarah, were born to the couple later, apparently followed soon by the death of Sarah (Charles) Backus, whether from childbirth or other cause is not known. By 1664, William had taken as his second wife Elizabeth Pratt, daughter of Lt. William and Elizabeth (Clark) Pratt (see Appendix D). Her father was an original proprietor of Hartford, a man of considerable standing, and for years a Deputy to the General Court, - the central governing body - of the colony. Elizabeth bore her husband six children; her union with William must have been a propitious one, for their descendants have included many distinguished individuals. Though commonly shown as surviving until 1730, it is more likely that she died in 1703 or thereabouts; this is deduced by Mary E. N. Backus (49) from details in an acknowledgement by Joseph³ Backus in 1704/5 of property deeded him by his father, William, Jr.

The specific occupation of William Backus, Jr., is nowhere mentioned, but that he was well respected is amply clear. At a session of the General Assembly at Hartford, October, 1663, he was "accepted to be made free", that is, granted full political privileges* (82), and was listed as one of but 25 such persons

* Freeman: Originally England allowed colonial land grants only to specified companies which often included members of the nobility. (continued next page)

in Norwich in 1669. He is shown to have filled various official and community posts, - as Marshal of a Norwich Court of Commission; as Townsman (Selectman) during several periods from 1679 to 1686; as member of church committees, on church construction, selection of a pastor, plan for seating of the congregation; as member of a committee to negotiate a dispute with Uncas, the Mohegan Chief, in 1683; and as Deputy for Norwich to the General Court at Hartford in May and October, 1680, October and November, 1683, October, 1684, and October, 1689. The patent of the Town of Norwich, dated 1685 (149, 1:315), shows Ensign William Backus as one of twelve patentees of the town.

He accumulated a sizable amount of property before he died. What he may have possessed as a young man in Saybrook is not known. His original allotment of land in the new settlement of Norwich is given as six acres (78; see also Appendix B). On August 31, 1682, Chief Uncas and his son Owaneco deeded a further 150 acres of land to him, possibly "in connection with the settlement of the estate of Lt. William Pratt", his father-in-law. (49). William was also a member of the group of thirteen men to whom, in February, 1675/6, Attawanhood, also known as Joseph Uncas, another son of the old chief, made over a large tract of land situated northwest of Norwich. This transaction was further confirmed by a will of Joshua Uncas, dated April 29, 1684 (149, 13:236; 85, p. 1290), by which William is said to have received three shares of 1000 acres each. This jointly held tract eventually became the site of Windham. William continued to live in Norwich, but later deeded part or all of this land to his two elder sons, William³ and John³, apparently receiving in return their property in Norwich, in March, 1691/2.

William obviously believed in preparedness. His will dated February 8, 1693, long antedated his death, but was never changed. He must have been a sturdy man, for his length of life became noteworthy. In 1702 he was mentioned as one of the few surviving founders of Norwich; he died early in 1721, having outlived all the rest (147).

His will, on file among the Norwich probate records in the Connecticut State Library, is of interest, giving, as Jacobus has noted, the proof that Sarah Charles was his first wife, and not the wife of his father. The major portions read as follows:

"I William Backus of the town of Norwich Being in my perfect understanding and memory doe make this my last will and testament....I give and bequeath unto my deere and Loving Wife Elizabeth one-third part of the profieth of all my Reall Estate...one-third part of all my personall Estate to be att her Despose.. ..unto my son Nathaniell, all my home lott in Norwich with all the houseing upon it....all my Land on the East side of the Street, where his house standeth, ..unto my two Sonns Joseph and Nathaniell...all my Lands within the Bounds of Norwich that I stand possessed of att my Death... as also....all my Land Lyeing neere the Great Pond at the corner of Norwich Grounds, with all my Interest of Land within the township of Saybrook in Pottapauge Quarter....to be Equally Divided between them for quantity and quallety....unto my Son John and to my Grand Son William....all my Interest of Lands in the Township of Windham to be Equally Divided between them for quantity and Quallety...unto my son John

The governor and certain assisting corporation members were designated "freemen" with power to make laws and govern the colony. But as time passed, membership in the ruling freemen was expanded to include other reputable persons, providing they were members of the church. Political franchise and church membership thus became related. (McLaughlin, A. C.: History of the American Nation, p. 58-61)

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all my Interest of Land which I bought of Mr. James Fitch Senior as may appeare by Deed.....unto my Daughter Sarah thirty pounds - with that which she hath already received as may appeare by my Booke...unto my Daughter Elizabeth Thirty pounds....unto my Daughter Hanah Thirty pounds....unto my Daughter Mary Thirty pounds.....all that doth remayne of my personall Estates, my will is it shall be Divided Equally among all my children, The Reason why in this my will I shall not given to my Son William any Lands is because before this I have Given him Lands as may appeare by Deed of gift; and therefore my will is, that with respect unto my two Sonns William and John, and also with respect unto my Daughter Sarah, what I have given them formerly with that which I Doe give them in this my will, shall be the whole of their portions of my Estate, anything that I received of their Grandfather Charles, his Estate notwithstanding, -

I Doe ordaine and appoint my Deere and Loveing Wife Elizabeth with my two Sons Joseph and Nathaniell to be Executors, to pay both Debts and Legacies; and to performe all that is contayned in this my will: -
Signed and sealed in presence of us --
Richard Bushnell
Elizabeth Bushnell
Further I Do Desire my Trusty and faithfull friends, Solomon Tracy and Richard Bushnell to be overseers with respect to this my will: - And that this the above written is my Declared will in Witness where of I have hereunto sett my hand and Seale this the 8th day of February anno 1693

William Backus" :4

The children of William Backus, Jr.:

- A. By Sarah (Charles) Backus -
 - + 1. William³, b. May 11, 1660; d. Jan. 25, 1742; m. 1) Elizabeth Royce, and 2) Mary Benton. (See p. 13).
 - + 2. John³, b. at Norwich Feb. 9, 1661/2; d. Mar. 27, 1744; m. Mary Bingham. (See p. 14).
 - 3. Sarah³, b. at Norwich June 14, 1663; m. Jan. 15, 1681/2, Lt. Edward Culver, who was b. at New London ca. 1654, d. at Litchfield April 7, 1732, son of Edward and Ann (Ellis) Culver. Moved to Lebanon, 1696, to Litchfield ca. 1723. No record of children. *Yes, there are children. Sarah Culver m. Isaac...*
- B. By Elizabeth (Pratt) Backus -
 - + 4. Samuel³, b. in Norwich May 2, 1665, d. young.
 - + 5. Joseph³, b. in Norwich Sept. 6, 1667; d. at Norwich Dec., 1740; m. Elizabeth Huntington (See p. 16).
 - + 6. Nathaniel³, b. in Norwich April 15, 1669; d. Aug. 16, 1728; m. 1) Lydia Edgerton, and 2) Elizabeth Tracy (See p. 18).
 - 7. Elizabeth³, b. in Norwich ca. 1670; d. at Windham Dec. 29, 1729; m. at Norwich Feb. 10, 1686/7, Capt. (also known as Deacon) Thomas Huntington of Mansfield, who was b. at Norwich Mar. 18, 1664, d. at Windham Nov. 7, 1732, son of Christopher and Ruth (Rockwell) Huntington. Elizabeth's monument calls her "that Gracious Saint of Christ". Children:
 - a. Thomas Huntington, b. April 22, 1688.
 - b. Jedidiah Huntington, b. March 14, 1692/3. (153, 1:18).
 - 8. Hannah³, b. at Norwich ca. 1675 or '76; d. at Norwich Feb. 25, 1752; m. 1) Feb. 17, 1691/2, Thomas Bingham, Jr., b. Dec. 11, 1667, d. Apr. 1, 1710, son of Thomas and Mary (Rudd) Bingham; she m. 2) Mar. 4, 1711/12, Daniel Tracy, b. ca. 1652, d. at Norwich June 29, 1728, son of Lieut. Thomas Tracy; and 3) Nov. 18, 1729, Samuel Griswold, b. at Norwich Sept., 1664, d. there Dec. 2, 1740, son of Lieut. Francis Griswold. They resided at Windham. Children of Hannah by Thomas Bingham:
 - a. Thomas Bingham, b. Nov. 20, 1692.

- b. Jeremiah Bingham, b. July 4, 1694.
- c. Hannah Bingham, b. March 31, 1697.
- d. Mary Bingham, b. Feb. 20, 1698.
- e. Dorathy Bingham, b. Jan. 24, 1700.
- f. Jabez Bingham, b. Nov. 20, 1701.
- g. Nathaniel Bingham, b. June 3, 1704.
- h. Joseph Bingham, b. June 4, 1709.
- i. Thomas Bingham, b. Apr. 1, 1710.
- 9. Mary³, b. at Norwich ca. 1677, d. there Mar. 27, 1752; m. at Norwich, Dec., 1697, Thomas Hyde, who was b. at Norwich, July, 1672, d. there Apr. 9, 1755, son of Samuel and Jane (Lee) Hyde of West Farms (Franklin Children (153, 1:63)):
 - a. Mary Hyde, b. Feb. 1698.
 - b. Thomas Hyde, b. July 29, 1699.
 - c. Phebe Hyde, b. Mar. 16, 1701/2.
 - d. Jacob Hyde, b. Jan. 20, 1702/3.
 - e. Jane Hyde, b. Dec. 4, 1704.
 - f. Abner Hyde, b. Sept. 12, 1706.

References: 49; 121; 183; 159; 79; 60.

Stephen² Backus, second son of William Backus, Sr., and his (unknown) first wife (p. 8), may have been born in England, but Jacobus (121) and others surmise he was born in Saybrook about 1642, and so just approaching his majority as the family moved to Norwich in 1660. Early details about him are missing. But having reached Norwich, he succeeded to the allotment of his father on the death of the latter in 1661, Stephen's elder brother, William, Jr., having had a homesite granted him in his own right. Stephen was thus counted one of the Norwich founders, and so was listed on the Founder's Monument. Frances Caulkins states "The homelot was entered in his name as a first purchaser." The lot lay "upon the pent highway by the Yantic, between the Town Green and the allotment of Thomas Bliss." (See Appendix B). As time passed and Stephen died, the property was sold in 1700, incorporated into a larger structure, and converted into the Leffingwell Inn. This stood for over two centuries, only to give way in 1959 for construction of a new freeway.

Stephen's occupation is not recorded. In December, 1666, he married Sarah Spencer, who was born about 1644, daughter of Ensign Gerard (Or Jared) and Hannah Spencer of Haddam, Connecticut (120; 153, 1:4). (Older records occasionally show him, apparently incorrectly, as married to Sarah Gardiner, daughter of Lion Gardiner, the engineer whom Governor Winthrop brought over to Saybrook.) Gerard Spencer, born in England in 1614, was one of four Spencer brothers who came to America; he settled at Haddam, and died there in 1685 (120). (For more on the Spencer family, see Appendix D.)

In 1692 Stephen moved his family to the new settlement of Canterbury, of which he was counted as one of the founders. There he died in 1695, his estate being settled by agreement between his widow Sarah, his son Timothy, his daughter Elizabeth, and David Knight, Robert Green, and William Baker, the husbands of his daughters Sarah, Ruth, and Rebecca, respectively, the elder son, Stephen, Jr., having died, apparently without heir (121). The date of death of Sarah (Spencer) Backus is not known. Children of Stephen and Sarah (Spencer) Backus:

- 1. Sarah³, b. Apr., 1668; m. Mar. 17, 1691/2, at Norwich, David Knight of East Greenwich, R. I., who d. at Norwich Nov. 24, 1744 (149, 87:269; 153, 1:51; 74). Their children:
 - a. Rachel Knight, b. Nov. 14, 1691.
 - b. David Knight, b. 1693.
 - c. Sarah Knight, b. 1695.
 - d. Jonathan Knight, b. July 2, 1698.

- e. Mary Kr
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- 3. Mary³, b. Nov.
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William³, eldest (p. 11), was born May of his parents to the he married Elizabeth Deborah (Calkins) Royce March 28, 1687/8 (122) London County Court Re Jonathan Royce a beque

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William was appoint also "poundkeeper and he was on a committee

- e. Mary Knight, b. Apr. 2, 1700.
 - f. Hannah Knight, b. Jan. 30, 1702.
 - g. Laranah Knight, b. Feb. 1, 1704.
 - h. Joseph Knight, b. Nov. 7, 1705.
 - i. Benjamin Knight, b. Aug. 13, 1707.
 - j. David Knight, b. Nov. 26, 1714.
 - 2. Stephen³, b. Oct., 1670, d. May 1, 1707. No record of marriage, but some writers list a son, Timothy⁴. (See p. 25).
 - 3. Mary³, b. Nov. 1672.
 - 4. Ruth³, b. Dec. 19, 1674; m. Robert Green, Canterbury.
 - 5. Lydia³, b. Nov. 1677, d. young.
 - + 6. Timothy³, b. Oct. 7, 1682; d. Feb. 28, 1762; m. Sarah Post. (See p. 19).
 - 7. Elizabeth³, b. July 20, 1686; d. Feb. 1748/9; m. Mar. 17, 1713/14, at Norwich, Nathaniel Bond, b. 1686, of Nathaniel and Bethiah (Fuller) Bond, Watertown, Mass.
 - 8. Rebecca³, m. June 13, 1706, at Canterbury, William Baker, Canterbury.
- References: 153, 1:4; 121; 49; 159.

THIRD GENERATION

William³, eldest son of William² Backus, Jr., and Sarah (Charles) Backus (p. 11), was born May 11, 1660, presumably at Saybrook just before the transfer of his parents to the settlement which was to become Norwich. On Nov. 3, 1681, he married Elizabeth Royce, who was born January, 1661, daughter of Jonathan and Deborah (Calkins) Royce, both of English descent (see Appendix D). Elizabeth died March 28, 1687/8 (122), some months after the birth of her third child. The New London County Court Records, 1689-1703, pp. 31 and 41, show that on the death of Jonathan Royce a bequest of fifteen pounds was left to William.

Four years after the death of his first wife, William married Mary Benton, on August 31, 1692. She was a daughter of Edward and Mary Benton (121, 122), the name often being given incorrectly as Dunton (see Appendix D). Mary died Dec. 16, 1757.

When Windham was settled in 1691, after some years of delay, William³ transferred his property in Norwich to his father and received in return one of the land portions assigned to his father in the new territory known as "Joshua's Tract", so becoming one of the 22 original settlers of that town. Larned's interesting History of Windham County (130) related "In 1691...William and Joseph (apparently meaning John³) Backus had broken up land, built houses and established themselves in the Hither-place - on what is now the west side of old Windham Street....In the autumn of 1691, the residents of the New Plantation now numbering about thirty, felt themselves sufficiently established to undertake the management of a township...and made known their wishes." The petition was signed by eleven men, including William and John Backus. The Hither-place, where the home lots of William and John were situated, later became Windham Center; there were two other settlements, one known as the Ponde place, becoming Mansfield Centre, the other, Willimantic. A portion of William's home lot was later purchased in 1700 by Mr. Whiting (later the town pastor) and Ensign Crane, and made over by them to the town for use as a meeting-house common. This was the nucleus of Windham Green, and a meeting house was soon erected. (See Appendix C).

William was appointed Sergeant of the Windham train band in 1692. He was also "poundkeeper and hayward for the great field at the South end." In 1707 he was on a committee to select a burying ground. It is to be assumed that he

maintained himself and family chiefly by farming. Apparently as William became aged, misfortune or mismanagement overtook him, for in April, 1730, "The proprietors of the town, considering that William Backus was one of the ancient inhabitants of the town and now attained to old age and reduced to poverty, give him and his wife Mary, one and one half acres of land and to his son Ephraim after him". This suggests that the parents may have spent their declining years with this, their youngest son. (122) William died at Windham January 25, 1742. The children of William³ Backus -

A. By Elizabeth (Royce) Backus:

1. Sarah⁴, b. at Norwich Feb. 3, 1682/3; believed to have married Nov. 4, 1702, Joseph Bennett of Stonington (149, 80:108).
2. John⁴, born at Norwich, Apr. 3, 1685.
3. William⁴, b. at Norwich Oct. 3, 1687; d. at Windham Apr. 1, 1695.

B. By Mary (Benton) Backus:

- + 4. Samuel⁴, b. at Windham July 5, 1693; m. Dec. 2, 1719, Sarah Gard. (See p. 19).
5. Abigail⁴, twin of Samuel; d. Sept. 26, 1693.
 6. Mary⁴, b. at Windham Dec. 22(?), 1694.
 7. Daniel⁴, b. at Windham Oct. 27, 1696.
 8. William⁴ (2nd of this name), b. Apr. 1, 1697 or 1698; d. Jan. 25, 1707/8. This individual record is in some doubt, as a 3rd William appears below, with date of birth occurring before reported death of the 2nd William.
 9. Hannah⁴, b. at Windham Nov. 1, 1699.
 10. Peter⁴, b. at Windham Apr. 25, 1701; m. Feb. 7, 1728/9, Mary Arnold.
 11. William⁴ (3rd), b. at Windham Apr. 4, 1702; d. Mar. 5, 1776; m. 1) Mar. 24, 1728, Sarah Bennett; 2) Nov. 3, 1742, Mary Dimmock (or Dimock), who d. 1793. Children of William⁴ Backus -
By Sarah (Bennett) Backus:
 - a. Anne⁵, b. June 1, 1732.
 - b. Stephen⁵, b. May 27, 1734.
 - c. Sarah⁵, b. Aug. 15, 1736.
 By Mary (Dimmock) Backus:
 - d. Lydia⁵, b. at Windham Mar. 28, 1745; m. Apr. 30, 1767, Demetrius Backus of Windham, her first cousin.
 - ? (An Abigail, b. Feb. 15, 1701, is listed in the Windham Vital Records as a child of William⁴, but appears inconsistent with record above).
 12. Stephen⁴, b. Windham Mar. 12, 1704; d. Aug. 9, 1783?
 13. Ephraim⁴, b. at Windham May 25, 1708; m. Oct. 10, 1734, Colaty Vining, who was b. ca. 1709, d. Jan. 22, 1801. Ephraim d. Feb. 28, 1785. Children:
 - a. Colaty⁵, b. June 8, 1736; d. Sept. 1796.
 - b. Zerviah⁵, b. May 17, 1738; m. John Rouse?
 - c. Mary⁵, b. Sept. 4, 1740; d. Dec. 15, 1741.
 - d. Rufus⁵, b. Oct. 15, 1742; d. May 4, 1774.
 - e. Demetrius⁵, b. May 31, 1745; d. 1812; m. Apr. 30, 1767, his first cousin, Lydia Backus (see above), who was b. Mar. 28, 1745. Their children:
 - 1) Stephen⁶, b. Mar. 10, 1768, d. Aug. 9, 1783.
 - 2) Shubael⁶, b. Dec. 1, 1779, d. Mar. 27, 1781.
 - f. Mary⁵, b. Feb. 19, 1747/8; d. Mar. 14, 1798.
 - g. Hannah⁵, b. Nov. 16, 1750; d. Dec. 13, 1839.

References: 153, 187, 122, 184, 159.

John³ Backus, second son of William, Jr., and Sarah (Charles) Backus (p. 11) appears in the family archives as a man of sober and steady character. He was

born in Norwich settlers of Windham², dated my Son John and ship of Windham would have been to have died in father's legacy.

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cles) Backus (p. 11),
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born in Norwich February 9, 1661/2, and was another of the twenty-two original
 settlers of Windham, through the gift of 1000 acres from his father. The will of
 William², dated Feb. 8, 1693/4. shows further favor to John in bequeathing "to
 my Son John and to my Grand Son William....all my Interest of Lands in the Town-
 ship of Windham to be Equally Divided between them". The grandson here mentioned
 would have been William⁴, born in 1687, second son of William³; since he is said
 to have died in 1695, it is uncertain what happened to his share of his grand-
 father's legacy.

In the summer of 1691 John, along with his brother William³, went to the
 new townsite, broke up land, built a house, and established his home (130), his
 home lot, like William's, being on the west side of old Windham Street, in what
 is now Windham Center. Some months later, on Feb. 17, 1691/2, he married Mary
 Bingham, who was born July 6, 1672, daughter of Thomas and Mary (Rudd) Bingham,
 and granddaughter of Anne Bingham, the second wife of William Backus, Sr. (73;
 153, 1:50) Her gravestone shows Mary died at Windham, February 19, 1747, survi-
 ving her husband, who died in 1744.

John was active in the community, and apparently well regarded. He was one of
 a committee of three to arrange with workmen for construction of a meeting house,
 and later served similarly in building schools. In 1700 the town proprietors
 "granted to him the privilege of the stream at Willimantic Falls to build a mill".
 (130) He was one of the original members of the church organized in 1720. Larned
 closes John's life story thus: "Mr. John Backus, the last of the original settlers,
 died March 27, 1744, in the eighty third year of his age, 'having served his gen-
 eration in a course of probity and piety'....of his daughters...all were women
 of superior energy and character". Children of John³ and Mary (Bingham) Backus:

1. Mary⁴, b. Nov. 8, 1692, d. Oct. 19, 1770; m. Dec. 3, 1712, Joshua Ripley,
 Jr., of Windham, son of Joshua and Hannah (Bradford) Ripley, born May
 13, 1688, died Nov. 18, 1773. Their children:
 - a. Mary Ripley, m. Joshua Abbe.
 2. Lydia⁴, b. Jan. 15, 1695, d. Oct. 25, 1750; m. Oct. 24, 1717, Col. Thomas
 Dyer of Windham, b. 1694, d. 1766, son of Deacon Joseph and Hannah
 (Baxter) Dyer of Weymouth; he was a shoemaker, a colonel in the French
 and Indian War. Their children:
 - a. Mary Dyer, m. Rev. Stephen White; son, Judge White of Connecticut
 Supreme Court.
 - b. Eliphalet Dyer, b. 1721, a lawyer, judge, statesman.
 - c. Lydia Dyer, b. 1724. (102)
 - d. Eunice Dyer, b. 1727, m. Ebenezer⁴ Backus (see p.23).
 3. John⁴, b. and d. Mar. 20, 1697.
 - + 4. John⁴, b. Aug. 17, 1698, d. June 17, 1769; m. Sibyl Whiting (see p. 20).
 5. Abigail⁴, b. July 3, 1701; m. Aug. 18, 1725, Elijah Hurlburt of Windham,
 who was bap. at Fairfield Nov. 3, 1696, d. at Woodstock Aug. 11, 1763.
 Their children (74):
 - a. Elisha Hurlburt, b. 1726.
 - b. Abigail Hurlburt, b. 1727/8.
 - c. Ann Hurlburt, b. 1730.
 - d. Elijah Hurlburt, b. 1731/2.
 - e. Prudence Hurlburt, b. 1734.
 - f. Mary Hurlburt, b. 1737.
 - g. Nathaniel Hurlburt, b. 1739.
 - h. Jerusha Hurlburt, b. 1741.
 - i. Chloe Hurlburt, b. 1743.
 6. Jerusha⁴, b. Sept. 29, 1704, d. Sept. 24, 1744; m. Oct. 20, 1742 (as his
 second wife), Daniel Stoughton of Windham.
 7. Zerviah⁴, b. Aug. 10, 1709; m. June 2, 1738 (as his second wife) Rev.
 Hezekiah Lord of Preston, son of Ensign James Lord of Saybrook.
 8. Nathaniel⁴, b. June 10, 1712; d. Aug. 15, 1720.

References: 159, 184, 130.

Joseph³ Backus, second son of William, Jr., and his second wife Elizabeth (Pratt) Backus (p. 11), was born September 6, 1667, at Norwich, and lived out his life there, dying in December, 1740 (159, 49). On April 9, 1690, he married Elizabeth Huntington, who was born October 6, 1667, and died August 24, 1762, daughter of Simon and Sarah (Clark) Huntington. Her family was one of some prominence. The three Huntington brothers, Christopher, Simon, and Thomas, came early to Connecticut with their mother, a widow, their father having died during the Atlantic crossing. The young men established themselves quickly, Simon becoming the first of a long line of deacons (78, pp. 179-85).

Joseph received a considerable legacy of property from his father, including a tract at Saybrook and two or more areas at Norwich. He appears to have been able, ambitious, and well respected. In 1699 the town proprietors granted him "so much land...as may be needful for him to set up a shop and coal-house upon, provided he improves it for the above use." The grant was confirmed a year later. He was made a Lieutenant in the train band in 1708. At various times he was mentioned as moderator of a town meeting, and as being active in church and community affairs. He was a Representative in the General Assembly of the colony on numerous occasions between 1704 and 1733, and had a long record of service as Justice of the Peace. Caulkins relates (159) that in April, 1730, all the freemen were enrolled. "The first on the list, and probably so placed in respect to respect and dignity, was Joseph Backus, Esq., the three reverend ministers, Lord, Willes, and Kirtland, and the two deacons, Simon and Christopher Huntington."

On one occasion a neighbor did take exception to Joseph's conduct. Mary Perkins (160), in discussing town customs, relates that goat-raising "became a source of profit, and though no laws had then been made for their restraint, who can blame Joseph Tracy for impounding fifty-four belonging to Joseph Backus, which like an invading army invaded his lands in 1722"!

In matters of church polity, Joseph was clear-thinking and determined when need arose. The church of the New England colonies was generally congregational in organization, each church group being virtually independent, finding its own pastor, and accepting as members only those who had been well scrutinized by the membership, and approved by their vote. By 1708, certain leaders in the church felt it was time for a broader organization, to which the individual congregations would be subordinate. A council of delegates, 12 ministers and 4 laymen, met at Saybrook and drew up a plan for regulating the churches, known as the Saybrook Platform, giving dominant power to the ministers. They then managed to get it confirmed by the General Assembly as the law of the colony, but with the proviso that any church dissenting from this might worship in its own way. The Norwich pastor presented the Platform to his congregation without mentioning the proviso, hoping for acceptance. The church had been of "independent Congregational order...and jealous of extraneous influences, whether civil or ecclesiastical. The members...denied the jurisdiction of magistrates and presbyteries." (78) Hearing their pastor urge acceptance of the Platform, the two Norwich Representatives in the Assembly, Richard Bushnell and Joseph Backus, rose in meeting, vigorously stated their objections to the plan, and told of the proviso permitting them to take independent action. Dissension in the church was long and painful; the pastor was eventually dismissed, a new pastor installed in 1717, and at the same time, the church "renounced the Saybrook Platform as their code of faith."

Joseph's will, signed Dec. 5, 1740, the month of his death, left legacies to his wife and children, and made his wife and youngest son, Ebenezer, executors.

Children of Joseph³

1. Joseph⁴, b. 1721/2, Ha at Norwich Edwards, ha Simon⁴. Jos Backus of that year, received,
 - a. Willie
 - b. Elisha
 - c. Mary⁵
 - d. Hannah
 - e. Joseph
- + 2. Samuel⁴, b. 1715/16 (sa
3. Ann⁴, b. Jan. Apr. 25, 17 there Mar. Adgates we came soon
 - a. Ann L
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 - c. Lucy
 - d. Asa L
 Also order and ha
- + 4. Simon⁴, b. Fe
5. James⁴, b. A per; m. at (49) orl72 July 27, 18 twenty year remaining
 - a. Joseph
 - b. Mary⁵
 - fat
 - c. Ezekie
 - d. Lois⁵
 - e. Mary⁵
6. Elizabeth⁴, b Norwich Sep 1702, and and Elizab
 - a. Elisha
 - b. Andre
 - c. Ann, 1
7. Sarah⁴, b. Ju Isaac Bing son of Dea and grandse
- + 8. Ebenezer⁴, b. 2) Eunice 1

and wife Elizabeth
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Joseph Backus,
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, executors.

- Children of Joseph³ and Elizabeth (Huntington) Backus, all born at Norwich:
1. Joseph⁴, b. March 1690/1, d. at Norwich March 30, 1761; m. March 1, 1721/2, Hannah Edwards (153, 1:27), b. at Hartford, Jan. 3, 1695/6, d. at Norwich Oct. 17, 1747, daughter of Richard and Mary (Talcott) Edwards, half-sister of Rev. Timothy Edwards and aunt of the wife of Simon⁴. Joseph was a graduate of Yale in 1718, became known as "Lawyer Backus of Norwich". Moved to Hartford Co. in 1724, became sheriff in that year, but was removed in 1732 for failure to account for monies received, later returned to Norwich. Children of Joseph⁴ and Hannah:
 - a. William⁵, b. at Norwich Apr. 20, 1723.
 - b. Elisha⁵, b. at Norwich Oct. 18, 1724.
 - c. Mary⁵, bap. at Hartford, Oct. 31, 1725.
 - d. Hannah⁵, bap. at Hartford, Apr. 21, 1728.
 - e. Joseph⁵, bap. at Hartford, Aug. 22, 1731.
 - + 2. Samuel⁴, b. Jan. 6, 1693/4, d. Nov. 24, 1740; m. Elizabeth Tracy, 1715/16 (see p. 20).
 3. Ann⁴, b. Jan. 27, 1695/6, d. at Norwich Aug. 24, 1761; m. at Norwich. Apr. 25, 1717, Nathaniel Lathrop, b. at Norwich, July 15, 1693, d. there Mar. 20, 1774, son of Samuel and Hannah (Adgate) Lathrop. The Adgates were among the original proprietors of Norwich; the Lathrops came soon after the founding. Children of Ann and Nathaniel Lathrop:
 - a. Ann Lathrop, b. Aug. 13, 1735, d. Oct. 23, 1736.
 - b. Chloe Lathrop, b. Aug. 30, 1736.
 - c. Lucy Lathrop, d. Apr. 7, 1747.
 - d. Asa Lathrop, d. Nov. 30, 1761.Also Elizabeth, Nathaniel, Zebadiah, Azariah, Mary, and Amy, order of birth, etc., unknown. Amy m. William Bradford Whiting, and had 12 children. (58).
 - + 4. Simon⁴, b. Feb. 11, 1700/1, d. 1745/6; m. Eunice Edwards (see p. 22).
 5. James⁴, b. Aug. 14, 1703, d. at Norwich, Oct. 15, 1753, of camp distemper; m. at Norwich Nov. 1, 1747, Lydia Huntley, who was b. ca. 1722 (49) or 1727 (121), dau. of David and Mary (Munsell) Huntley, and d. July 27, 1811. James' estate was administered by his brother Ebenezer; twenty years later the property was distributed to his wife and two remaining children, Ezekiel and Mary. Children of James (153, 2:97):
 - a. Joseph⁵, b. Sept. 14, 1748; d. young.
 - b. Mary⁵, b. Nov. 28, 1749, d. Oct. 25, 1753, 10 days after her father.
 - c. Ezekiel⁵, b. Feb. 14, 1751.
 - d. Lois⁵, b. Aug. 9, 1752; d. young.
 - e. Mary⁵, b. Jan. 1, 1754; m. James Malsor Camp.
 6. Elizabeth⁴, b. Oct. 27, 1705; d. at Norwich Aug. 7, 1787; m. at Norwich Sept. 26, 1725, Cyprian Lord, who was b. at Saybrook March 20, 1702, and d. at Norwich, Nov. 27, 1743, son of Norwich pastor Benjamin and Elizabeth (Pratt) Lord. Children of Elizabeth and Cyprian Lord:
 - a. Elisha Lord, b. Aug. 10, 1726.
 - b. Andrew Lord, an attorney.
 - c. Ann, b. 1730.
 7. Sarah⁴, b. July, 1709, d. Nov. 22, 1790; m. at Windham, July 6, 1732, Isaac Bingham, who was b. at Windham, July 1, 1709, d. Jan. 6, 1798, son of Dea. Nathaniel and Sarah (Lobdell) Bingham of Scotland, Conn., and grandson of Thomas Bingham, Sr., of Norwich. No children.
 - + 8. Ebenezer⁴, b. March 30, 1712, d. Nov. 4, 1768; m. 1) Abigail Trumbull, 2) Eunice Dyer, and 3) Sarah Clark (see p. 23).

References: 153, 1:49; 121; 49; 159.

Nathaniel³, third son of William, Jr., and his second wife, Elizabeth (Pratt) Backus (p. 11), was born at Norwich April 15, 1669, and lived out his life there, dying August 16, 1728. He married at Norwich, first, Lydia Edgerton, born April, 1675, daughter of Richard and Mary (Sylvester) Edgerton. Lydia died about 1701; and on July 7, 1702, Nathaniel married second, Elizabeth Tracy, born at Norwich July 7, 1676, and dying there Nov. 11, 1739, daughter of John and Mary (Winslow) Tracy. The Edgertons and Tracys were original proprietors at Norwich; Mrs. John Tracy was a niece of Governor Edward Winslow of Plymouth.

Nathaniel, like his elder full-brother Joseph, appears to have been well regarded by their father, and received a generous legacy of property, which he seems to have administered well. Along with his mother and Joseph he was named an executor of his father's will. Miss Caulkins notes that Nathaniel and his father were two of the original church members surviving and active in 1717. He is mentioned as one of the original proprietors at what became known as The Landing, later New Chelsea (78), his home being on "Union, not far from the corner of Main Street." One might assume that he was a good parent, for his immediate descendants are described as men of some means and influence.

Nathaniel's will, dated July 10, 1728, named his wife, Elizabeth, his sons Nathaniel, Josiah, Jabez, his daughters Lidia, Mary, Elizabeth, with Nathaniel as executor. The will was recorded December 25, 1728. (4). The children of Nathaniel³ Backus -

A. By Lydia (Edgerton) Backus:

1. Daniel⁴, b. at Norwich Dec. 26, 1694; d. Mar. 29, 1694/5.
2. Lydia⁴, b. July 4, 1697; m. May 10, 1720, David Birchard of Norwich, "possibly son of Samuel and Anna (Calkins) Birchard". Their children:
 - a. Lydia Birchard, b. July 13, 1721.
 - b. Jonathan Birchard, b. Apr. 6, 1724.
 - c. Jabez Birchard, b. July 9, 1726.
 - d. Samuel Birchard, b. Mar. 19, 1730.
 - e. Anne Birchard, b. Apr. 3, 1732.
 - f. Elijah Birchard, b. July 25, 1738.
 - g. Eunice Birchard, b. Feb. 1, 1741.
3. Nathaniel⁴, bap. Aug. 9, 1701, d. early.

B. By Elizabeth (Tracy) Backus:

4. Nathaniel⁴, bap. May 2, 1703, d. early.
- + 5. Nathaniel⁴, b. Apr. 5, 1704, d. Sept. 2, 1773; m. Jan. 6, 1726, Hannah Baldwin (See p. 23).
6. Mary⁴, b. Oct. 12, 1707, d. June 12, 1752; m. Dec. 22, 1730, Nathaniel Rudd, son of Nathaniel and Abigail (Hartshorn) Rudd. Children:
 - a. Nathanael Rudd, b. Nov. 2, 1731.
 - b. Elizabeth Rudd, b. Feb. 27, 1733.
 - c. Elisha Rudd, b. Jan. 23, 1735.
 - d. Mary Rudd, b. Mar. 11, 1737.
 - e. Andrew Rudd, b. May 12, 1739.
 - f. Sarah Rudd, b. May 20, 1741.
 - g. Jabez Rudd, b. Oct. 21, 1744.
 - h. Lydia Rudd, b. Oct. 5, 1747.
 - i. Anne Rudd, b. July 3, 1749.
 - j. Mary Rudd, b. Jan. 27, 1752.
7. Elizabeth⁴, b. Sept. 9, 1709, d. Nov. 26, 1767; m. at Norwich, Dec. 7, 1755 (as second wife) John Hyde, b. Dec. 5, 1698, d. Oct. 22, 1762, son of John and Experience (Abell) Hyde. No children recorded.
- + 8. Josiah⁴, b. Oct. 10, 1710, d. June 18, 1779; m. Nov. 3, 1732, Love Kingsbury (See p. 24).
- + 9. Jabez⁴, b. Aug. 1712, d. July 15, 1761; m. 1) Eunice Kingsbury, and 2) Esther (Clark) Lathrop (see p. 24).

10. Elizabeth⁴
References: 153,

Timothy³ Backus was born at Norwich live in Canterbury Timothy. He married Dec. 1, 1686, and Post of Norwich. that some time after one-half shares of bury in 1712-13, moderator at one a position opposed maintained his share Backus, born at C

1. Stephen⁴, Abigail Brown of
2. Sarah⁴, b. Possibly
3. Thomas⁴, b.
4. Mary⁴, b. Canterbury
5. John⁴, bap.
- + 6. Timothy⁴, b. Canterbury
- + 7. John⁴, b. (see p.
8. Eunice⁴, b. References: 153,

Samuel⁴ Backus (p. 14), was time there, dying married Sarah Gardner Rhode Island.

It is assumed devoted to the church commendatory remarks community affairs difficulty under detailing local Backus was arranged again later, "Widow Backus though put the temerity, in Joshua Sawyer, effected their estate bound over as an It was at about 17

10. Elizabeth⁴, bap. Dec. 8, 1717.
References: 153, 1:55; 159; 79.

Timothy³ Backus, second son of Stephen² and Sarah (Spencer) Backus (p. 13), was born at Norwich Oct. 7, 1682, and along with his father's family went to live in Canterbury; he died there Feb. 28, 1762. He is often styled Deacon Timothy. He married at Canterbury Jan. 26, 1708/9, Sarah Post, who was born Dec. 1, 1686, and died Feb. 24, 1760, daughter of John, Jr., and Sarah (Reynolds) Post of Norwich. Larned relates that he was active in Canterbury affairs, and that some time after the original settlement, was allotted an additional one and one-half shares of previously unallotted land. He joined the church at Canterbury in 1712-13, was active in church matters, became a deacon, served as church moderator at one time. With the controversy over the Saybrook Platform, he took a position opposing the Platform, aligned himself with the Separatists, and maintained his stand until his death. Children of Timothy and Sarah (Post) Backus, born at Canterbury:

1. Stephen⁴, b. Nov. 10, 1709, d. at Canterbury, 1751; m. Oct. 11, 1750, Abigail Brown, b. Mar. 31, 1726, possibly dau. of John and Abigail Brown of Canterbury. She married second, 1752, Samuel Standish.
 2. Sarah⁴, b. Apr. 5, 1711; m. July 9, 1729, John Pike of Canterbury. Possibly m. June 5, 1765, Deacon Stephen Frost of Canterbury.
 3. Thomas⁴, bap. July 12, 1713.
 4. Mary⁴, b. Jan. 31, 1713/14, d. ca. 1772 at Preston; m. 1)? -- Hide of Canterbury, and 2) Feb. 7, 1750, Thomas Tracy of Preston.
 5. John⁴, bap. Feb. 27, 1715, d. young.
 - + 6. Timothy⁴, b. Nov. 18, 1717, d. Mar. 5, 1790, bur. at Cleaveland Cemetery, Canterbury; m. Nov. 14, 1739, Mary Bacon (see p. 25).
 - + 7. John⁴, b. May 5, 1720, d. before 1790; m. Joanna (Cleveland) Downing (see p. 26).
 8. Eunice⁴, b. 1722, m. June 25, 1744, David Cleveland of Canterbury.
- References: 153, 1:4; 159; 130; 66; 121; 179.

FOURTH GENERATION

Samuel⁴ Backus, first son of William³ by his second wife, Mary (Benton) Backus (p. 14), was born at Windham July 5, 1693 (184; 85), and spent his lifetime there, dying at 84, on Oct. 14, 1776 (149, 71:178). On Dec. 2, 1719, he married Sarah Gard, whose family origin is not known, but may have been in Rhode Island.

It is assumed that he made his living by farming. He apparently was not devoted to the church, for he is unmentioned in the church annals, and the commendatory remarks often applied to other members of the family in records of community affairs are notably lacking in regard to Samuel. He must have had difficulty under the stern restraints of colonial society, for Larned, in detailing local events at Windham sometime in the 1720's notes that "Samuel Backus was arraigned for speaking 'vile, ungodly, and profane language.'" And again later, "Windham did not escape occasional outbreaks of rowdiness. Samuel Backus though punished by imprisonment and hard labor...as before related, had the temerity, in 1730, to join with two other lads, William Backus, Jun., and Joshua Sawyer, - steal the keys of the gaol and let out certain prisoners, who effected their escape from justice. For this high-handed offense, Backus was bound over as an apprentice or servant for three years to Mr. Zedediah Strong." It was at about this same time that the town fathers found it necessary to give

mothy ³ ..William ¹	54
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" "	32
en ⁸William ¹	111
" "	111
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" "	111
en'r ⁴ ...William ¹	49
t ⁶William ¹	63
er ⁵ ...William ¹	63
len ⁹ ...William ¹	114
" "	114
mon ⁸William ¹	89
John ⁴ ...William ¹	132
ez ⁶ ...William ¹	132
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