



# Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly

Volume 20 Issue 2

Summer 2015

## Sometimes You Never Know Where You're Going Until You Get There

By John T. Hastings

A number of years ago I came across the photo at the right. It intrigued me since the photo is a group of people standing around the grave of George Satterlee while on the back is written, "The grave of Sig Sautelle." So, who was Sig Sautelle and George Satterlee? And why were all these people standing around the grave site, one in full Indian dress?

Well, my curiosity got the best of me and I started doing some research on the people and the photograph.

As it turns out, George Satterlee was born in Luzerne on September 22, 1850 (or 1848 depending on your source). At the age of 14 he enlisted



in the 18th New York volunteers as a drummer boy. His career as a showman was laid while in the service of his country. He made the acquaintance of a ventriloquist, under whose tutelage he was taught the art of ventriloquism for doing favors and odd chores, such as blacking boots, washing clothes, keeping them in repair, and writing letters. He was the proficient pupil and when he was mustered out he had perfected his knack of voice-throwing. After the war he returned

to Glens Falls and learned the trades of printer and wagon maker.

Soon after, he moved to Ft. Edward, where he married Belle (Ida B.) Traver and in 1874 with \$47 in capital, the two began a show career which continued for many years. They first played various fairgrounds in the eastern states with a Punch and Judy Show.

Up until this time he was known by his true name of George Satterlee.

(Continued on page 3)

In this issue:	Page
<i>Sometimes</i> _____	1
<i>Society Page</i> _____	2
<i>Lori</i> _____	4
<i>Allen Lillibridge</i> _____	7
<i>Mystery Photo</i> _____	8

**PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

The Society's Preservation Committee, chaired by John Franchini, conducted a brush-cutting at the Tannery property in April. Measurements were taken for the survey map being created by board member Bob Bradley. A plan to sub-divide a half-acre lot from the Electric Avenue end of the 2.72-acre parcel is now under review.

Plans for the rest of the parcel include walking trails, historical markers, and benches that will add to Warrensburg's recreational resources along the river.

Speaking of trails, Sandi Parisi, Town Historian, made a presentation at the Town Board's May 13 meeting to show the first of several Heritage Trail brochures she, Teresa Whalen, and Terry Jamison have been creating to guide visitors and locals to our many historic sites and sights both within and outside the hamlet. Besides brochures, a website is being created that will contain hundreds of photos and descriptions. This major effort is supported by a \$1,500 occupancy tax grant from the Town.

Our Historical Enrichment program at the elementary school has concluded successfully. Thrice-monthly sessions were conducted by Education Committee members Paul Gilchrist, Donne Lynn Winslow, Mark Brown, Elaine Cowin, and chairperson Rosemary Maher. An awards ceremony will be held at the museum in June. We are grateful for the excellent coordination efforts by Dr. Kathleen Bernhard at the school.

We will again raffle two Old Town kayaks this year. Thanks to Dennis Martinez and Gary Bivona for making arrangements with F.R. Smith Marina.

The Society will resurrect its popular Graveyard Walks this October. Plans are underway for characters, actors, scripts, and the crucial dessert venues.

Until next time, keep looking backwards.

*Paul Gilchrist*

**Quarterly Editor**

John T. Hastings

jthastings@roadrunner.com

or 518-798-0248

We welcome comments, corrections, articles, pictures, letters, and reminiscences. Send to:

Quarterly Editor  
Warrensburgh Historical Society  
PO Box 441  
Warrensburg, NY 12885

**Board of Directors**

Paul Gilchrist: President, Donne Lynn Winslow: Vice-President, Gary Bivona: Treasurer, Wendy Peluso: Secretary, Bob Bradley, Mark Brown, Elaine Cowin, John Franchini, Bob Knowles, Peggy Knowles, Joan West,  
Sandi Parisi - Town Historian  
Steve Parisi - Museum Director

**\*Note Change\***

The Board of Directors meets at the Senior Center (May-October) or at Richards Library (November - April) at 7:00 pm on the **FIRST Wednesday** of each month. Call Paul to confirm at 623-3162.

*Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly*

*Copyright 2015. All rights reserved.*

**Membership Information**

Students \$5.00 Individual \$15.00 Family \$25.00 Senior (62+) \$10.00 Senior Family \$18 Contributing \$55.00 Business \$50.00 Life (Individual only) \$300 (membership is on a calendar year basis)

If you would like to join and receive the Quarterly by mail, please send a check for the amount of the membership classification, with name, address, and phone number to: **Warrensburgh Historical Society, P.O. Box 441, Warrensburg, N.Y. 12885**

**NOTICE**

The recording of history is an interpretive and ever changing study. Therefore, the Warrensburg Historical Society or its Board of Directors or members shall not be held liable for the accuracy or authenticity of the material herein. **We welcome and encourage corrections, comments, and additional information.**

**Contributors to this Issue**

*Sandi Parisi  
Paul Gilchrist*

**CURRENT MEMBERSHIP:  
245**

**Warrensburgh Historical Society**

**Website:** www.whs12885.org

**Email:** whs7396@yahoo.com

**Welcome New Members:**

The Healy Family  
Steve Bederian

**Calendar of Events**

**August 9;** Sticky Wicket at the Fish Hatchery Noon to ?

For more events and details go to: [www.whs12885.org](http://www.whs12885.org) .

(Continued from page 1) Sig Sautelle

But with the launching of the Punch and Judy show, he planned to adopt the cognomen (an extra personal name functioning rather like a nickname and typically passed down from father to son.) Signor. But somehow his face lacked the Latin characteristics to go with the name, and the second syllable of Signor was never pronounced, and thus it was that the master showman was known as Sig Sautelle.

Soon he attracted the attention of A. B. Stowe who induced him to join the A. B. Stowe Great American Circus and perform his act as a sideshow. Later, he would travel with Barnum and Bailey.

After 8 years he realized his great circus ambition of his own and started Sig Sautelle's Big Show which opened in Syracuse. The show traveled by canal boats and played along the Erie, Chemung and Champlain canals. After 5 years and the progress made in road building, he opened the 1887 year as a wagon show. This opened new horizons and allowed for longer seasons. By 1891 he had 225 people on the payroll, with 2 elephants, 14 cages of animals and 150 heads of horses and ponies.

For his winter home he first purchased a hotel in DeRuyter and then later one in Homer, just south of Syracuse. The hotel in Homer was named the David Harum House, a name which is still part of the tavern.

In 1894 he made his first known appearance in Warrensburgh. The following is taken from the September 6, 1894 Warrensburgh News. "By means of large and handsomely colored lithographs, posted in liberal quantities on barns, sheds,

rocks, or wherever a smooth surface presents itself and is available, and an advertisement which will be found in another column in this paper, the irrepressible Sig Sautelle announces to the people of Warrensburgh and vicinity, among whom he numbers many friends and acquaintances, that his circus, bigger, brighter and better than ever, will exhibit in this place, for one day only, Wednesday September 12, giving two performances, afternoon and evening."

In 1895 Saautelle's and Ewer's Circus performed two shows, afternoon and evening, on King Street, where audiences were large and fully satisfied. The day of the performance was July 31st and the rides were "good and there were many other features that were first class, notably the work on the horizontal bars by the Rite Brothers. Sig Sautelle is rapidly climbing the ladder of fame as a circus manager and each year enlarges and improves his

show. His present outfit may justly be ranked among the best of the small circuses."

On July 14, 1898 the Warrensburgh News reported "Sig Sautelle's big twenty five cent circus arrived in Warrensburgh early Wednesday morning and pitched its tents on King Street. The whole town awaits the ascension of the balloon and his parachute jump tonight."

The following year "Sig Sautelle's big one-ring, twenty-five cent circus" exhibited on July 27th, with two shows, at two and eight pm. There was a grand street parade in the morning and a parachute jump by Professor Laroux at the circus grounds just before the afternoon show.

The circus would continue to come to Warrensburgh in 1900 and 1901. The 1901 show was held on August 22 for two shows. The tents were pitched on the Woodward lot, between Hudson Street and the "Big Turn" (which is now the west end of 4th Avenue). The Warrensburgh News went on to say "Mr. Sautelle is no stranger to circus patrons and the simple announcement that his show will be seen here on the date mentioned is sufficient to assure him two large audiences. The success of his circus has been achieved by the fundamental principle of offering the best in the world at the lowest price. The performances are strictly moral in tone and character and nothing is said to offend the most fastidious lady or gentleman."

After the August 22nd show, tragedy struck. While on route from Warrensburgh to North Creek, one of Sig Sautelle's wagons ran off a steep embankment on what is known as the "dug way" three miles north of the

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from Page 3) Sig Sautelle

village. The accident occurred around two a.m. and a passenger, Adolf Lorraine was killed instantly. Another passenger was seriously injured. Both were asleep in the kitchen wagon when it went off a curve in the road and rolled down the embankment and crashed into a tree.

Lorraine was 26 years old, a native of Germany and had been with the circus for seven years. He was buried in the Warrensburgh Cemetery. Sig Sautelle paid all the expenses for the funeral.

In 1904 Sautelle was approached by James McCaddon of the Barnum and Bailey show. He wanted a circus to take to France, and the show was turned over to him at the close of the season. The consideration to Sautelle for this was \$120,000.

In 1911 he formed a partnership with George Rollins and launched Sautelle's Nine Big Shows. Shortly after this, Mrs. Sautelle's health failed. She passed away in 1916 and is buried in Fort Edward. Sig would be in and out of the circus business many times over the next ten years, but none lasted very long.

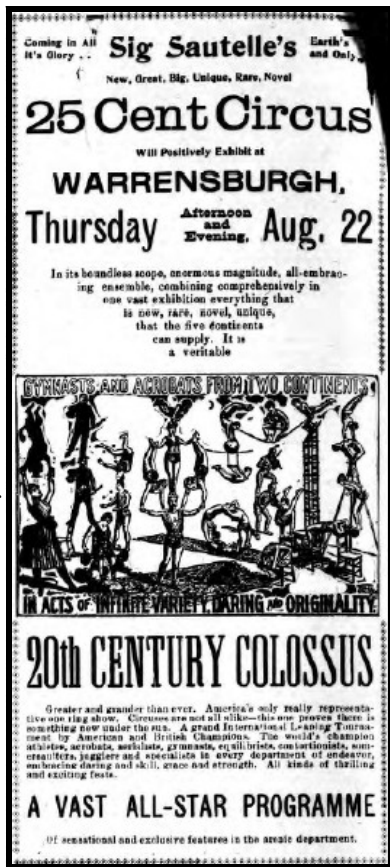
Sautelle was a clever showman and originator. His wife was the business brains. It was she who presided in the ticket wagon, handled all the money, and paid all the bills. It was Sig who ruled the entertainment program.

Sig Sautelle died at Glens Falls on June 21, 1928. He was buried beside his wife in Union Cemetery in Ft. Edward.

In July of 1929 the following article appeared in the Warrensburgh News.

**Honor Dead Showman**

Barnett Brother's Outfit Pays Respect to Late Sig Sautelle



Tribute to the memory of the late Sig Sautelle for years a widely known and prominent showman, was paid by the personnel of Barrett Brothers Circus Sunday when it was on its way from Greenwich to Warrensburgh. The long caravan of motor trucks bearing the show halted at the entrance of the Union Cemetery, in Ft. Edward, and the band, many of the performers and members of the business staff of the circus preceded to the grave of their late friend and placed a wreath upon it.

The circus band played "Nearer My God to Thee" after which Dr. Joseph P. Heffernan, a life long friend of the dead showman, and a member of the executive staff of the circus, offered a prayer. The group, with bowed heads, returned to their cars, discussing the good deeds of their friend, "Sig" who was known to all as the showman's friend.

**LORI STORY**

by Paul Gilchrist

*How dear to my heart are the scenes of my childhood, when fond recollection presents them to view - "The Old Oaken Bucket"*

Last April 2 (2015), Sandi Parisi, as Town Historian, received an e-mail from a woman named Lori asking for help finding the property in Warrensburgh where a camp owned by her grandparents had been located. She had last visited it when she was about seven years old, i.e., probably 1968.

According to her recollection, she thought the camp was in Pack Forest on Pack Forest Road. On the other side of the road ran a stream, crossed by a small footbridge beyond which was a shanty. Beside the camp was a large rock upon which her grandparents' name, McNally, was painted. Their camp had burned down, but they rebuilt it. Not far away, along the road to the camp, a decrepit old house straddled the stream and was butted up against a huge boulder that was situated in the middle of the stream. She was told the house was rumored to be haunted. She also asked if we knew where Mill Office Road was.

Sandi forwarded the message to John Hastings and yours truly. A research effort sprang into action to meet the challenge.

Points of confusion arose immediately. On the 1968 USGS map, the road labeled Pack Forest Road begins on Route 9, runs north-south to the east of Pack Forest Lake, and comes out just over two miles farther along Route 9. But

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4) Lori

the Google map labels this as “Old Route 9,” with Pack Forest Road branching off it and running to the south and west of Pack Forest Lake, past the headquarters houses and forestry school campus. Was it the former or the latter to which Lori was referring as Pack Forest Road?

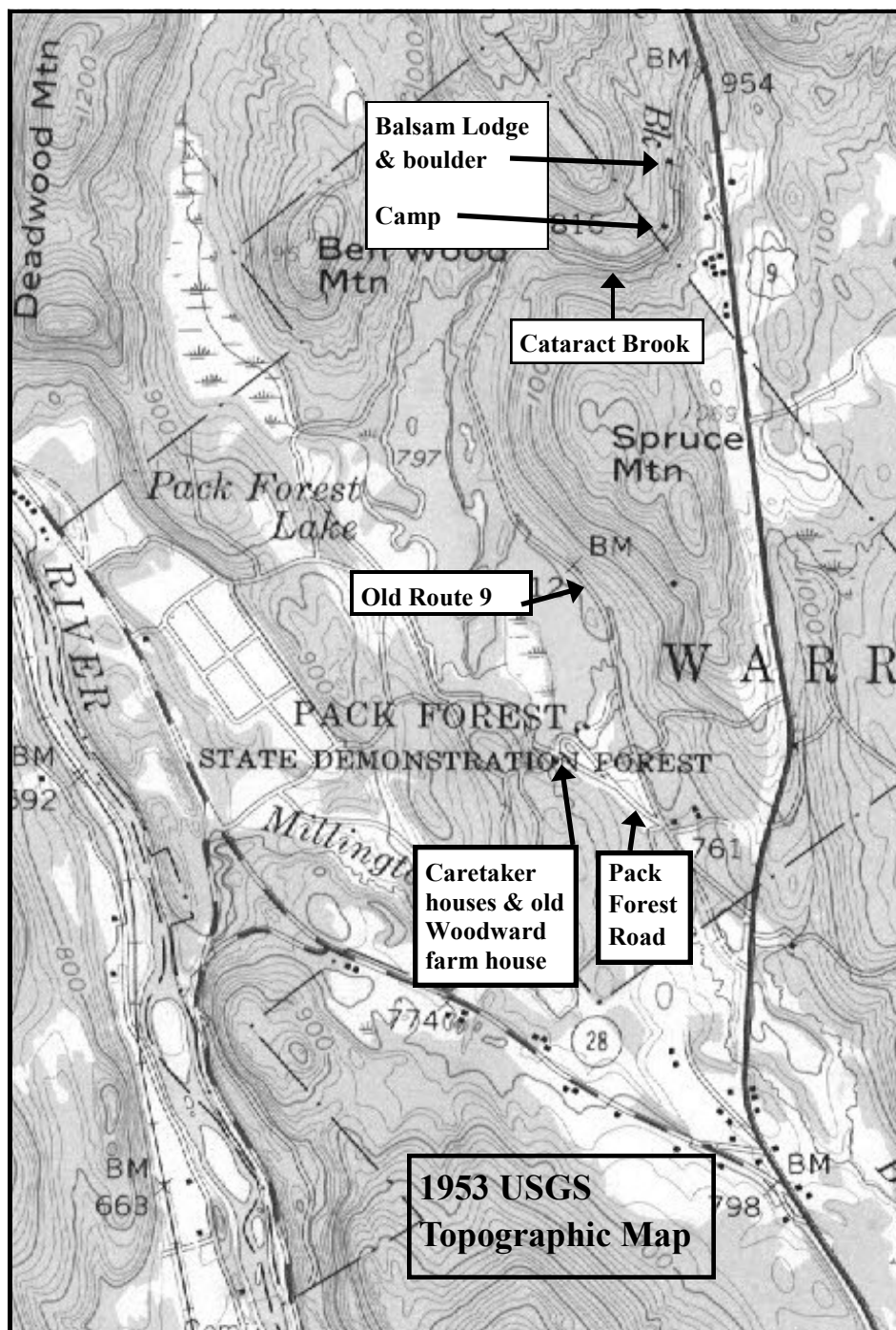
That she had asked about the location of Mill Office Road gave the impression it was the latter, since Mill Office Road branches off and leads to the main parking area where the former mill is located, just across from the headquarters residences and the nature trail. Millington Brook flows beside this road; perhaps it was the stream Lori had mentioned. But where would have been the camp, the footbridge, and the “haunted house” straddling the stream with the big boulder beside it? Google map street views of this whole stretch were e-mailed to Lori, but nothing looked familiar to her. Further, the southern end of the road labeled as Pack Forest Road on the 1968 USGS map has no stream beside it, ruling that out.

Her mother had inherited the camp, but then sold it. It was suggested to Lori on Saturday, April 4, that the deed could be looked up under her grandparents’ or mother’s name at the Warren County Clerk’s Office the next week when it was open. The deed would have the location, description, and tax map number of the property, and we could then also look up the current owner. This jogged her

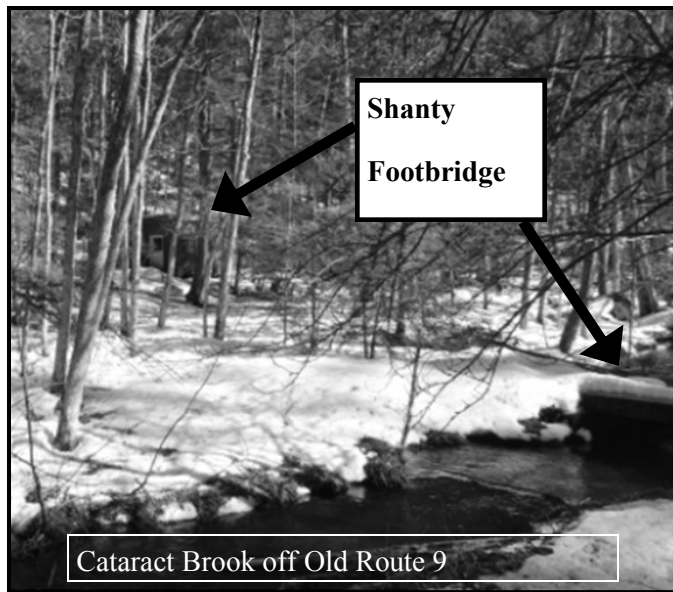
memory: it hadn’t occurred to her that she had a copy of her mother’s deed in her possession. She found it and e-mailed us a copy.

On that same day, John Hastings e-mailed us a copy of an old post card from his collection, showing a building called Balsam Lodge. From the

automobiles in the photo, it must have been in the 1920s. John surmised it was likely the “old decrepit house,” as it was known to have been built over Cataract Brook, which flows into Pack Forest Lake from the north. The Lodge was located on “old Route 9,” which is often referred to as Pack Forest Road. It was



(Continued on page 6)



*(Continued from page 5) Lori*

located a few hundred yards north of Pack Forest's northern boundary. The road lay close along Cataract Brook (see map).

The deed revealed the southwest boundary of the property was also the northeast boundary of Pack Experimental Forest and that the property lay along the "old State Macadam Highway" between Chestertown and Warrensburg. That clinched it: the camp was just off the northeast boundary of Pack Forest. The inquiry about Mill Office Road and the initial reference to the camp being on Pack Forest Road had steered our search at first to the southern end of Pack Forest. John Hastings' e-mail and the deed had corrected our course.

So now we knew the location of the property, but was there anything left of the camp, the footbridge over the stream, and the shanty? And what about the old decrepit house and the large boulder in the middle of the

stream? Was there any trace left of B a l s a m Lodge?

The next step was to visit the site, which meant approaching from the north, since the old Route 9 in Pack Forest is not plowed during the winter

and there was still plenty of snow. No sense delaying - Saturday was a fine sunny day, albeit a bit chilly. The idea now was to take some photographs of whatever was there and e-mail them to Lori, who is hoping to come to Warrensburg later in the spring on a sentimental journey. She now lives 3½ hours away in Massena.

A 1968 USGS topographic map indicated a building on the site at that time, which was exactly when Lori had been there as a 7-year old child. Recent Warren County and Google aerial views showed a building there currently, likely a house. Was it the one her grandparents had rebuilt after the fire?

The left turn onto the northern end of old Route 9 is about a mile past Forest Lake Road. Thence a half mile southward is the northern entrance to Pack Forest, easy to identify because the road was blocked by snow at that point. The log-style house was on the right, across the road was a little footbridge crossing

the stream, and beyond that a shanty tucked among the trees. The lady living in the house (her name is Laurie) was eager to talk to us. We took photos of everything.

Asked about the large rock that Lori said had the name "McNally" painted on it, Laurie said when she purchased the property, a different name had been painted on it, which she removed, but it was doubtless the same rock, at that moment snow-covered. She was aware there had been a fire, because in the basement of the house there were still charred timbers.

We mentioned the decrepit old haunted house and big boulder in the middle of the stream; she said we had passed the spot on our way in, about a thousand feet back up the road. The boulder is there, but nothing is left of the building, of which she'd heard rumors that it had once been a speakeasy. We took photos of the boulder on the way out.

The 1968 USGS map does not show a building where the boulder is, but a building is indeed indicated there on the above 1953 USGS map. This would be the one Lori remembered

After editing the photos, it was pleasing to be able to attach them to e-mails and send them to Lori, along with a written account of our site visit. She excitedly (and with tears in her eyes, she said) sent back confirmation of the views in the photos and was astonished, as were we, that things like the foot-

*(Continued from page 6) Lori*

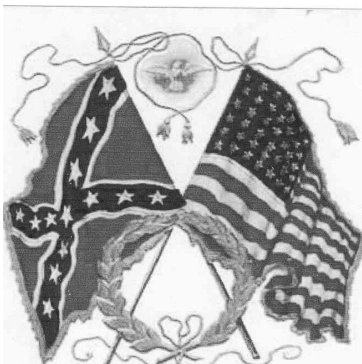
bridge and shanty were still there after so many years.

Lori can decide when she visits whether the shanty is the same one or whether it's like the woodsman's axe that's had a few new handles and a few new blades, but is still the same old axe. Her biological grandfather lived in the shanty, while her grandmother and step-grandfather stayed in the main camp across the road.

It might be worth poking around the site of the old Balsam Lodge now that the snow is gone to see whether any artifacts can be found. Lori had said she remembered remains of a waterwheel there. Might there be pieces of machinery?

We stopped at the house a couple of weeks later to give Laurie Lori's telephone number. We know now that Lori and Laurie have been in telephone communication.

We hope to see Lori someday this spring or summer when she comes to Warrensburg. Meanwhile, in the course of this effort, another potential inquiry has arisen: Laurie and others have questions about the history of "old Route 9" and how it relates to the old plank road that ran between Warrensburg and Chestertown; but we'll save that research for another day.



## Allen P. Lillibridge

From the May 18, 1905 Warrensburg News: "

Allen P. Lillibridge, of Thurman, a worthy veteran of the Civil War, who served his country faithfully and fearlessly all through that terrible conflict, and in the line of duty contracted disabilities which now render him unlit for the battle of life, is deserted in his old age by the nation for which he fought, and is compelled to suffer for the actual necessities of life because of a mere technicality which, the pension department maintains, blocks his application for the financial relief he so badly needs and which it is conceded he so well deserves. In the records of the department Mr. Lillibridge is branded as a deserter from the army. Technically he admits that he is guilty of the charge, but morally he is as innocent as the most ardent patriot who enjoys the financial reward of the nation's gratitude through the department of pensions. Probably there is not a more peculiar case than his on record. In the first year of the war Mr. Lillibridge enlisted in the Ninety-third Regiment, N. Y. Vols., at Chestertown. He went to the front and with his regiment fought in the battles of Fair Oaks and Second Bull Run, also in many skirmishes along the James River. He became ill with rheumatism and was sent to a hospital in Philadelphia. From there he was transferred to David's Island, near New York. After being treated there for a short time he began to improve and was able to be around the hospital. The surgeon in charge then set him at work preparing the bodies of dead soldiers for burial. This work was very distasteful to him and he

pleaded with the surgeon to send him back to his regiment. But the doctor was short of help and therefore refused the request. Mr. Lillibridge entered a vigorous protest, but it was useless. He then asked the doctor to give him a pass for twenty-four hours at the same time telling him that if it was granted he should go to New York and enlist in the navy. No importance was attached to the threat and the pass was granted. On the same day there appeared at the naval recruiting depot in New York a soldierly appearing young man who gave his name as William Kenyon and announced his desire to enlist in the navy. He passed the examination and was accepted, his name, through a mistake being recorded as William Kenyon. This young fellow was no other than Allen P. Lillibridge. For three years he served faithfully in this branch of the service and received an honorable discharge. The diseases from which he now suffers, rheumatism, asthma and heart trouble, were contracted during his service in the army, and about eighteen years ago he applied for a pension under his own name. He was notified to appear before an examining board and was declared entitled to a pension. When his record was looked up, however, it was found that it was impossible to grant it without a special act of Congress. Ever since then he has been endeavoring to interest someone in his cause, and has received many promises of assistance, but the much needed relief seems as far away as ever. On February 27, 1909 he finally received his pension. He was married to Helen Kenyon. They had a daughter Martha who married Clayton Kenyon. In the spring of 1917 he moved to Warrensburg and lived over the Warrensburg Garage. He died April 19, 1921 at the age of 79.

# Mystery Photo



Can you identify the above photo as to where it is located and who currently or formerly owned this farm? If so, contact John at 798-0248 or at [jthastings@roadrunner.com](mailto:jthastings@roadrunner.com). The photo in the last Quarterly was that of the Blueberry Farm which was located on the Schroon River Road. It was started in 1946 when Mr. & Mrs. John Wagner purchased the property from Carleton Brown and continued the business into the late 1950s. They sold blueberries and turkeys. Children consisted of two sons; Richard and John, and twin daughters, Loretta and Winifred.

**WIN TWO Old Town Kayaks**

**Annual Society Raffle**

**Tickets: \$3.00 or 2 for \$5.00**

**Tickets available at the Museum, where kayaks can be seen.**

**Drawing is October at the World's Largest Garage Sale**



**WARRENSBURGH  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S  
19TH ANNUAL  
STICKY WICKET  
CROQUET COMPETITION  
& PICNIC  
AT THE FISH HATCHERY  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2015**

