

# the RUCKER FAMILY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOL. 27, NO. 2, AUGUST 2016

RUCKER STEAMBOAT

CAPTAINS

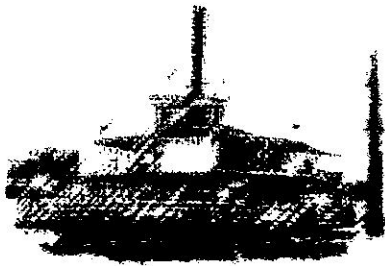


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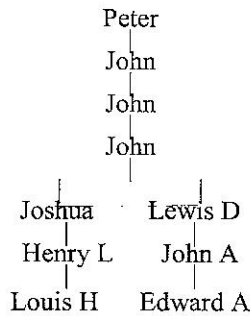
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**Early Chicago Ruckers**  
by Bill Smith

Following this article are three additional articles concerning the same “branch” of the Rucker family. The early Chicago Ruckers and Louisiana Ruckers in these articles are descendants of two brothers, Joshua Rucker and his younger brother, Lewis Dawson Rucker, both born in Virginia, but while remaining in contact with one another, the families chose vastly different occupations at opposite ends of the Mississippi River. Below is a simplified chart showing these brothers’ descent from Peter Rucker, the Virginia immigrant.



Joshua Rucker (1786-1859) and his wife Elizabeth Chambers  
*Continued on page 12*

**John Alphus Rucker**  
by Christopher Rucker

John<sup>6</sup> Alphus Rucker, patriarch of the family of Mississippi River steamboat captains, is descended from Peter as noted by Sudie Wood (p. 39 of *The Rucker Family Genealogy*): John<sup>6</sup> Alphus, Lewis<sup>5</sup> Dawson, John<sup>4</sup>; John<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>. We can add to the incomplete information provided by Wood. He is named in the 1850 census of Scott Co., KY, living with father Louis D., stepmother Hester D. (his mother was Amelia, the second of Louis’ three wives, not Margaret, his first, as claimed by Wood: Amelia Beauchamp married Louis D. Rucker 8 Jan. 1816 at Fayette, KY according to the Franklin County marriage bonds. The oldest child in the 1850 census, Henry, was born about 1820) and siblings Henry, Fanny, Margaret, Martha D. and Joseph Barnett. John Alphus was still at home in the 1860 census. He was a sergeant in Co. H, 2<sup>nd</sup> Reg. KY Mounted Rifles, CSA, during the Civil War; his  
*Continued on page 13*

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married in 1804 in Allen Co., Kentucky. They would have a large family of eleven children. Henry Louis their oldest child, was born in 1809 in Kentucky, and the other subject of this article is his younger brother, Edward Augustus (1821-after 1870).

Henry L. Rucker was married to four women (Mary G. Heckenruder, Mary Burnap, Mary P. Fitch, and Mary Kellog), had thirteen children, but only four survived childhood. Rucker's only son to survive, Louis Henry Rucker, is the subject of the last section of this article.

Henry Louis Rucker was quite an influential man in Chicago in the first several decades of the city (Chicago was incorporated in 1833). Henry L Rucker served as an alderman for six one-year terms beginning in 1838 and ending in 1849. In that year he became a county judge and served until 1857. He apparently served simultaneously as a police magistrate in 1851 (who mainly tried violations of city ordinances and lower grade criminal offences). Rucker was also involved in the temperance movement, being an officer in the 1,100-member Washington Temperance Society in the 1840s.

As an other indication of his success, the 1860 census, Judge Rucker's personal and real property value was \$30,000, which

translates into 2016 dollars as \$818,000. Additionally, for much of the 19th century, Rucker Street in Chicago was in the middle of the oldest part of Chicago (it would later be renamed Centre Avenue).

The most famous, or infamous case associated with Judge H. L. Rucker, was the 1855 Lager Beer Riots. The cause for the riots was two-fold. First, the city decided to enforce a law that stated all taverns should close on Sunday. This was apparently serious to the German and Irish communities in Chicago. Secondly, the city council raised the city's annual liquor license from \$50 to \$300. The combination was apparently more than certain people could take and riots ensued. This marked Chicago's first civil disturbance, on April 21, 1855, resulted in 1 death, 60 arrests, and the beginning of political partisanship in city elections. The riot mobilized Chicago's immigrant voters. In March 1856, a heavy German and Irish turnout defeated the 'nativists,' causing the \$50 liquor license to be restored. More important was the renewed attention to city elections on the part of political party leaders, ending the era of municipal nonpartisanship. Never again would city elections be of such limited interest."

Judge Rucker's participation was to attempt to try some of the 200 tavern owners who had not paid

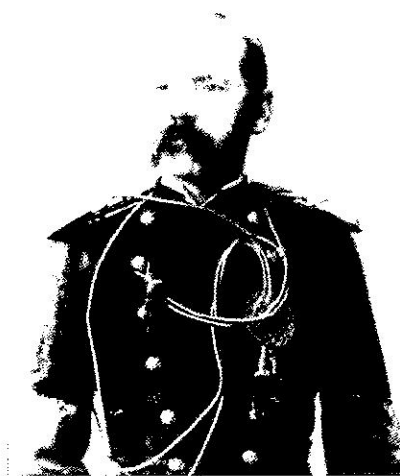
their liquor license. Some of the rioters actually entered the chambers and had to be forcibly dragged from court and jailed.

I was able to find less information about Henry's younger brother Edward. He was married to Susan (1860 IL Census), who had two children, who were probably not Edward's children (judging by his and their ages). They were living the Chicago's 2nd Ward in 1850. Edward's mother Elizabeth was living with them (though she had been living with Louis in the 1850 Census). He was the Town Clerk of Chicago in 1844 and 1845, and as was his brother, a president of a temperance organization.

The last section of this branch of the Rucker family that I will describe concerns one of the few children of Judge Henry Louis Rucker who survived childhood. Louis Henry Rucker was born in Chicago in 1842 to Judge Rucker and his first wife, Mary G. Heckenuder. Louis made a career in the U. S. Army, and eventually was buried in the San Francisco National Cemetery, along with his second wife, Cinderella Rosette Rucker (1847-1925) whom he married in Illinois in 1872. Rucker began his career in the Civil War and was involved in the Gettysburg campaign and against John Singleton Mosby in norther Virginia. Rucker would retire with the rank of Brigadier General, which

was confirmed in 1903.

Rucker and his wife had at least two sons, John Rosette Rucker (1874-1952) and Shelby Louis Rucker (1880-1938). Sudie Rucker, in *The Rucker Family Genealogy*, mentions a 1st wife (Gertee Briggs) and a 3rd son (Col. William Rucker), though I was unable to find any other record of them.



Gen. Louis Henry Rucker (1842-1906)

I discovered, perhaps, the most note worthy events of his career when I ran across a these quotes "Rucker saw a good deal of service with the colored troops on the Western frontier . . . when he served in several Indian wars" and Gen. Rucker served as "Superintendent of Yosemite Nat'l Park from June to September 1900 [with the Buffalo soldiers]." When I first saw the quote referring to "colored troops," I could only think of the Buffalo Soldiers, originally members of the U.S. 10th Cavalry Regiment (and remembering

Rucker was a cavalryman), which had been formed in 1866 at Ft. Leavenworth, KS. The Native American tribes had called the "Negro Cavalry." These men, typically commanded by white officers, but eventually by black as well, served in the Indian Wars from 1866 until the early 1890s. They also served as park rangers in Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National parks.

\* \* \* \* \*

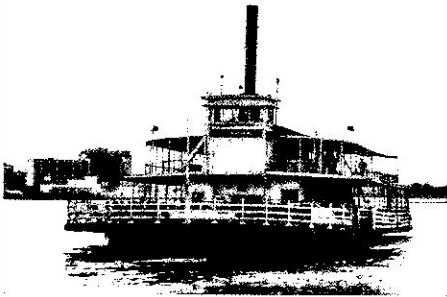
### John Alphus Rucker

*Continued from page 11*

younger brother Joseph B. was a private in the same unit. John married the widow Rachel S. Harmanson Boone, daughter of a Louisiana state senator and U.S. congressman, 16 May 1866 at Avoyelles, LA (LA Marriages 1718 - 1925), the second of her four marriages (Rachel's first husband, Richard M. Boone, was the captain of an artillery battery during the Civil War's siege of Port Hudson, when a Federal 30 pounder Parrott shell took off most of his right leg. Despite a surgical amputation, he died of his wound several days later, but not before he ordered his men to retrieve the amputated limb and load it into one of the cannons in order to fire it back at the enemy. Modern artillery reenactors sing "Boone's Artillery" in honor of his bravado). John Alphus isn't evident in the census after 1860, and it isn't known if he died or if he and Rachel divorced before

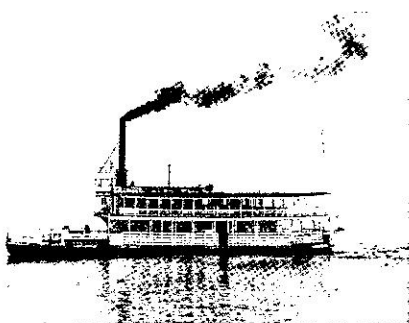
she remarried in 1871 to her third husband, Louis A. Mourain.

According to Sudie Wood, John<sup>6</sup> Alphus and Rachel had one son,



Steamboat City of Baton Rouge

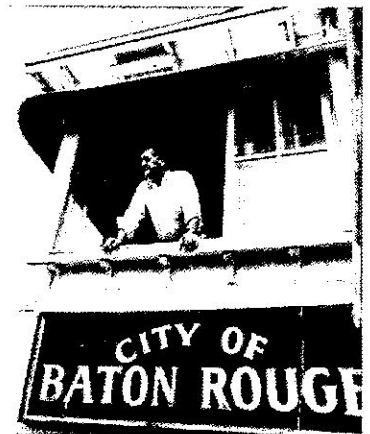
“Edwin”<sup>7</sup> Augustus, who became the noted steamboat captain and father of four more (see Mike Rucker’s article in this issue). However, further research reveals that John and Rachel had another son, who also plied the Mississippi until tragedy struck him down at a young age. In 1886, the New Orleans city directory shows Edward A. Rucker, stage manager, at the same address as a John J. Rucker; in 1889, Edward A. Rucker, pilot, and John J. Rucker, engineer, are again living together, as they are in 1891: Edward J. and John S., both pilots. Were they brothers? The local newspaper of 18 June



Steamboat City of Baton Rouge

1889 reported that a John Rucker was assaulted by Charles L. Rareshide with a dangerous weapon. Charles Rareshide was Rachel Harmanson Boone Rucker Mourain’s fourth husband, married 29 April 1887. Was there a family row between a son, John, and his mother Rachel’s new husband? The supposition that Edward<sup>7</sup> Augustus and John are brothers is strengthened by Edward A. Rucker’s marriage to Emma Brenan on 20 Oct. 1891 at New Orleans: there was a witness named John J. Rucker (LA Parish Marriages 1837 – 1957). The last appearance of John Rucker in the city directory is in 1892, still living with “Edgar” Rucker, both pilots. However, by the date of publication, the information was already outdated, as John had recently died.

Local newspapers provide confirmation of the fraternal relationship between Edward and John, and the details of John’s tragic demise. On 18 May, 1892, *The Advocate* of Baton Rouge reported that “Mr. John Rucker, of New Orleans, a popular young society gentleman, is visiting in our city.” That visit was part of his two months courtship of Miss Henrietta Laura (“Nettie”) Husted, a twenty-five year old post office clerk, who John had met while her ill mother was convalescing in New Orleans and Nettie was staying at the boarding house of John’s mother. As recounted by Edward Rucker, quoted in articles in *The Advocate*, 23 and 27 December



Owen Rucker in 1966

1892, his brother had landed a job as a pilot on the mail steamer *Cleon* serving Baton Rouge and Bayou Sara several months previously. John and his fiancée planned to marry in June at Mrs. Husted’s bedside, but she passed away before the arrangements could be completed, and John married Nettie the day after the funeral. They lived uneventfully in Bayou Sara for six months, and after supper on 23 December at the home of Nettie’s aunt, she prevailed upon them to spend the night at her place. They were all looking forward to a Christmas reunion with mother Rachel, brother Edward Augustus and his wife, Emma, and their two month old infant, Emma Rachel, who were to arrive by steamer that night. After retiring, the aunt, in the next bedroom, said that John took Nettie’s head in his arm, asked if they would be together forever, and pressed a pistol to her and pulled the trigger. She was shot in the leg and breast before he put the gun to his own temple, and ended his life. Edward and his family recognized the *Cleon* as they steamed toward Bayou Sara, and received the news of the tragedy from its crew. Edward related

that Rachel hadn't seen John in six months, and no doubt the family was devastated. Edward took his brother's body back to New Orleans for burial. He was suspicious of the reports of John's actions, questioning the aunt's story, the coroner's findings and noting that his brother was never known to carry a gun. No further information on the crime appears in the newspapers, but there was a silver lining to the tragedy: Nettie survived her wounds, and remarried three years later to widower Louis E. Colet, twenty years her senior. By 1910 Nettie had lost her second husband, and she later remarried to George Troescher. She died 17 July 1931.

Readers who have questions or would like to have a complete set of sources for Chris' article can contact him at the email listed on page 12 of this issue.

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## Rucker Steamboat Captains

by Michael P. "Mike" Rucker

During the late 1800's and early 1900's the name Rucker was familiar one among steamboat operators on the lower Mississippi River.

Captain Edward<sup>7</sup> Augustus Rucker of New Orleans was the first of the Rucker family to become a steamboat captain in New Orleans. (Rucker lineage below)

Edward was born March 25, 1867 in Avoyelles, Louisiana, about 150 miles north of New

Orleans. Edward and his wife Mary Emma Brenan had four daughters and five sons. Four of the five sons followed in their father's footsteps to become steamboat pilots and captains.



Edward Augustus Rucker, Sr.

The children of Captain Edward Augustus Rucker and Marie Emma Brenan:

- Emma Rachel - 11 Oct 1892
  - Edward Augustus, Jr. (*captain*)  
20 Sep 1894
  - James Brenan (*captain*) 19 Jan  
1898-Apr 1991
  - John Anthony (*captain*) -  
14 Dec 1899
  - Inez Azora - 31 Jul 1902
  - Anna Katherine - b. ca. 1908
  - Owen Thomas Francis (*captain*)  
- 16 Oct 1909-24 Jun 1980
  - Marie Louise - 11 Oct 1911
  - Harmanson Selser - 15 Mar 14
- Their father, Edward A. Rucker, Sr. was at the wheel of *STR H. M. Carter* when it exploded November 10, 1908 (see the article concerning this event in *Rucker Family Society Newsletter*, Vol. 27, No. 1, April 2016, page 8).
- Son, Edward A. Rucker, Jr. pi-

loted a number of steamboats on the Mississippi, including the *J.J. Merge*, the *William Garic*, the *America* and the *President*. The last 20 years of his career was with the Federal Barge Lines.

Captain James B. Rucker served as the Manager of the Accident Prevention Division for the Lykes Line Steamship Company. He also worked for the U. S. Coast Guard as the officer in charge of the USCG Inspection Department in Mobile. After that he was promoted to Manager of the Accident Prevention Division, USCG 8<sup>th</sup> Division.

Captain John A. Rucker served as captain of the yacht *Good Neighbor* from the time it arrived in New Orleans in 1946 until 1966 when it was sold. That beautiful yacht belonged to the "Dock Board of New Orleans". For two decades, the *Good Neighbor* sailed the lower Mississippi – a floating reception hall and welcome center that offered "a taste of luxury travel along with an informative tour of a working port." The ship was called "the finest harbor inspection vessel in the country." Captain, John A. Rucker, sailed it from Canada to Florida for renovation before bringing it to its new home in New Orleans. Rucker would stay as the captain of the *Good Neighbor* until his retirement in 1966. The vessel was built in 1930 and is still in service else-

where. It is 153 feet long, 24.5 feet wide and has a draft of nine and one half feet.

Captain Owen T. F. Rucker piloted steamboats for the Baton Rouge Transportation Company for many years. The two boats with he was most associated were the *City of Baton Rouge* (launched in 1916) and the *Louisiana* (launched in 1924). Both of these vessels served as ferries between Baton Rouge on the east side of the Mississippi and Port Allen on the west. These strongly powered vessels could make the three-quarter mile crossing in eight to ten minutes. The *Louisiana* was slightly larger of the two and could carry 47 automobiles and 1,000 passengers. These two vessels served in this capacity until Interstate Highway 10 was opened for traffic across the Mississippi in 1966.

The *Louisiana* was converted to a diesel-powered vessel and continued service as a ferry elsewhere in Louisiana until retired in 2008. However, the 100 year old *City of Baton Rouge* is still afloat and serves as the attractive boarding platform for the beautiful cruise vessel *Riverboat Twilight* in Le Claire, Iowa. Her well-built steam engines were removed and refurbished to serve as the power for a new sternwheel, *Steamboat Julia Belle Swain*, which was launched in 1971. This vessel initially made tour

cruises from Peoria, Illinois. She is now in dry dock undergoing a \$1.5 million renovation and will be again back in business in 2017 making tours from La Crosse, Wisconsin. Her steam engines, built in 1915 for the *City of Baton Rouge*, have already logged more than one-million miles and will soon be adding even more.

Captain T. F. Owen Rucker was in command of the *City of Baton Rouge* during her last trip across the Mississippi on April 20, 1968. He took part in a captain's strike a few weeks before the end of the ferry service. The captains were seeking an additional 47 cents per hour, to raise their pay to \$3.00 per hour. The matter was settled but the ferries were soon out of business when the new Interstate Highway Bridge opened.

The Rucker lineage of Edward<sup>7</sup> Augustus Rucker is: John<sup>6</sup> Al-  
phus, Lewis<sup>5</sup> Dawson, John<sup>4</sup>,  
John<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>.

Edward A. Rucker, Jr. was the father of the Louisiana artist, Robert Malcolm Rucker. The *Rucker Family Society Newsletter* Vol. 18, No. 2, June 2007 contains an article about him.

\* \* \* \* \*

## In Memoriam



Harriet Jones Rucker in 1969,  
the year of her marriage to Mike

**Harriet J. Rucker**, 71, of Peoria, passed away at 3:15 AM Friday, November 18, 2016, at her residence surrounded by her family.

She was born April 18, 1945, in Washington, D.C. to John (Jack) Rucker Jones and Helen McClaugherty Jones. Harriet graduated from Washington and Lee High School in Arlington, Virginia and attended American University in Washington and the University of Oklahoma. She married Michael Price Rucker (the same Mike Rucker who frequently contributes to the *RFS Newsletter*, among many other contributions to the Society and the wider society in general) on September 20, 1969.

Harriet is survived by her husband, Michael Price Rucker; their son, Derek Peck (Diane) Rucker; and three granddaughters, Sabrina, Fiona and Brianna

who reside in Apple Valley, Minnesota. She is also survived by her brother, John Rucker Jones, Jr., of Falls Church, Virginia.

Published in Peoria Journal Star on Nov. 19, 2016

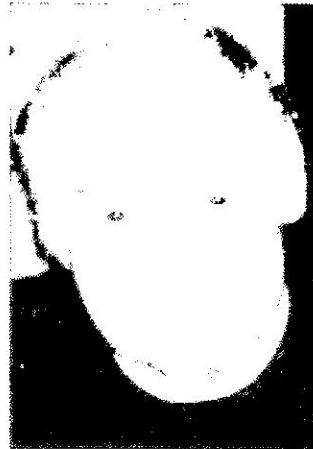
There is a lovely family profile of Helen and Mike in the February 1991 *RFS Newsletter*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1-2, 4, 10.

Harriet's Rucker lineages are: Harriet Allen<sup>9/10</sup> Jones, John<sup>8/9</sup> Rucker Jones, Margaret<sup>7/8</sup> Virginia, Mariamna<sup>7</sup>, James<sup>6</sup> Monroe, Jonathan<sup>5</sup>, George<sup>4</sup>, John<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>; and Daniel<sup>6</sup> H. (who married his 1st cousin Mariamna<sup>7</sup> Rucker), William<sup>5</sup> B., George<sup>4</sup>, John<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>; and Mary<sup>6</sup> Ann Dawson Rucker (who married her 2nd cousin William<sup>5</sup> B., Rucker), Ambrose<sup>5</sup>, Reuben<sup>4</sup>, Ambrose<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>. Harriet and her husband Mike are 3rd cousins.

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**Paul Allen Reynolds**, of Townsend, Tennessee passed away July 18, 2016 at home. He was born September 22, 1938, in Union Co., TN. Paul was a member of First Lutheran Church of Knoxville and worked as a civil engineer. He was the former owner of Phoenix Construction Company. He had served as City Commissioner and Vice Mayor of Townsend. Paul was the survivor of a dou-

ble lung transplant that he needed as a result of pulmonary fibrosis. Unfortunately, he later developed lymphoma which he bravely fought until the end.



Paul Allen Reynolds

Paul was preceded in death by grandson, Wesley Paul Robinson, his parents Lucy Jane (Hansard) and Arthur Levon "Ott" Reynolds, his sister Imogene Cox and his brother A.L. Reynolds. He is survived by his wife, Norma Branum Reynolds, their children, Teresa and her husband Frank Robinson of Greenback, TN, and Christina and husband Jared Henry of Coalfield, TN, and his grandchildren, Elizabeth Robinson, and Leeah and Austin Henry, as well as several nieces and nephews.

Services were on July 21, 2016 at Bethany Baptist Church Cemetery in Knoxville, TN.

Paul's Rucker lineage is: Paul<sup>9</sup> A. Reynolds, Lucy<sup>8</sup> J. Hansard, John<sup>6</sup>, Archelus<sup>5</sup> B., Caroline<sup>4</sup> Rucker, Ambrose<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>.

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## **Robert Malcolm Rucker, An Official "Louisiana Legend"**

by Michael P. "Mike" Rucker

*This article appeared in the June 2007 RFS Newsletter, Vol. 18, No. 2. It is reprinted here because of the relevance to the previous articles.*

That's a tall statement, but after researching the works and reputation of Robert Malcolm Rucker, I say it with confidence.

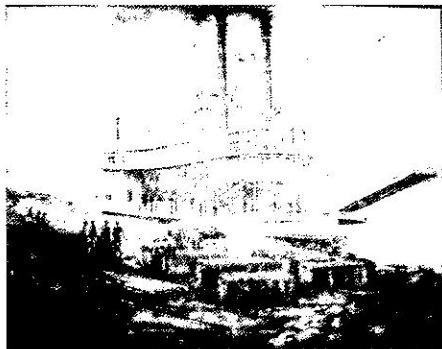
Born in New Orleans on March 28, 1932, Robert never wandered far from his beloved Louisiana.

His paintings include visions of ponderous river boats heavy laden with cotton, misty cypress bayous, poor sharecropper cabins, joyous Vieux Carré jazz musicians and ma-



Robert Malcolm Rucker (1932-2001)

jestic nostalgic plantation manor houses. All his paintings shimmer with life, vitality – and vivid colors.



Steamboat Natchez

a now departed age and imagine the lifestyle of those in each exotic scene. Seeing a Robert Rucker painting is almost like taking a vacation to southern Louisiana.

He created a huge volume of paintings during his career and according to the Jean Bragg Gallery of Southern Art in New Orleans, “His star is rising.” That is to say the prices for his works are rapidly accelerating. Originals of his works now typically fetch between \$5,000 and \$15,000. He was named a Louisiana Legend by Louisiana Public Broadcasting in 1997 four years before his death.

Robert Malcolm Rucker was born into a family of steamboat captains. His father, Edward Augustus Rucker, Jr., and both of his grandfathers were captains, as were two of his father's brothers. But a life on the river was not to be for Robert. In

1948, when he was just age 16, he had displayed enough talent and productivity in his paintings that his mother opened “Rucker's Studio” in the French Quarter in which to exhibit and sell his works. The shop was on St. Peter Street across from Pat O'Brien's.

Then tragedy struck! The very next year he contracted crippling poliomyelitis. From 1948 to 1952 he underwent a number of operations before he turned 21. Fortunately the disease did not stymie his creativity. Because of his illness the Louisiana Department of Education funded his schooling at the John McCrady School of Fine Arts at 910 Bourbon Street in New Orleans for five years. In fact, his affliction probably enhanced his artistic ability. In an interview with the Baton Rouge *In Register* in 1997 he stated, “*I don't know if I would have had the discipline I do if not for the polio. It taught me discipline I didn't have. – To this day, I bet I can sit down in a chair longer than you and not go crazy. I can literally sit and paint for hours.*”

Although his oils are most often seen today Robert Rucker was equally gifted in a number of other art forms including watercolor, acrylic, lithography and etching. Careful preparation was one of his

hallmarks. His oil paintings and most of his watercolors were executed only after he had prepared a careful pencil understudy. Many of his works could be called “impressionistic” on account of the flickering brushwork and handling of light, he was a skilled draftsman and often included a wealth of detail in many of his paintings. One can study a Robert Rucker painting at length and continually find interesting previously unnoticed small details. Of significance, he was an important member of the group of artist-preservationists who “saved” the Vieux Carré, the “Old



Town” or French Quarter of New Orleans. He documented the historic buildings and made the public aware of their value to the city through his charming paintings. Also, many of the images along the River Road on both sides of the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans had these visions not been captured by the brush of Robert Rucker.



After finishing art school, Robert had to work at various drafting and illustrating jobs to make ends meet. His primary job at the time was as a medical school illustrator at Tulane University Medical School. He also worked as a textile designer, in advertising and motion pictures, and as an art instructor for the City of New Orleans Recreation Department for several years. Robert met his wife to be, Margaret Evans, in 1956; *"I met her on the bus. We rode the same bus every day for four or five months until she caught me."* The next year they were married and their first child was born a year later. They were to have three daughters, Lynn, Janet and Yvonne.

Tragically, his eyesight began to fail. In 1995, he had his first cataract operation, after which he said that he "felt like a teenager." He had four other eye operations, during which period he continued to paint, attaching a "one-eyed Jack" stamp on the back of each of his paintings.

But shortly after his last eye operation, he died of a heart attack, March 7, 2001.

His favorite subjects were riverboats and he painted dozens of them. While he was not a riverboat captain or pilot Robert

Rucker knew and portrayed the river and the southern scenes in a manner few have been able to emulate. As Mark Twain wrote in *Life on the Mississippi*, "There is only one way to become a pilot and that is get the entire river by heart. You have to know it just like A B C."

Robert Rucker did just that – in his paintings.

Rucker lineage of Robert<sup>9</sup> Malcolm Rucker: Edward<sup>8</sup> Augustus Jr., Edward<sup>7</sup> Augustus, John<sup>6</sup> Alphas, Lewis<sup>5</sup> Dawson, John<sup>4</sup>, John<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>.

Sources: Most of the information in this article was obtained from the paperback book *Down on the Levee*, published by the Jean Bragg Gallery. Also, thanks to the staff of the Jean Bragg Gallery for their input and, most significantly, to Robert's widow, Margaret Evans Rucker.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Excerpts from a letter of Joshua Rucker By Jeannie Brydon

The following is a letter from Joshua Rucker to his nephew Isaac Rucker. Sudie Wood's *The Rucker Family Genealogy* has excerpts of the letter on pages 32-33, and Edythe Whitley's *Ruckers and Connections* has the complete letter with a few differences on pages 264-266 .

*Madison Parish, LA*

*Feb. 1, 1858*

*Dear Nephew Isaac:*

*You May be somewhat surprised at receiving a letter from me and more especially so when I inform you that I am now in the state of Louisiana, where I have come to spend the winter with my two daughters Mary E. Noulén and Josephine W. Smith . . .*

*I will inform you why I am here to spend the winter. In the last three or four years, I found that the cold winters of the north in Chicago and my health has been seriously affected and am troubled with what is called dry asthma, sometimes a wheezing and difficult of breathing. Myself and wife . . . came down here and spent the last winter, and I found my health so much improved that I concluded to try it again this winter . . .*

*. . . on the steamboat as we were coming down the Mississippi River . . .*

*I find it very pleasant down here where at this time I can walk in the garden and pluck roses . . .*

*[I will be back in] Chicago, Ill., by the first of May.*

*Your affectionate Uncle*

*Joshua Rucker.*

**Question:** Who has the letter now?

### Rucker Hotel, Delaware Co.



*The Rucker Hotel was on the northwest corner of Second Street and Broadway. Built by W. F. Rucker about the turn of the century, the hotel burned about 1912 or 1913. Pictured from left to right: ...?..., 2. W. F. Rucker, 3. Mary E. Rucker, 4. Florence Rucker, 5. Vernie Harper, 6. ...?..., 7. ...?..., 8. Nan Rucker, 9. ...?..., 10. ...?..., 11. Elliot Rucker, 12. ...?..., 13. ...?..., 14. ...?..., 15. Anna Lee Rucker, 16. ...?.... The young boy on the porch roof is Robert Clyde Smith, grandson of W. F. and Mary E. Rucker.*

At the time of publication, the state in which Delaware Co. is a part was unknown to the editor (there are at least seven states to chose from).

## The RUCKER family SOCIETY

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SANTA CLARITA, CA 91321

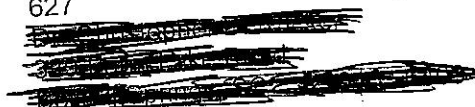
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