

Jonathan and Abigail (Battle) Bathrick

David and Lydia (Maynard) Bathrick (or Batherick) joined the Westborough church on August 27, 1749, and a week later they presented three children for baptism: Jonathan, Solomon, and Anna.¹ David Bathrick had recorded the birth of Solomon (Apr. 22, 1746) and Anna (Mar. 20, 1748)² but not Jonathan. Another son, Benjamin, had died on October 14, 1746;³ his birth was not recorded nor had he been baptized. Because David Bathrick and Lydia Maynard had been married on May 12, 1742,⁴ Jonathan and Benjamin may have been their first two children.

Jonathan worked for Ebenezer Parkman on three occasions before his marriage, getting posts and rails from the ministerial lot (Mar. 26, 1765, Feb. 10, 1766) and carting muck (Nov. 1765). After his marriage, Parkman's references to him changed from "Jonathan Bathrick" to "Mr. Jonathan Bathrick."

Jonathan's first marriage was to Abigail Battle, May 17, 1769, in Mendon. Their connection to Mendon is unclear, as the Mendon vital records state that they were "both of Westborough."⁵ Jonathan approached Parkman about joining the church in early 1771 and "Was examined and approved" (Feb. 18). The following week thirty-year-old Edmund Chamberlain, himself married and a member of the church, came to Parkman about Bathrick's proposed membership: he was "dissatisfyed with Mr. *Jonathan Batherick* on Account of his leaving the young Mens meeting without giving any good Reason for it" (Feb. 27). Parkman or Bathrick must have addressed Chamberlain's concerns, as there is no further record of his dissatisfaction. Jonathan brought his and Abigail's relations to Parkman a week later (Mar. 7), and Parkman then met with Abigail so that she could "answer Some Questions" and "have some Corrections in the Draught of her Relation" (Mar. 9). They were scheduled for admission on March 10, but few people came to the meeting because of a "great Storm, of *Snow, wind,* and toward Night *Hail.*" On the following Sunday Jonathan and Abigail Bathrick were admitted along with Abigail Parker (Mar. 17).

Jonathan and Abigail had seven children, with the records suggesting heartbreaking difficulties. Jonathan did not record the birth of their first child, John, but the infant was baptized on December 29, 1771.⁶ This was two and a half years after their marriage and seven months after joining the church. Had there been an earlier, unrecorded birth and death? Can we assume that John was born within a week or two of his baptism? That would certainly fit the general pattern of the baptisms of church members' children.

¹Westborough Church Records (Westborough Public Library), 85 (Aug. 27, Sept. 3); hereafter cited as WCR.

²*Vital Records of Westborough, Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1849* (Worcester, MA: Franklin P. Rice, 1903), 14-15; hereafter cited as WVR.

³*Ibid.*, 227.

⁴*Ibid.*, 120.

⁵*Vital Records of Mendon, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* (Boston, 1920), 245.

⁶WCR, 154.

John died an at unknown date, as did his younger brother, Eli, who had also been baptized. Both of them were remembered when two subsequent children were given their names. The second John was born on July 18, 1777⁷ and baptized on September 7.⁸ His mother's recovery from childbirth was particularly difficult. As Parkman noted, "Mr. *Jonathan Batherick* here and perswades *Suse* to take his Infant of a fortnight old, to *Suckle* it: and p.m. it is brought, Mrs. *Batheric* being very low" (Aug. 4). *Suse* was Parkman's daughter-in-law, Susanna (Brigham) Parkman, who had married his son Breck earlier that year⁹ and had a miscarriage on July 27. Although Abigail Bathrick "had so poor a night that they are almost ready to despair of her Life" (Aug. 5), she survived this crisis.

John survived as did his sister, Puah, who was baptized on October 10, 1779.¹⁰ Abigail Bathrick's next pregnancy resulted in a stillbirth: "I attended the burying of Mr. Jonathan Batherick's Infant: still-born" (Oct. 17, 1782). Her last two children, James and Eli, survived, but their mother Abigail did not, dying on August 3, 1786, a month after Eli's birth.¹¹ After church on the following Sunday, Breck Parkman attended the "very Large funeral."¹²

Fifteen months after Abigail's death, on November 18, 1787, Jonathan married Susannah Fay.¹³ Twins Jonathan and Susanna were born on June 12, 1788,¹⁴ sufficiently early to cause concern. According to Breck Parkman, "Jonathan Bathrick called to an account for his twins being born in 4 days less than 7 months after their marriage. He declares his innocency. The church vote their acceptance of it."¹⁵ Two more children followed, Nabby, born on December 30, 1790, and Nahum, September 12, 1792.¹⁶

Jonathan Bathrick appeared occasionally in Parkman's diary after his marriage, most frequently because of his talent for singing. On one Sunday, for example, there was no one to set the tune:

N.B. Was obliged to Set the Psalm my Self, in the afternoon first Singing, and for the last desired that Some one would Set a convenient Tune. I added, that I named no body that I might not give Offence and I had been willing to do every

⁷WVR, 14.

⁸WCR, 176.

⁹Breck and Susanna's intention was recorded on Nov. 14, 1776; WVR, 193. Their marriage was on Jan. 9, 1777; *Vital Records of Northborough, Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1850* (Worcester, MA: Franklin P. Rice, 1901), 107.

¹⁰WCR, 182.

¹¹James, b. Nov. 25, 1783; Eli, b. July 4, 1786; Abigail, d. Aug. 3, 1786; WVR, 14, 227

¹²Breck Parkman Diary (American Antiquarian Society, Parkman Family Papers), Aug. 6, 1786.

¹³WVR, 121. A fifteen-month interval between the death of a wife and the husband's remarriage was not uncommon; see Ross W. Beales, Jr., "A Minister's Bereavement and Remarriage: Ebenezer Parkman of Westborough, Massachusetts," *History of the Family* 17, no. 4 (2012), 399.

¹⁴WVR, 14.

¹⁵Breck Parkman Diary, July 6, 1788.

¹⁶Ibid.

Thing to keep Peace in this matter of Singing. Still no body arose. After waiting Some while, I desired Neighbour *Batherick*, and added “let who will be offended,” but neither did he Soon rise to do it. At length he undertook it. (June 9, 1771)

While Jonathan’s exact age is not known, he was probably in his twenties. Given the age hierarchies of the era and the fact that he was newly admitted to the church, his reluctance to step forward is understandable.

Seven years later, he was clearly more confident about his musical abilities. After the itinerant singing master Lemuel Babcock finished a singing school in Westborough, the school was continued under Bathrick’s instruction (Mar. 10, 1778). The next year he kept his own singing school in Upton,¹⁷ and a few weeks later the Westborough congregation chose him as one of four choristers (Mar. 17, 1779).¹⁸ He was among those who particularly desired that Parkman propose to the congregation “to sing five Times on the Sabbath” (May, 18, 1782).

Aside from his interest in singing, Bathrick appears in the diaries of both Ebenezer and Breck Parkman as a individual with skills in building and raising structures. Thus, he hauled timber and helped to frame, raise, and board the sides of a building for Breck Parkman (May 11, 1778),¹⁹ and when Breck (who himself was trained as a housewright) built a store, Bathrick was one of the two “principal Workmen” who oversaw the raising (July 10, 1782).²⁰ He later built “a little House for the Convenience of the School house”; hewed timbers; made a fence; and laid “new Timber and flour” for Breck Parkman.²¹ While he described himself as a “yeoman” in his last will and testament, his work on various structures reminds us of the range of skills that were important sources of income to supplement the crops that a farm might produce.

Jonathan Bathrick died on February 25, 1825.²² According to his last will and testament, dated March 13, 1813,²³ Eli, his youngest son by his first marriage, was to be his executor.²⁴ He made bequests to his surviving children, including Puah Harrington who was to have one hundred dollars, paid in four equal installments, “the bed on which I usually Sleep,” and “a

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Feb. 23, 1779.

¹⁸ WCR, 179 (Mar. 17, 1779).

¹⁹ Breck Parkman Diary, Apr. 28-30, 1778.

²⁰ See also *ibid.*, July 1-2, 1782. Bathrick also made a “Celler way into the Store”; laid part of a floor; shingled the cellar way; worked on lathing; and helped cut out a window. *Ibid.*, Oct. 24-26, 28-30, Nov. 25-26, 1782.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1798, Feb. 2, 1799, June 5, Aug. 24, 1800.

²² WVR, 228.

²³ Worcester County Registry of Deed, Series A, Case 4425, accessed through Ancestry.com: https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9069/007485955_00780?pid=6558190&treeid=&personid=&rc=&usePUB=true&phsrc=Rwd43&phstart=successSource#?imageId=007485955_00787 (Mar. 22, 2019).

²⁴ Eli declined and asked that Lovett Peters of Westborough be appointed in his place.

privilege of a home in my house as long as She remains a widow.”²⁵ He did not mention his second wife, Susannah, who had most likely predeceased him and whose death he did not record with the town clerk.²⁶

²⁵For all the children except Eli and Puah, the bequests were nominal since Jonathan had already made other provisions for them. Eli received Jonathan’s land and buildings and the residue of his estate after the other bequests had been paid.

²⁶In the *WVR*’s record of Jonathan’s death, he is described as “h. Susanna,” but on the probate court’s form “To the Widow and Heirs,” giving opportunity to challenge the will and the appointment of Lovett Peters as executor, the words “Widow and” were crossed out.