

January 20, 1938

DEATH SUMMONS 2 LOCAL PIONEERS

**GEORGE STEBBINS AND V. F.
RATHBUN PASS AWAY FROM
PARALYSIS, HEART TROUBLE**

Two Groton pioneers, men who came to this section in their early youth and were instrumental in establishing a civilization in the Great Northwest, passed into the beyond last week, their deaths coming a scant 14 hours apart. V. F. Rathbun died at his winter home at Pomona, Calif., while Mr. Stebbins expired at his home in Groton. Both of them were unexpected to Groton friends.

V. F. Rathbun's Death

Mr. Rathbun, for many years councilman of Groton and at one time serving as mayor of the city, passed away last Wednesday morning, January 12, at 11:20 a. m., at his winter home in Pomona, Calif. His death followed a stroke of paralysis, which he suffered January 5, and from which he never recovered. The funeral was held Friday afternoon at Pomona and interment was made in the cemetery at that place.

Mr. Rathbun was born at Sparta, Wis., February 20, 1860 and came to South Dakota in 1882, settling in or near Groton.

During his early years in this community Mr. Rathbun pioneered in land and business enterprises as well as government. He established one of the first grain and flour mills in this part of the country and likewise installed the first telephone exchange in his store on Main street. He joined the Groton Fire Department in 1883 and for 20 years served as fire chief. He engaged in the mercantile business at various times, having both Ira Perkins and George Aves as partners, while in a civic way he represented his ward on the city council a number of years and was mayor of Groton at one time, as well as president of the council.

For the past ten years Mr. and Mrs. Rathbun, who were married in June, 1886, have been spending their winters in California with their son and daughter, Mrs. Myrtle Patterson. He is survived by Mrs. Rathbun, two daughters, Mrs. Myrtle Patterson of Pomona, and Mrs. J. G. English of St. Paul, as well as four sons—J. E. Rathbun, G. E. Rathbun and Wm. Virgil Rathbun of Pomona, and Charles of Groton, together with two sisters, Mrs. Etta Aves of Groton and Mrs. Charlotte Schwab of Linton, N. D., as well as 11 grand-children.