

# Warrensburgh Historical Society Quarterly

Volume 21 Issue 3

### FRANKLIN K. WHEELER and the PLATTSBURGH MOVEMENT

#### by Rita Ferraro

Following the armistice at the conclusion of WW I, a French officer complimented an American officer as to the U.S. having raised over three million men in ten months.

The French officer continued, "... although you raised over three million men in ten months, you had no officers reserves to start with, yet you somehow found 200,000 new, very competent officers." That was astonishing and he wanted to know how it was done.

The American who himself was a product of the system described the famous 90-day officer training camps of America in 1917.

It all began in the summer of 1913 with the idea of establishing a training program for young civilians. That year the Army conducted two experimental camps for college men. Chief of Staff, General Leonard Wood's political and public-relations savvy helped launch the fledgling attempt at military preparedness. For years the militia had conducted camps of instruction. The idea of summer military training was not new.

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A supplement to the 1912 War Department's Annual Report recommended summer camps along with a proposed national reserve organization.

The inspiration for Wood's actions in 1913 came when he heard of a plan the US Navy had proposed to college students. During Cornell University's spring break, Lt. Henry Bull, professor of military science, travelled to Washington DC and met with the Chief of Staff. Bull, too, had learned of the Navy's plan to offer college students a two-month summer cruise aboard battleships and thought the idea could be adopted by the Army. He proposed that qualified students be attached to regular Army units for 4 or 5 weeks in summer, strictly as volunteer civilians with no enlistment. Wood liked the idea but believed

special camps should be established for training. He assigned Bull to a three -officer committee to prepare a detailed program. The other two officers were Captain Robert van Horn and Captain Douglas A. MacArthur.

With the backing of the Secretary of War, Wood sent the following circular to the

presidents of colleges and universities throughout the nation:

#### (continued on page 3)

Citizens Military

Training Camps-

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1921

Fall 2016

#### Response to Israel Mead Article By Sharon Stone

The past—What is it that fascinates us about it? What is it that pulls us back and causes us to immerse ourselves in the history of an event or person until we find answers to the many questions that arise when we start researching? I don't know about you but for me, it is the untold story, the whats, wheres and whyfors, the questions left unanswered. If that untold story happens to trigger a memory from my own past, even better, I'm hooked; I have to find out the rest.

That being said, there is a tiny cemetery about a half a mile down the road from where I grew up on a mountain in Danby, Vt. There are six to eight grave markers visible from the road. I have never taken the time to stop and look at those stones but I have asked my dad about them. He grew up on that mountain yet he seems to know very little about them. Why is that, I wonder?

Fast forward to my growing up and renting my first apartment and discovering a cemetery about a half a mile down the road. This cemetery has around 30 grave markers present. I took the time to walk in and look at the markers. To my astonishment, every marker was for a child. No one buried in the cemetery was over 16 years old—curious, don't you think?

Moving forward to present time and my involvement with the WHS, I received a call from John Wulfken concerning an article he had written about some missing gravestones in a small cemetery about a half a mile up Harrington Hill Road.

#### Society Page

# PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The Society again raffelled off two kayaks acquired from F.R. Smith in Bolton Landing thanks to Dennis Martinez. We sold tickets at the Glens Falls National Bank Customer Appreciation Day and at the Farmers Market on July 15. Tickets were sold at the Museum and Sticky Wicket Croquet Tournament and on Garage Sale Weekend, when the drawing was held. This was a major fundraiser. The kayaks were won by Austin Pastore of North Hudson. *(below)* 



The Sticky Wicket Tournament on August 7 at the Fish Hatchery had perfect weather and exciting games. The championship was won by Al Leger from Queensbury. Al is 82 and is the oldest player to win the tournament. He was also the oldest when he won in 2004 and 1999. It was Al's lucky day, as he and his wife also won the drawing for a stay at the Cornerstone Victorian Bed & Breakfast. Master Chef Brian Engle again did the BBQ chicken and corn to perfection, and Peggy Knowles did an excellent job organizing the event.

Our secretary Sharon Stone has now taken over the Society's bookkeeping from Sandi Parisi, who has held that job for many years. Thank you, Sandi.

Our board held a special meeting with ten members of the Bolton Historical Society board on September 7 at the Museum. It was an opportunity to get acquainted and for the Bolton board to learn about the

(Continued on page 3)

# **Quarterly Editor**

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

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

Paul Gilchrist: President

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Kim LeCount

Sandi Parisi: Town Historian

Steve Parisi: Museum Director

# **Board Meetings**

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

#### NOTICE

The recording of history is an interpretive and ever changing study. Therefore, the Warrensburgh Historical Society or its Board of Directors or members shall not be held liable for the accuracy or authenticity of the material herein.

# Membership Information

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

# **Contributors to this issue**

Rita Ferraro Sharon Stone Paul Gilchrist Steve Parisi

We welcome and encourage corrections, comments, and additional information as well as articles from our readers

# **CURRENT MEMBERSHIP:**

# 258

Warrensburgh Historical Society Website: www.whs12885.org Email: whs7396@yahoo.com

#### **<u>NEW MEMBERS</u>**:

Sunny Lou Aiken-Lyon Alan Grant New Beginnings Merrill Magee Inn Miller Mannix Schachner & Hafner LLC Tops

# **IN MEMORIUM**

John Wulfken Founding member & former VP of the New Society Robert Frank Music teacher Warrensburg High School

# **Holiday Dinner**

Tuesday, December 6th at Lizzie Keays Call 504-4043 for reservations

Social 5:30 PM / Dinner 6:30 PM Price: \$30—tax & tip included

Membership Rates				
Students	\$5.00	Contrib- uting	\$55.00	
Individual	\$15.00	Business	\$50.00	
Family	\$25.00	Institutional	\$100.00	
Senior (62+)	\$10.00	Life (Individual	\$300.00	
Senior Fami- ly	\$18.00	only)		

#### President (continued from page 1)

years of work that went into upgrading our museum to reopen it several years ago. Bolton is now finishing a new addition onto their museum and they are facing a similar daunting task. We know they're up to it and will do it right.

On September 21, we hosted the Warren County Historical Society's program by Dick Nason, presented in the community room of Richards Library, which served as co-host. The logging heritage of our town and this region were evident as a standing-room-only crowd filled the room right to its maximum allowed capacity of 75. Nason's films date back almost a century, including high-quality color footage from the 1930s. The enthusiastic audience asked questions and made comments for over 20 minutes.



Mikelean Allen is chairing our Graveyard Walks this year, which feature a military theme. The walks will be on October 21st and 28th at 7:00; tickets are \$8 ; call Liz Sebald at 623-9367. There will be complimentary desserts at the Senior Center following each walk. Dinner with the Dead will be at the Merrill-Magee Inn on October 30 at 6:00. The price is \$35.56. Call for reservations: 623-2030.



"In 1997, November was established as New York State History Month by the New York State Legislature. The goal was "to celebrate the history of New York State and recognize the

contributions of state and local historians." New York State History Month provides the opportunity for historians, museums, and cultural institutions to highlight the ways in which history is vitally important in our lives as New Yorkers, and the ways we can all work to preserve it. "

The museum will be participating in the Shop Local Saturday on November 26 from 10—4, all books will be discounted.

Please take some time to visit the museum. Revisit your favorite exhibits and check out any new displays and of course browse our selection of books.

#### Wheeler (continued from page 1)

"The Secretary of War has decided to hold two experimental military camps of instruction during summer vacation. Should these camps prove a success it is intended to hold them annually. The object of these camps is primarily to increase the present inadequate personnel of U. S. trained military reserve by a class of men from whom in time of national emergency, a large proportion of commissioned officers will probably be drawn, and upon whose military judgement at such time the lives of many other men will in measure depend."

Despite short notice, two successful camps were conducted that summer in Gettysburg, PA and Pacific Grove, CA. There were no extra appropriations, nor did Wood attempt to obtain any. In addition to transportation costs to and from camp, the training cost for each man was \$27.50 : \$10.00 for uniforms and \$17.50 for food.

In 1914 the European Continent was engulfed in war, causing the idea of military preparedness to take on new urgency for Americans. Concern was particularly strong in New York and the Northeast. Influential young eastern executives and politicians became so anxious about the issue they almost spontaneously created what became known as the "Plattsburg (\*spelling at the time) Movement." Hundreds of 30- and 40-year-old distinguished and not so distinguished public and private leaders, including 36-year-old NY Mayor John Purroy Mitchel, volunteered for summer camp at Plattsburg Barracks in upstate New York. Quentin and Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. also attended, as did Julius Ochs Adler, general manager of the New York Times.

The Plattsburg Camp was in addition to the camps for college men which continued in 1915. The four-week training at Plattsburg was officially known as the "Business Men's Camp" but branded by the press as the "Tired Business Men's Camp."

One of the nation's most vocal and distinguished proponents of military readiness took to his "bully pulpit" to express his enthusiastic support of summer military training for young men. Theodore Roosevelt said "The military tent where boys sleep side by side will rank next to the public school among the great agents of democracy."

The graduates of the 1915 and 1916 camps gave the spark for the formation of the Military Training Camps Association (MTCA) with the core of its membership principally alumni of Plattsburg Training Camp.

### CITIZENS MILITARY TRAINING CAMPS (CMTC)

The Citizens Military Training Camps were a continuation of the Plattsburg camps, a volunteer pre-enlistment training program organized by private citizens before the United States' entry into WW I. The camps were set up and funded by the "Preparedness Movement" a group of influential pro-allied Americans. They recognized that the standing U.S. Army was far too small to affect the war and would have to expand immensely if the United States went to war.

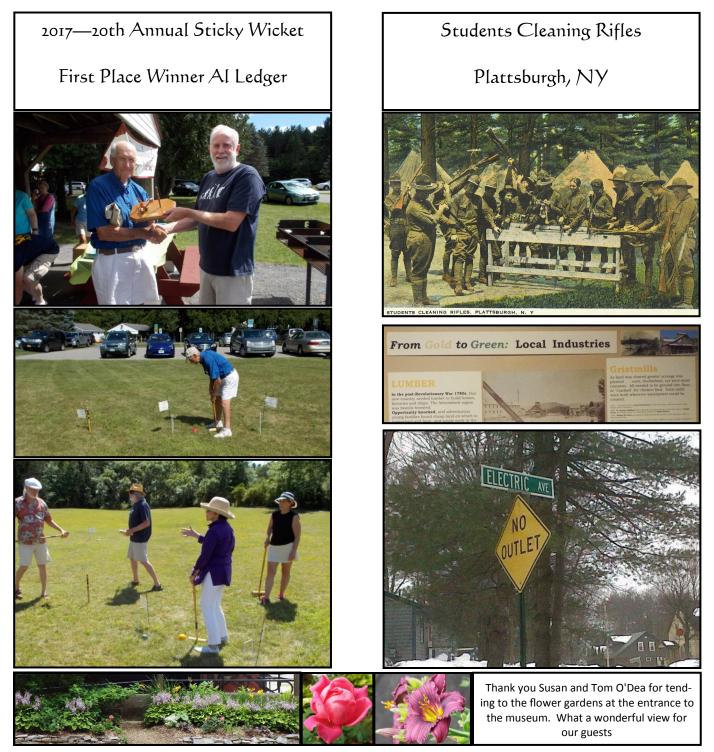
CMTC camps were a month in length in the summer and held at about 50 Army posts nationally. At their peak 1928-1929 at least 40,000 men received training. The program established that participants could receive a reserve commission as Second Lieutenant by completing four successive summer courses. However, only 5,000 such commissions were awarded over the 20 year history of the CMTC.

The mission of the camps was "To develop the manhood of the nation by bringing together young men of high and different types of both native and foreign born from all sections of the country, on a common basis of equality and under the most favorable conditions of outdoor life; to teach them privileges, duties and responsibilities of American Citizenship; to stimulate the interest of the country's youth in the im-

portance of military training as a benefit to the nation and the individual taking such training; to inculcate selfdiscipline and obedience; and to develop these voung men physically, mentally and



(continued on page 5)



### Members of the Bolton Historical Society tour the museum





#### Wheeler (continued from page 3)

#### morally."

Some well-known participants were Harry S. Truman, Ronald Reagan and Chuck Yeager.

There was another participant who may not have been well-known nationally but eagerly completed the course. At age 18 Franklin K. Wheeler, Warrensburg native, served in the CMTC program at the Plattsburg Barracks August 5th through September 3, 1927. He then went on for advanced training. Franklin was a lifelong resident of Warrensburg, although born at the family camp in Gull Bay on Lake George in 1909. He was the youngest of three children. His mother, Bessie died in 1925 when he was just sixteen. His father, Charles E. Wheeler, died in 1952.

Franklin married Ella Paige in 1930. In 1939 their son Charles Bertram Wheeler was born. Prior to that, two children,

Franklin, Jr. and Bessie both died at birth. In the early 1940's they built a Cape Cod style home at 31 Fourth Avenue in Warrensburg.

Franklin's hobbies included hunting, fishing, camping and rifle marksmanship.



Charles E. Wheeler (Frank's grandfather), Frank, Bertram Murray (Frank's uncle) Plattsburgh on Aug. 18, 1927.

(Possibly it was his CMTC training that spurred his interest in these particular hobbies.)

In his civilian career, this fine American citizen, wore many hats: D&H Railroad in Thurman; the American Locomotive in Schenectady and GE in Fort Edward. He also worked for his uncle, Bertram Murray, who was the first Superintendent of Highways in Warren County. He was a Special Deputy Sheriff under Sherriff Dick Baker. Most significantly, for 25

PRESIDENT CALLS FOR WAR DECLARATION, STRONGER NAVY, NEW ARMY OF 500,000 MEN, FULL CO-OPERATION WITH GERMANY'S FOES years he served as a NY State Forest Ranger, 1946-1971. Franklin K. Wheeler died on August 28, 1997.

New York Times April 3, 1917 Internet reference sources: 1) The Relevance Archive, Autumn 1997 issue, volume 6, #4, Plattsburgh Movement, by Donald Kington 2) Wikipedia, Civilian Military Training Camps

3) Warrensburgh Historical Society 2006 Spring Quarterly: Charles Wheeler article: "Forest Ranger, Franklin K. Wheeler"



# Mondays in the Museum by Sharon Stone

I have the pleasure of driving down the Northway by way of Minerva to Warrensburg every Monday to work at the museum. Paul comes in and works at the desk next to me and we entertain each other as we finish our respective tasks. He is educating me on climate science and I regale him with stories that appeared in my Facebook stream. There are things that I look for when I arrive at the museum. As I walk across the parking lot the abundance of color in the flower beds catch my eye (see page 4 photos). One of my favorite items in the museum is the vintage wedding dress in the glass case against the far right wall. To my dismay, when I arrived at the museum the last Monday of September, Rita was replacing the wedding dress with something new. I voiced my sadness over not being able to see the wedding dress to which she replied "Now you have something new to see." In case you did not know, Rita takes care of the clothing displays at the museum. Not only did she swap out the wedding dress with something just as amazing, she also changed the clothing on the porch display. No spoilers, if you want to see Rita's wonderful work you will have to pay a visit to the museum.

One other item that catches my eye are the tea cups in the china cabinet that came from the David M. Woodard Estate. They are so delicate and have such beautiful designs.

They make me smile because they remind me of my daughter who became a tea connoisseur after spending time in Taiwan. She would love these cups, especially the one with the mustache protector. (*go to page 7*)

### Israel Meade (continued from page 1)

The missing stones were hose of Corporal Israel Meade and his family. Corporal Meade was a civil war hero who settled in Warrensburg, NY in the late 1800's.

John's story intrigued me for many reasons. The missing headstones brought me back to my past and my experience with graveyards a half a mile down the road.

Remember the whats, wheres and whyfors I mentioned earlier? Well, this story has them aplenty—enough in fact to draw me in. I felt the need to know more about Corporal Meade and so began my journey.

In my search, I found myself at *onebigfamilytree.com* where presumably a relative of Israel Mead archived the many documents available concerning Corporal Mead.

There are several articles from the Warrensburgh News linked on the site. One article (Feb. 20, 1902) concerning Israel Meade not paying his school taxes read incredibly similar to John's story and brought forth more personal connections. This event involved a Collection Officer named Alfred C. Stone whom later became Sherriff Alfred C. Stone, a man I had learned about through the 2015 Graveyard Walks. In summary, Corporal Meade had not paid his school taxes in 3 years. His argument was that he was a pensioner and therefore exempt from paying school taxes. Officer Stone informed him that this was not the case and stated that since the taxes could not be paid they would take a cow in lieu of payment. There is a follow up article (Feb. 27, 1902) concerning the public auction of the cow.

Also archived on the site are two other articles; one concerning Mr. Mead's penchant for causing excitement in town and the other his obituary. I highly recommend reading the original articles as the vernacular of the time is much more entertaining than my summary. I have included the original articles following this piece.

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# Warrensburgh Historical Society's 20th Annual STICKY WICKET Croquet Competition & Pienie

At the Fish Hatchery Sunday, August 07, 2016

Another success, thanks to a good crowd, great weather, Croquetmaster Brendan Hanley and Super Chef Brian Engle!

# First Place Winner: Al Leger

# Our thanks to the following sponsors: Croquetmaster's Circle: Cronin's Golf Resort

# Premier Wicket Membership Level:

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Warrensburg Volunteer Fire Co. \*

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Al Leger, 82, from Queensbury, lines up his shot through the final wicket on his way to victory in the 20th annual Sticky Wicket Croquet Tournament sponsored by the Warrensburgh Historical Society on Sunday, August 7, at the Warren County Fish Hatchery These local businesses support our efforts to preserve Warrensburg's history. Please tell them how much you appreciate it when you shop at their establishments

# Warrensburgh Historical Society

# News from the Museum

# CALLING ALL CRAFTSPEOPLE!

You can participate in our next exhibit, *Holiday Craftsmanship*, due to open Saturday, December 3. The opening will be in conjunction with the town-wide Christmas in Warrensburgh celebration. The exhibit will remain up through the middle of January.

Society members and local residents are invited to lend us a sample of their handmade craftsmanship. Needlework in the form of knitting, cross-stitch, crocheting, quilting or sewing, woodworking or carvings, stained glass, painting or sculpture, and even holiday recipes may be submitted. (Recipe samples for the opening reception would be welcome!)

Unique holiday-related sweaters, stockings, placemats and other table decor, snowmen, mittens, tree ornaments, wreaths or garlands, holiday decorations, toys or games for any season, are just some of the "artifacts" that will help make this exhibit interesting to everyone.

Participants are asked to send a submission form with a brief description by November 14, with the actual object delivered to the museum by November 18. (This will help us organize the show and give us a handle on the number of submissions.) The form will be available at the museum, on the museum website (<u>www.whs12885.org/museum.html</u>) or on the Society's and Museum's Facebook pages and can be delivered to the museum or mailed to Museum Exhibit, P.O. Box 441, Warrensburg, NY 12885.

All submissions will be returned after Wednesday, January 18.

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(continued on page 7)

#### Museum (continued from page 6)

An opening reception for participants and Society members will be held on Friday, December 2 between 6 and 8 pm. The museum will be open to the public on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 3 & 4 from 10 am to 4 pm. Holiday refreshments will be offered.

For more information contact Steve at parisi39@yahoo.com or 232-7349.

#### HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Saturday, November 26 is **Shop Local Saturday**, sponsored by the Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce. The museum will be open 10 am to 4 pm. All books will be specially discounted that day.

(Preview our offerings online at http://www.whs12885.org. Click on the link to the Book Corner.)

Mondays *(continued from page 5)* I took some time to run a quick search about the history of tea in Warrensburg. I did not find much but I did stumble on an article from Lancaster Farming: The Farmers Choice which was published on Nov. 1, 2014, about Artifact Night at the Museum in 2014.

Sarah Farrar said her parents found a Staffordshire cup and tea caddy, made in England from the 1830s to 1860s, when they moved into the family home in 1942. It had been left there by relatives that previously occupied the house, possibly her grandfather, Charles Stewart, who purchased 200 acres for \$1,000 in 1851 and sold off parts of the property to cover the expense. "It was in the top shelf of the cupboard when my parents moved in," Farrar said of the pottery. The cup's design has a priory on the outside. The tea caddy shows Ontario Lake scenery. Both are blue and white and are considered transferware. Ink was applied to a paper design and laid on white pottery, transferring the image onto the item, which was then glazed and baked to produce the finished piece.

I have been working at the Museum every Monday for just over a year now. I so enjoy the drive down especially now when the leaves are so beautiful and I look forward to discovering something new, to me anyway, old to most, when I take a moment to walk around. If you stop by for a tour, don't forget to look up.

Israel Meade (continued from page 5) Author's Note: The cemetery near my childhood home is called Baker's Cemetery and has 15 - 20 headstones. The most recent is dated 1971. At the time that I lived near the cemetery, it was in woeful condition. I am happy to report that it is now being well cared for and maintained. Some of the people buried there are distant relatives of mine. The Children's Cemetery is actually called the Old Catholic Cemetery. The Cemetery was decommissioned so to speak and the interred were moved to the new cemetery in 1985. It is unknown if all the bodies were transferred and there is no record of which of headstones are still marking the location of the deceased. Several years ago the local middle school took on the process of caring for the graveyard. The 8th grade students not only maintain the grounds but have been trained in repairing the headstones as well.

#### QUESTION OF SCHOOL TAX.

IT LEADS TO A SERIOUS DIFFICULTY ON HARRINGTON HILL. The Warrensburg News 20 Feb 1902 / p. unknown, col. 3

To enforce the law has a brave sound, but Collector Alfred Stone found difficulty in going about it Saturday. In the extreme process of collecting a relaid school tax from Israel Mead, of South Warrensburgh his pulse went up in the air before he got through with the undertaking in this instance.

"General" Mead is a well known personage in these parts. He is a veteran of the civil war and any G.A.R. gathering would have a lonesome feeling without him. In health and contentment "the general" lives on the edge of Harrington Hill.

How blest is he whose wish and care A few paternal acres found. Content to breathe his native air On his own ground.

The above in connection with horse, cows, poultry and a pension keeps Mr. Meade in independence, free from want or care. It is his custom to come to the village several times a week he owns one of the best horses in town.

Collector Stone had spoken to Mr. Mead a number of times of late about paying his taxes, a matter of \$9.44, three years school tax relaid on the town. A pensioner is not exempt from school taxes, but the collector was given to understand that his occupation was gone as far as getting the above amount was concerned.

Coming to the conclusion that it was going to be a chase for his money, Mr. Stone took Jack Murphy in with him Saturday and started for Harrington hill and the home of Mr. Mead. "The general" was at home but refused to talk business - he did not propose to pay the \$9.44 and defied the authority of the collector to get it. Mr. Stone thereupon began to look around for loose property. He had not far to look.

A barnyard scene! On one side stretches the winter landscape, bleak and bare. Everything around so still and quiet looking. Not a leaf stirred. Within the yard enclosure a number of cows are silently ruminating, perhaps of pastures green, chewing the reflective cud. But the semblance of things changed when Mr. Stone suggested that in lieu of \$9.44 he proposed to take a cow! At this "the general" drew himself up with a flourish and threatened to shoot before he would allow a cow of his to leave the premises.

Seeing that the time for argument was up Mr. Stone proceeded to halter one of the cows and had finished the job just as Mr. Mead appeared flourishing a forty-four Smith & Wesson. The logic of how best to bring matters to a focus now stood Mr. Stone in hand. TO face a "forty-four" is a nerve tester and the collector did not proposed to be a mark, so he proceeded to disarm "the general>" During this brief interval Jacek Murphy was leading the cow toward town. In the general confusion the collector as bitten badly o the calf of his left leg by Mr. Mead's big dog.

It would not be surprising if quite a crowd attended the public tax sale of the cow and the revolver which is advertised to take place Saturday afternoon at 1 o'clock n front of the Adirondack hotel.

#### STEWART FARRAR SCRAPBOOK

Warrensburgh-Lake George News 08 Mar 1973 p. 2, col. 1

Stewart Farrar's scrapbook relates the following in an item from the issue of Feb. 27, 1902: "It looked like old town meeting times in front of the Adirondack Hotel Monday afternoon, when the public sale of Israel Mead's cow took place to satisfy a re -laid school tax or \$9.44 and costs. The chorus of bids was not loud or excited and the animal was finally "knocked down' to James Palmer, Mr. Mead's son-in-law for nineteen dollars. Owing to the illness of Collector Alfred Stone, Constable Jerry Moynehan had the proceedings in charge."

#### ISREAL MEAD

The Morning Star Newspaper Glens Falls, NY 21 Dec 1903 / p. 5, col. 2 Israel Me/ ad, of Warrensburg, died at his home on Harrington hill, Saturday, aged about seventy years. About two weeks ago he was driving home from Warrensburg and let go of the reins for a minute. The horses started and he was thrown from the road cart, striking on his head and shoulders. While no bones were broken, he was badly bruised and shaken up and was obliged to take to his bed. Later pneumonia set in, from which he died. Mr. Mead was a veteran of the civil war. He leaves two sons and one daughter. Warrensburgh Historical Society PO Box 441 Warrensburg, NY 12885

# **Member Address**



Mystery Photo Can you identify this photo as to where it was taken from and what it depicts? Email answer to: whs7396@yahoo.com or call Paul at

The Mystery Photo in the last Quarterly (Summer 2016, Volume 21, Issue #2) showed Karl Duell's Garage and Oldsmobile dealership on north Main Street, opposite the Town transfer station. It operated from 1932 until 1939, when it burned. In 1940, Karl opened an Esso Service Station and Oldsmobile Salesroom where Dragon Lee is today. Fifteen years later he moved the business north of town near the intersection of Routes 9 and 28. That garage also burned in 1960, but was reopened in 1963. The photo was correctly identified by Charlie Roberts. More people should have identified it, as it's on page 41 of the Society's book Warrensburg New York, 200 Years, People. Places, and Events (now on special sale for \$10 at the Museum).