

Hillcroft



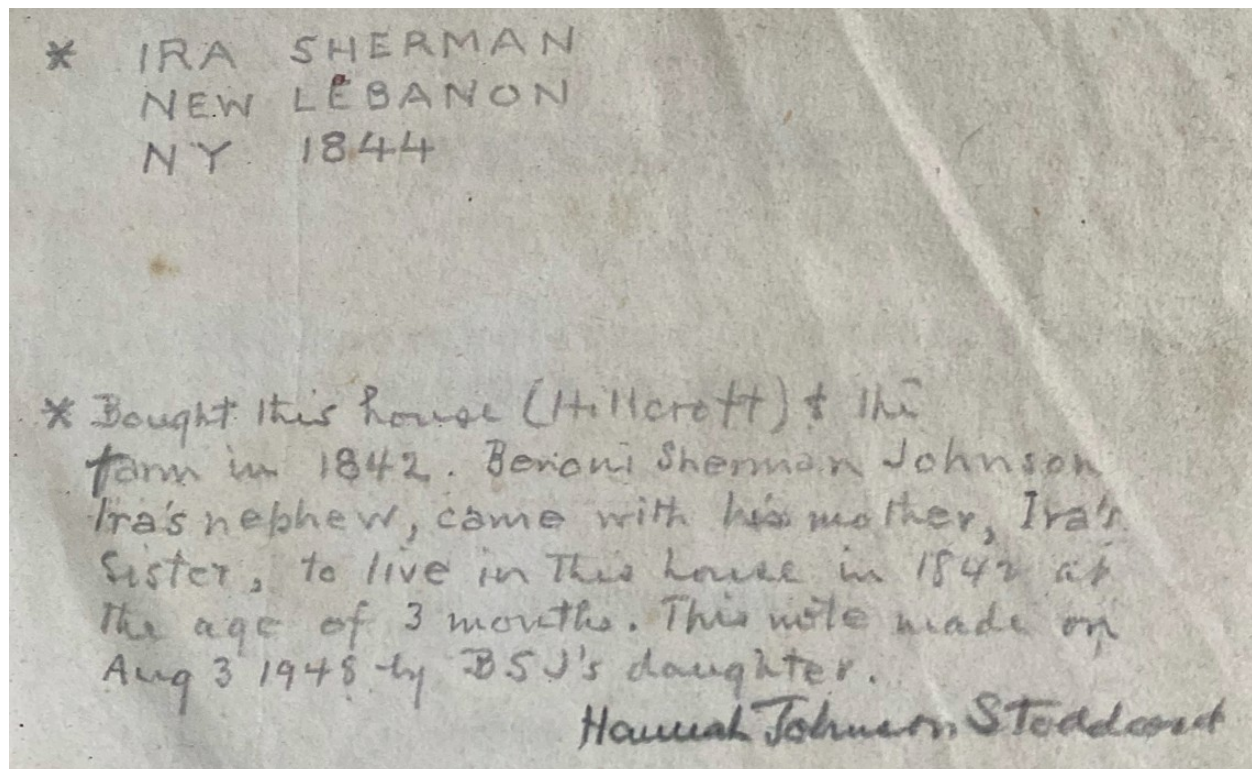
Watercolor painting of Hillcroft by Benoni J. Truslow, c. 1945, courtesy Ron and Mary Jo Johnson. _The frame of this painting has a back pocket containing a 1987 photo of Ben and Mary.

In the absence of any known documentary evidence and judging by construction techniques and building materials, Hillcroft appears to have grown out of the c. 1780-1800 central section of the current house which is the three bay, south facing, side gabled block that contains the living and dining room, fireplace and south end of the kitchen or pantry. The door to the flagstone terrace and Pagoda would have been the initial front door to the house. The more formal Federal style block facing County Route 5 was likely added during the period 1800-1830 based on architectural details from that period (this part of the house was updated with Colonial Revival style features by Sanford Stoddard around 1922). The summer kitchen and back porch were added before 1940, based on paintings of the porch done by Jessie Stuart Stoddard around that time and based on an insurance company's 1939 plan of buildings on the property. The name Hillcroft, included on the 1939 plan below, means "Flat spot on the side of a hill" or a "Farm on a small hill" and was likely applied in the late 19th century during the growth period of leisure time and vacation home ownership.

Ira Sherman was the initial family member to own the house when he bought the farm in 1842 from the judge and county recorder, Darius Peck, according to the deed from that year.

Involvement by the county authorities suggests the farm may have been in foreclosure at the time. And according to a note in a bible on a shelf in Hillcroft's game room written in 1948 by Hannah Johnson Stoddard, her great uncle Ira "bought this house (Hillcroft) & the farm in 1842. Benoni Sherman Johnson, Ira's nephew, came with his mother, Ira's sister [Sally Sherman Johnson] to live in this house in 1842 at the age of three months", thus establishing the family's presence in Canaan. The note would suggest Benoni's father Jason Herbert Johnson was also present starting in 1842, a theory borne out by another inscription written by Hannah, this one on the back of the photo of Jason hanging in the stairway. Jason later became the owner and his name appears next to the house as it is depicted on the 1851 Otley and 1858 Balch maps of Columbia County. Subsequent owners and occupants, initially as farmers and later as summer residents, included Jason Herbert Johnson's sons Ira and Benoni (Also a DB occupant), Benoni's friend Goodwin Stoddard (The Elder) starting in 1895, Goodwin's widow Julia in 1905, their son Sanford Stoddard in 1919 and then the older folks we remember, Johnson, Goodwin (The Younger) and David Stoddard and their descendants. Note that any living Johnsons have a Swedish root and are genetically unrelated to prior Johnsons, they being English or Scottish.

Note on the flyleaf of a bible in Hillcroft's game room written by Hannah Johnson Stoddard in 1948 (Great Grandmother of Ethan, Stod, Jennifer, Ann, Mark, et al).

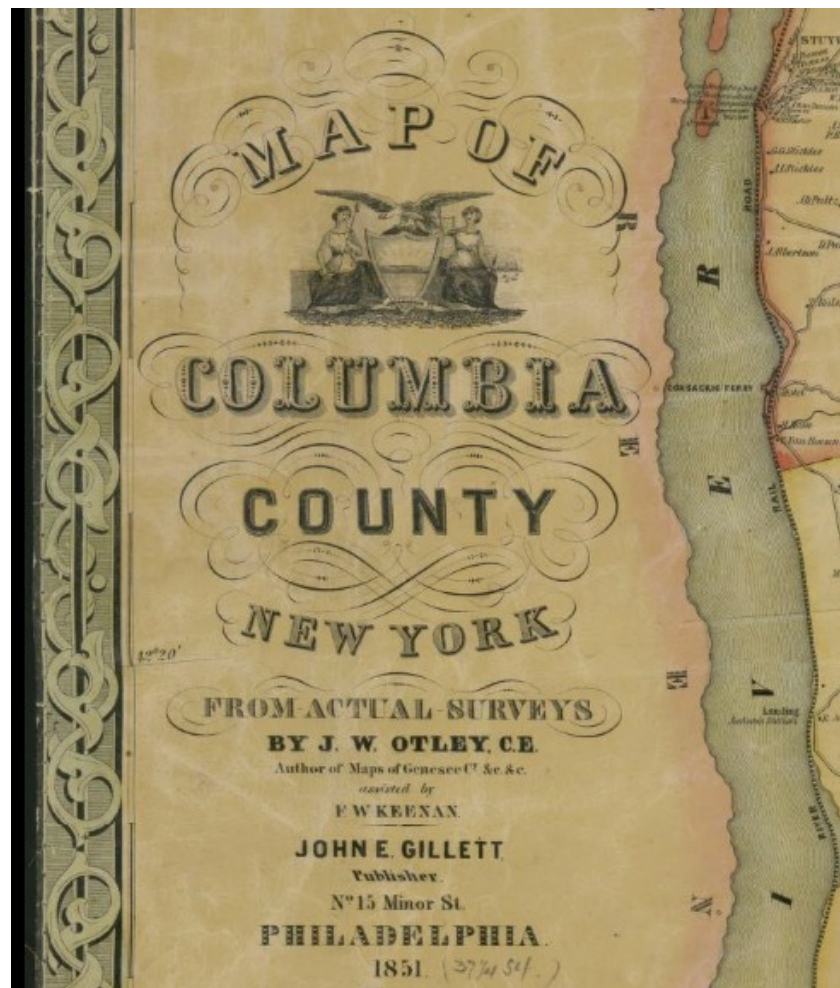


Jason Herbert Johnson



Inscription on the back by Hannah Johnson Stoddard: "Jason Herbert Johnson, 1st resident of Canaan Farm in 1842, Purchased by his brother-in-law, Ira Sherman, a bachelor too ill with tuberculosis to work it, given to stalwart Jason who was called to the village to challenge & fight braggarts. He once threw a pursuing bull by grabbing his horns. His wife was Sally Sherman, d'ter of Benoni Sherman."

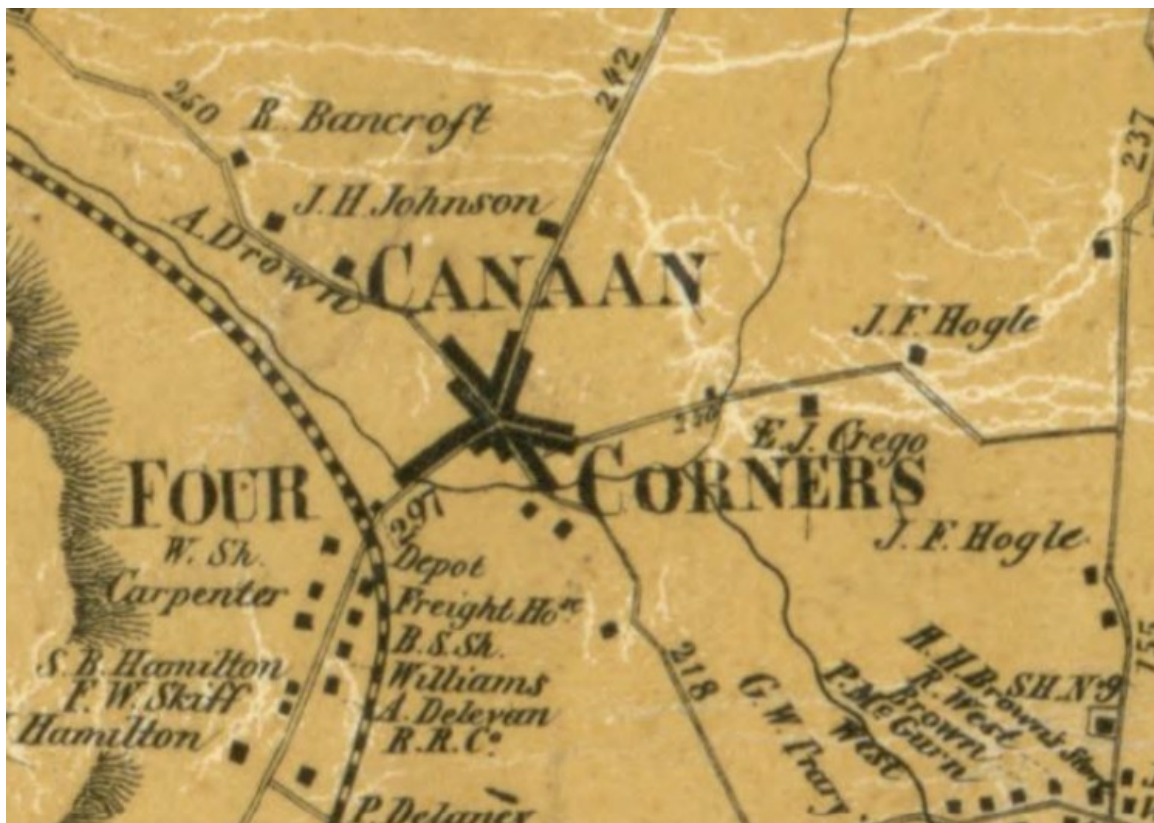
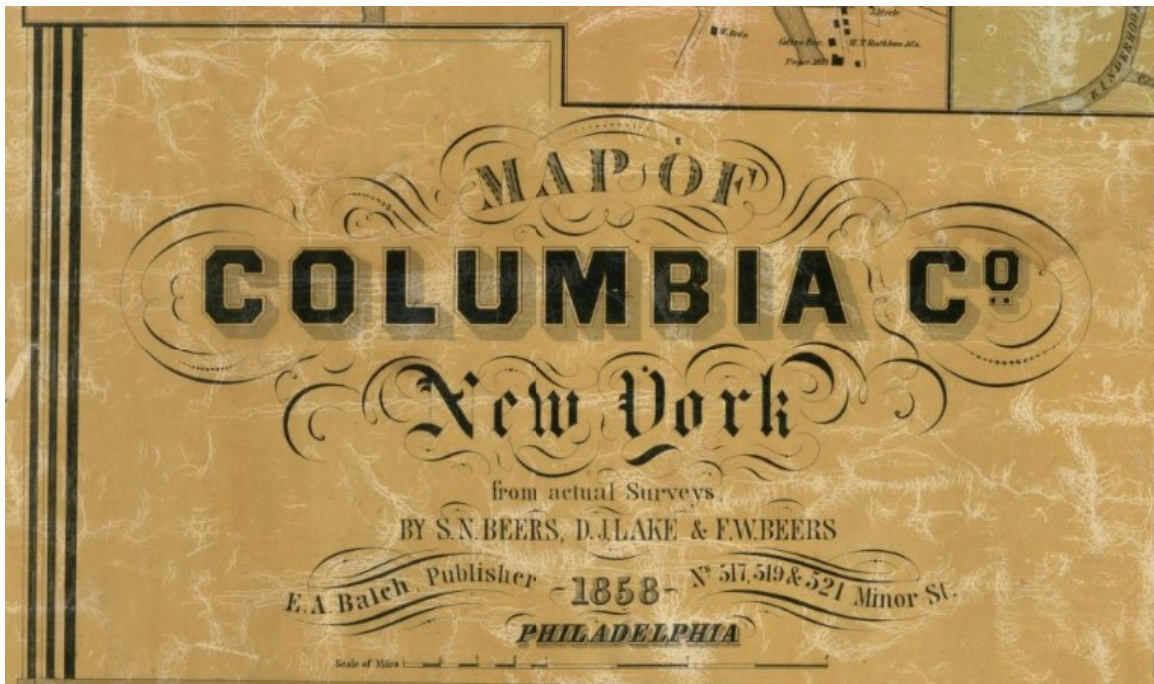
1851 Map of Columbia County, J. W. Otley



Canaan 4 Corners, 1851 map detail



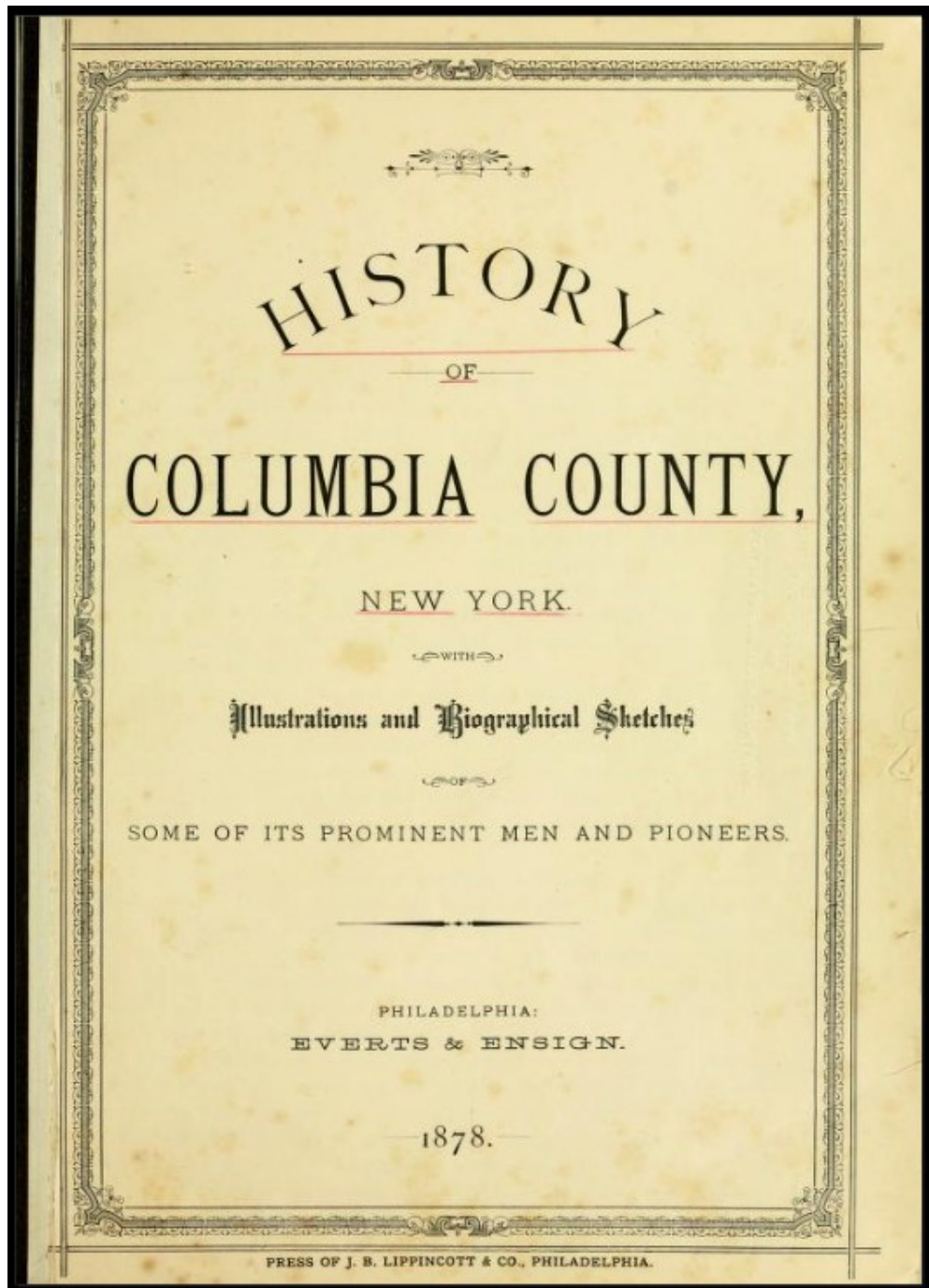
1858 Balch Map of Columbia County, NY, depicting Jason Herbert Johnson (Father of Benoni S., Ira and Jason M. Johnson, not born in that order) at the location of Hillcroft:



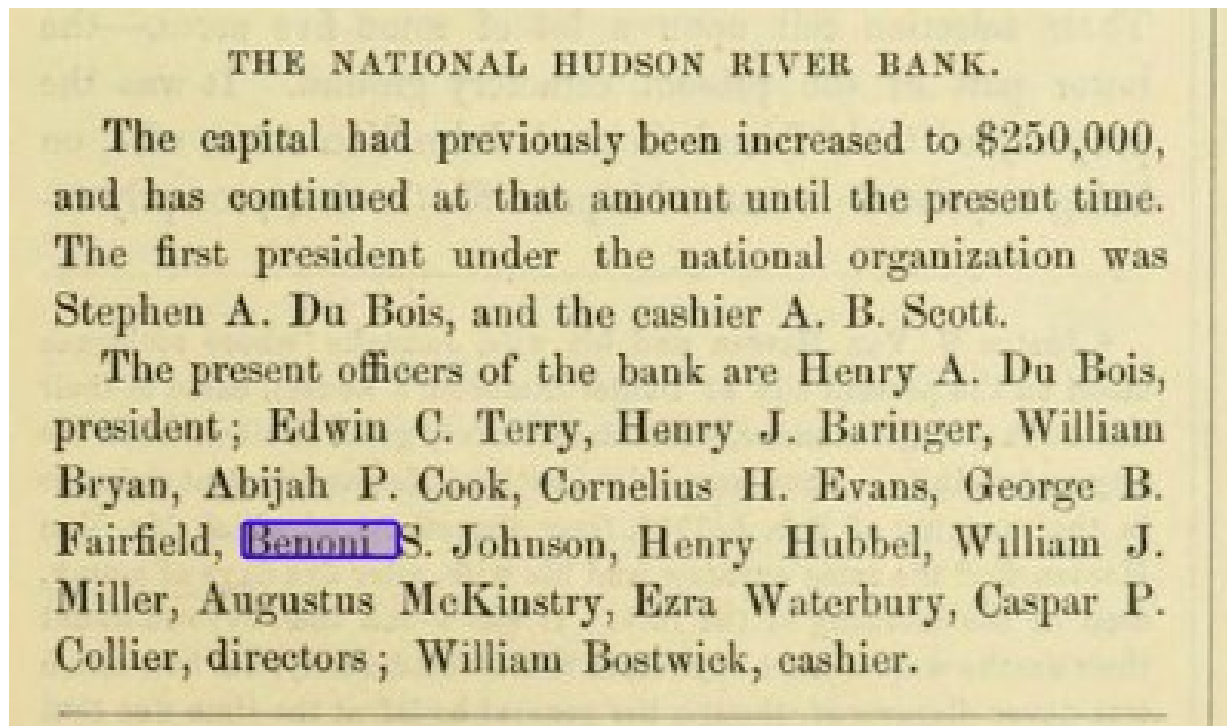
1858 Balch Map Four Corners village detail



Title Page, Everts & Ensign History of Columbia County, 1878

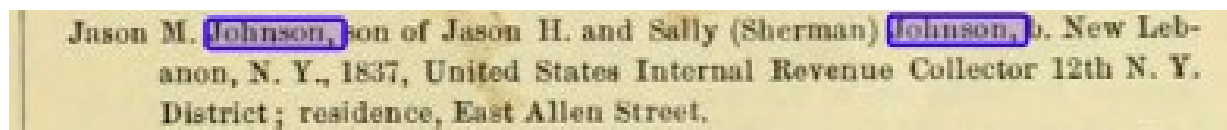


P. 179, Everts & Ensign (1878):



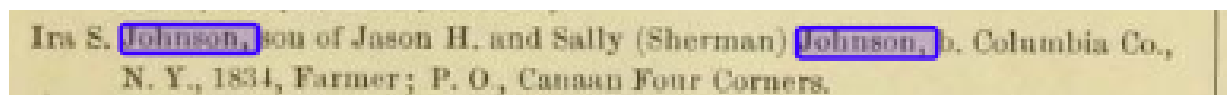
Benoni S. was a son of Jason H. Johnson.

P. 437:

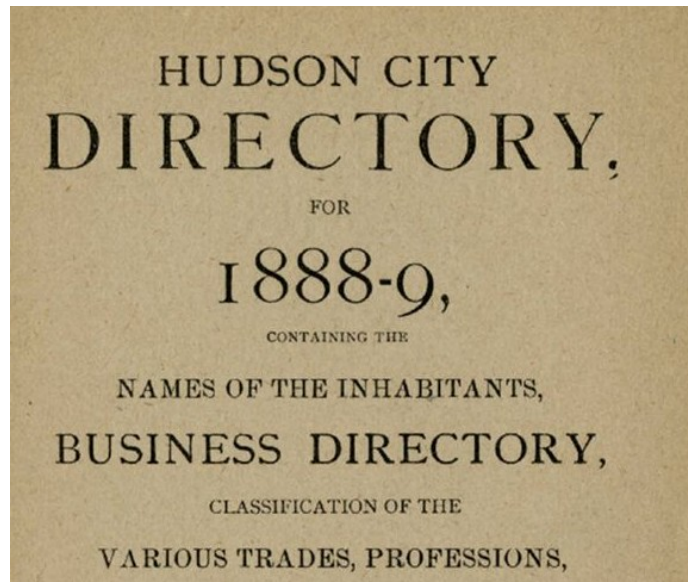


East Allen Street being in Hudson, NY

P. 444:



Hudson City Resident Directory for 1888-9



JOHNSON BENONI S., coal, N Seventh and
Ferry dock, house 254 (454) Warren.

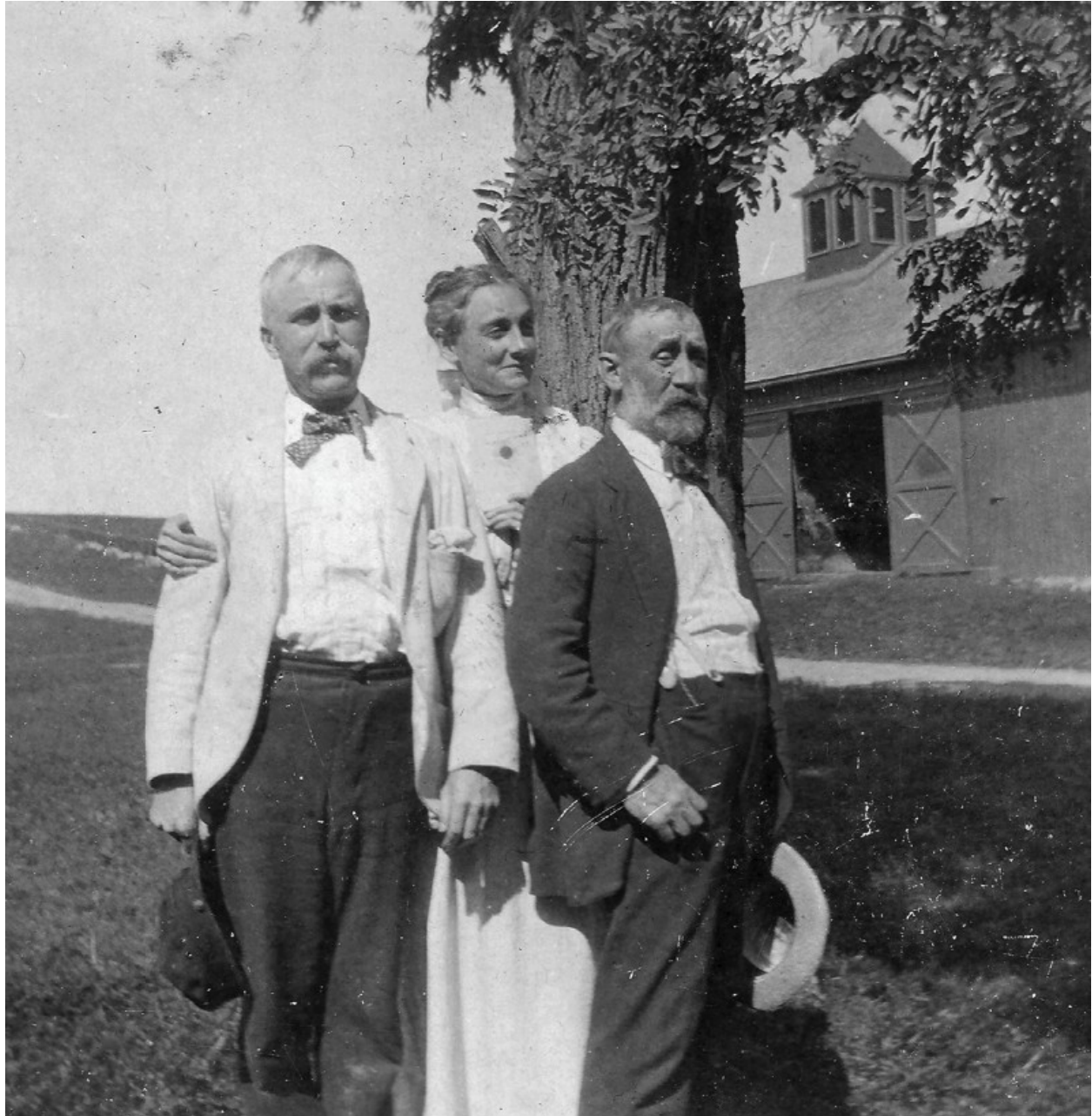
JOHNSON JASON M.,
drugs, medicines, paints and oils, Warren
cor Fourth, house 208 E Allen.

Columbia County Registry of Deeds, Grantee Index, 1800-1925, S Section: 2231, Page 1

Grantee index entry depicting the conveyance of real estate, most likely Hillcroft, from (Hudson, NY and later seasonal Pasadena, CA resident) Benoni S. Johnson to his (Bridgeport, CT) friend Goodwin Stoddard the Elder in 1895. This is followed by conveyances from Goodwin to his wife Julia in 1905 and, after inheriting from Julia, from G & J's #2 son Henry B. (his half interest) to his brother Sanford in 1919.

YEAR:	A B C D E	F G H I J	K L M N O	P Q R S T	U V W X Y Z	GRANTEES.	GRANTORS.	WIFE &c.	Liber.	Page.
1905		Julia E				Stoddard	Goodwin Stoddard		167	240
1895		Goodwin				Stoddard	Benoni S Johnson	Annie G	167	242
1919				Sanford		Stoddard	Henry B Stoddard		167	394

Goodwin Stoddard the Elder, his wife Julia (Sanford) Stoddard and Benoni S. Johnson (Who arrived at Hillcroft as a 3-month-old). Photo, c. 1906, courtesy of Mary and Stu Stoddard. The absence of Benoni's wife Annie G. Johnson from the photo suggests her as the snapshooter. Note that it was Benoni who occupied both HC and DB at different times over an 84-year span and was instrumental in settling both the Stoddards (in 1895-see above) and Berrys (in 1906-see below) in Canaan.



Oil Painting #1 of Hillcroft, 1940s by Jessie Stuart Stoddard, Grand D'ter in law of GS above, D'ter in law of Sanford Stoddard, Wife of Goodwin the younger and G'Ma of Ethan, Jennifer, Charlie and Sanford.



Oil Painting #2 of Hillcroft, initialed by Jessie Stuart Stoddard, 1940s.



Duffield Bank



Double rainbow photo by Jon Truslow

While Duffield Bank is not depicted across the road from Hillcroft on the 1858 Balch/Beers map of Columbia County (Then occupied by Benoni S Johnson's father, Jason H. Johnson), the architectural style of the house indicates it was likely built shortly after that date. It was in place by the time of the 1873 Beers Atlas and labelled as "Parsonage." By 1888, mapmaker Beers had labelled the house as being occupied by B. S. Johnson (father of Hannah and Hilda - Hillcroft was labelled on this map as the property of Ira S. Johnson, Benoni's brother) Duffield Bank would descend through the family of Annie W. and B.S. Johnson, Hilda Gould Johnson Truslow and Ernest Truslow, their children Anne and Benoni (and his wife, our favorite elder, Mary) and their children Jon, David, Stephen and Gill and now to the current trustee, Eric Truslow. We are not aware of any religious use of the house but do have faith in the 1873 mapmaker.

This house was enlarged several times, resulting in the irregular floor plan, porches and ell. I recall being told by Benoni Truslow that, like Hillcroft, the front door originally opened to the south. The gable returns on the elevation facing County Route 5 are a late Greek Revival feature while the carport has a delicate spindle frieze at the eave which is a later Queen Anne style element, together indicating the wide range of construction dates for different components of the house. The footprints of both DB and HC were complete by 1939 according to the insurance company plan drawn in that year and depicting in detail the houses, barns, porches and outbuildings. The name Duffield Bank appears originally to have been given to a much older house in Great Britain, possibly an ancestor's former residence. I also recall hearing that it had been applied more recently to a family member's house near Hudson, NY. and it was upcycled from that.

THE DESCENDANTS OF JOB ATTERBURY

BY

L. EFFINGHAM de FOREST, M.A., J.D., F.S.G., F.I.A.G.

AND

ANNE LAWRENCE de FOREST

THE DE FOREST PUBLISHING COMPANY

NEW YORK, N. Y.

1933

p. 36:

3. SARAH² ATTERBURY (Job¹) was born on March 7, 1781. She married her second cousin, Thomas Wright, son of William and Eleanor (Bakewell) Wright, of Sheffield, England. Their home was *Duffield Bank*, Hudson, New York, so named after the house of her great-aunt, Elizabeth (Woodhouse) Gifford, near Derby, England. Sarah (Atterbury) Wright's mother, Sarah (Bakewell) Atterbury, was brought up in the home of her aunt, Mrs. Gifford, after the death of her parents, and the tie between the families was doubtless a close one.

From: <https://www.earsathome.com/letters/Previctorian/gifford.html>

M^{rs} Gifford
Duffield Bank
near Derby
England
P. Labadie }

1828
Duffield Bank Vol. 4
near Hudson

The family book of Bakewell, Page, Campbell : being some account of the descendants of John Bakewell, of Castle Donington, Leicestershire, England, born in 1638. Benjamin Page, born in 1765, at Norwich, England. William Campbell, born July 1, 1766, at Mauchline, Ayrshire, Scotland. John Harding, of Leicester ---

Published 1896

Author Bakewell, B. G.

P. 19

THOMAS WRIGHT.

Sarah Atterbury⁵ (*Sarah Bakewell*⁴, *Joseph*³, *Robert*², *John*¹), of "Duffield Bank," Hudson, N. Y., second child of Job and Sarah (Bakewell) Atterbury, was born 7 March, 1781; married her second cousin, THOMAS WRIGHT, son of William Wright, of Sheffield, England, and Eleanor Bakewell, his wife. (See page 11.) Issue—

I. HANNAH WRIGHT, of Hudson, N. Y., *b.* 24 June, 1819; married Dr. John Stanton Gould, who died in 1874, leaving three daughters—

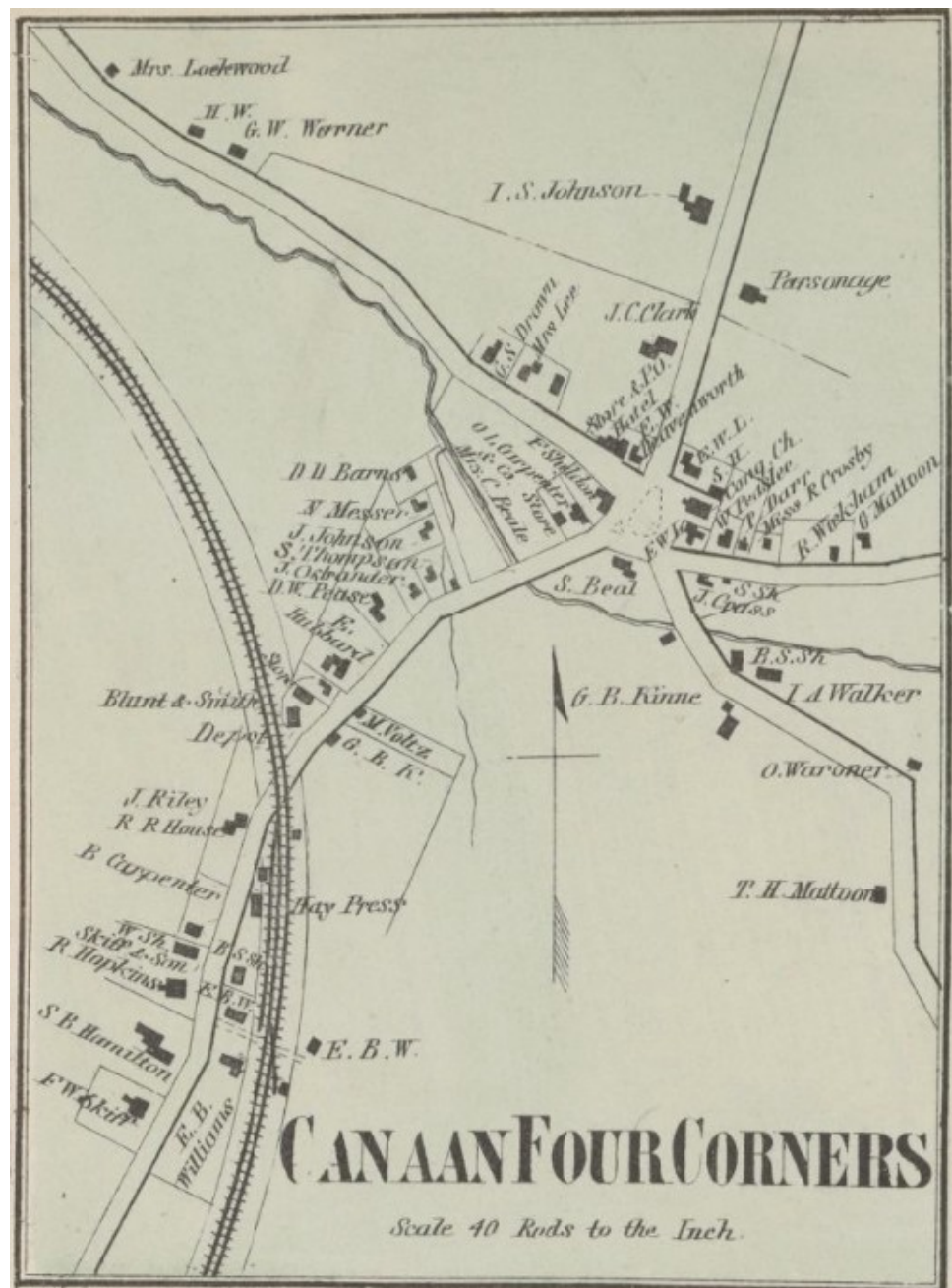
1. ELIZABETH WRIGHT GOULD; married Dr. William B. Berry, of Montclair, N. J.—
 1. *Romeyn Berry.*
 2. *Harriette Berry.*
2. ANNIE W. GOULD; married Dr. Benoni S. Johnson, of Hudson—
 1. *Hannah Johnson.*
 2. *Hilda Johnson.*
3. REBEKAH W. GOULD; married Bernard Gilpin Smith, of Berkeley, Harford County, Md.—
 1. *John Stanton Smith.*
 2. *Dorothy Smith.*

Lizzie summered in the Shanty and Annie summered in Duffield Bank. Rebekah married and moved to Berkeley, MD and, around 1920, to Brunswick, ME where she died in 1938.

1873 Beers Atlas, Columbia County, NY, depicting unlabelled houses at the locations of Hillcroft and Duffield Bank:



1873 Beers Atlas, Columbia County, NY, Canaan Four Corners detail, depicting the residence of Ira S. Johnson (Hillcroft) and the Parsonage (Duffield Bank):

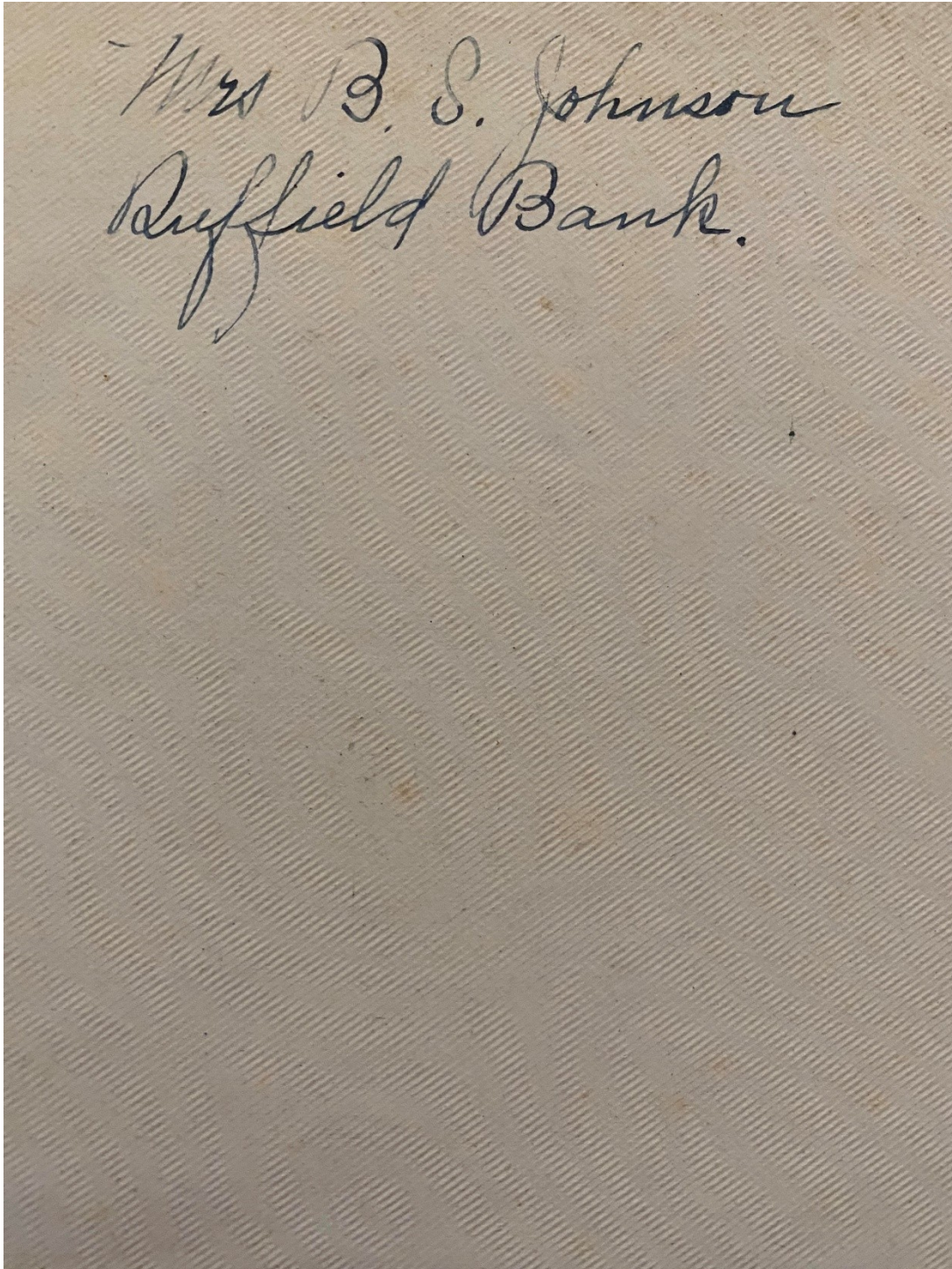


Canaan Four Corners Business Notices.

es.
dines,
Anoram.
al, "
kinds of Pic-

WHITING & JOHNSON, dealers in Hay, Straw, Coal,
Lumber, Shingles, &c.
E. W. LEAVENWORTH, Proprietor of Leavenworth Hotel.
L. GILE, Physician and Surgeon.
CANAAN PAPER CO. Manufacturers of Paper.
DAVIS & ALLEN, " "

This undated signature of Annie Wright Gould Johnson (1853-1941), mother of Hannah and Hilda, is on the flyleaf of the 1878 Columbia County history by Everts & Ensign, located on a shelf at Duffield Bank. See above for an image of the title page. The book makes reference to B. S. Johnson (See above, p. 8) among other ancestors.

A photograph of a flyleaf from a book. The paper is aged and has a diagonal ribbed texture. In the upper left corner, there is a handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Mrs B. S. Johnson" on the first line and "Duffield Bank." on the second line. The signature is written in a cursive style.

<https://historian.columbiacountyny.com/resources-for-study-of-local-history-museums-exhibits/additional-historical-resources>





NOTE: The photo album for this wedding is available in the SE room of Hillcroft

TRUSLOW—JOHNSON.

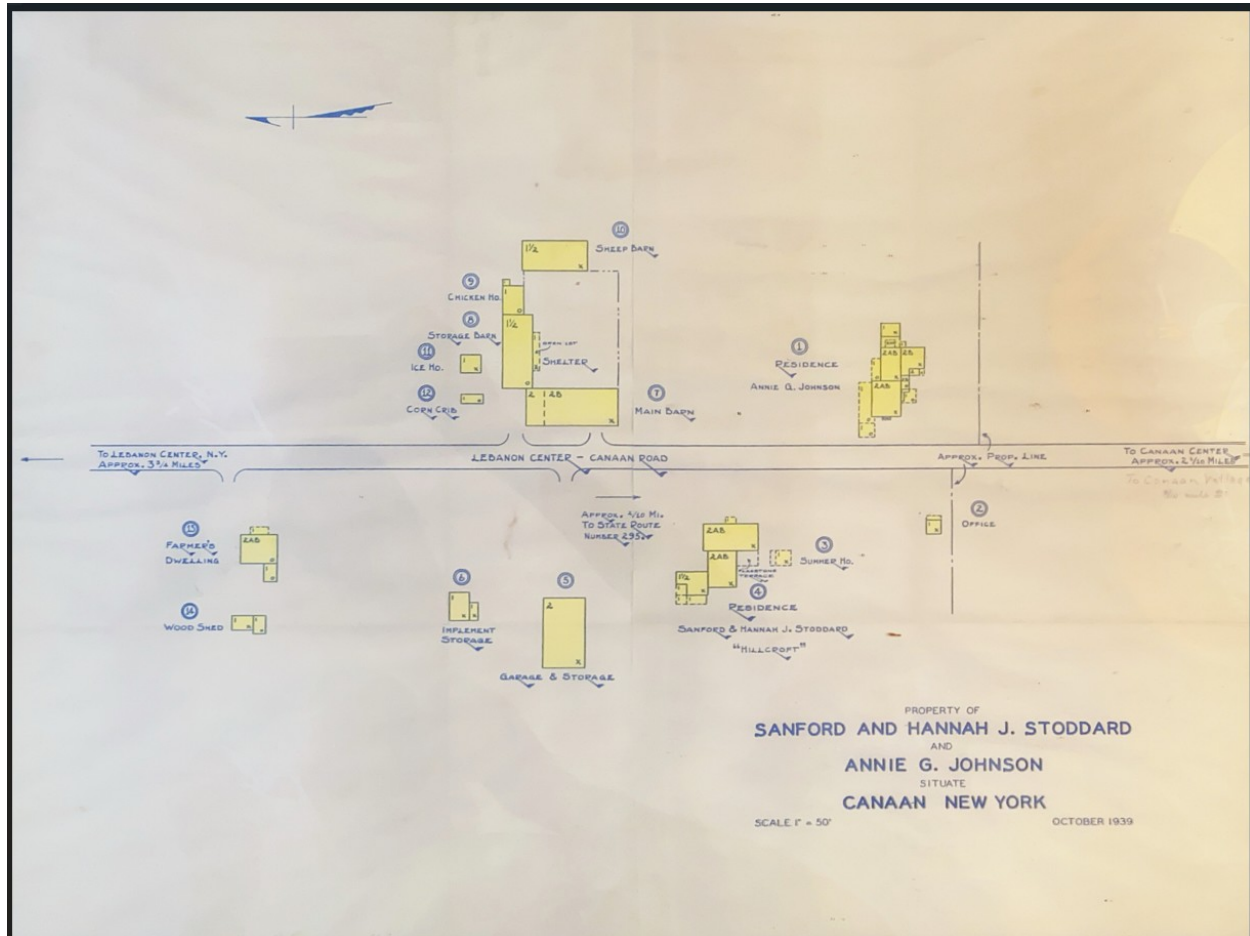
Special to The New York Times.

ALBANY, N. Y., Sept. 11.—Miss Hilda F. Johnson, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Johnson of Hudson, and Ernest Truslow of Summit, N. J., were married at Duffield Bank, Mr. Johnson's Summer home, to-day. The Rev. Dr. Ylesley of Hudson, the Rev. Dr. Hodges of Canaan, and the Rev. Dr. Atterbury of Philadelphia officiated. Mrs. Sanford Stoddard of Bridgeport, Conn., was the matron of honor, and Miss Mary Peck and Miss Harriet E. Berry of Hudson, Miss Candace Thurber of Brooklyn, and Miss Winifred Rand of Boston were the bridesmaids. Sanford Stoddard of Bridgeport was the best man, and Newton Adams, James P. Adams, and Holkins Palmer of Summit, N. J.; Osseau Ray of Boston, Henry B. Stoddard of Brooklyn, and George S. Mitendorf of New York were the ushers.

Mr. and Mrs. Truslow will reside in Summit after their wedding journey.

Note: Hilda was called Grandy by some and Aunt Hid and Hiddie by others. Some particulars above are incorrect.

“Insurance Company of North America Inspection and Survey Report: Property of Sanford and Hannah J. Stoddard [Labelled “Hillcroft”] and Annie G. Johnson, Situate Cannan, New York, October, 1939.” Annie was Mrs. B. S. Johnson, the property not yet being under the ownership of Ernest and Hilda (Johnson) Truslow, S & H’s contemporaries, which would happen by 1941. Note that all buildings are set at right angles to each other. This hangs in the living room at Hillcroft.



The Shanty



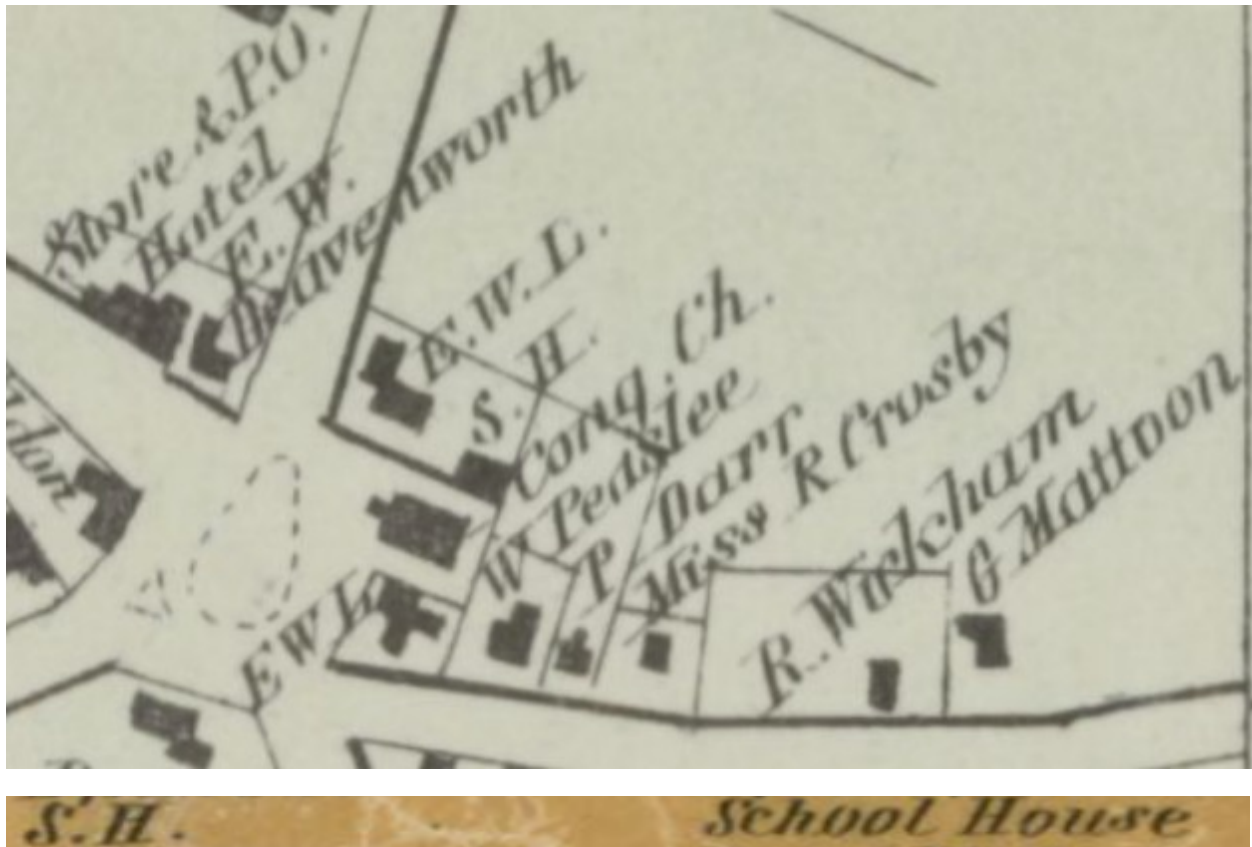
Watercolor by Elizabeth Wright Gould Berry (1851-1920), courtesy of Sally Sanford

According to family recollections (Peggy Tyson's and Sally Sanford's chief among them), The Shanty started life as a schoolhouse in the Four Corners village. The legend is that, having outlived its usefulness in that capacity, the schoolhouse was bought by Benoni Sherman Johnson for his sister-in-law Elizabeth "Lizzie" Wright Gould Berry, sister of Annie Wright Gould Johnson (wife of BSJ and Mother of Hannah and Hilda) and moved up the hill on rollers around 1900. In support of the theory, we can cite a Chatham Courier news item from July 25, 1906, which reports the sale of unspecified Canaan real estate by Benoni S. Johnson and wife to Elizabeth Gould Berry for \$350. This is probably a reference to The Shanty. It appears from diaries and letters that this was Lizzie's primary residence after retirement from working at Smith College and that she wintered with family members at various locations. The house has been used from that time as a summer place for members of the Berry and later the Tyson families, Aunt Peg being a long-term (adored and adoring) summer occupant.

Note on the watercolor by Lizzie Gould Berry that a tree comes up through the porch roof, indicating the porch was a later addition to the house. Lizzie also snuck in a miniature architectural rendering of the outhouse in her painting but she does not depict the south facing stairs off the front porch with flanking lilacs, indicating they came later.

Peggy Tyson made a rear addition in the early 2000s that now contains the kitchen and other spaces. The existing barn was built at a time unknown to me, but Mike or another family member might know that piece. The diary kept by Lizzie indicates the house was named “The Shanty” almost immediately after occupancy (by daughter Harriet) and that a barn did exist at that time, occupied by a family factotum named Seneca Livingston.

1873 Beers Atlas, Columbia County, NY, Canaan Four Corners, detail, depicting the possible location of the schoolhouse (S.H.) that we believe became The Shanty:



Conveyance notice from: <https://news.hrvh.org/>: Chatham Courier, 25 July 1906

**REAL ESTATE TRANS-
FERS.**

**Property in the County That Has
Changed Hands Recently.**

Alfred B. Ford to William B.
Daley, Copake, \$20
Benoni S. Johnson and wife to
Elizabeth Gould Berry, Canaan,
\$350.

Undated Shanty Photo courtesy of Jeremy Tyson:



USGS Map, Canaan, NY, 1927, updated 1946 (The fourth or fifth building depicted north of County 295 on the west side of County 5 is near the location of The Shanty):



Glengarry



Photo by Patsy McDonald

The McDonald summer house was constructed of chestnut harvested from the groves of Queechy Lake in the 1920's by Ira Finch, a railroad signal man according to a Chatham Courier article of February 3, 1921. The same newspaper suggests he did odd jobs, was an avid motorist and that he and his wife were quite friendly with Percy Fingar, a Stoddard family friend, chauffer and gas/repair station owner as well. Mr. Finch also appears to have served as Canaan Town Clerk around that time. Predating its occupancy by the McDonalds, Glengarry was put to use as the overnight getaway by campers attending "Boyville", a summer camp in Canaan that functioned from around 1916 until at least 1940 (See news item below). Boys would hike up Vandenburg Hill to the getaway camp which had a complete view of the lake and potato fields below.

Ruth McDonald, granddaughter of Lizzie Gould Berry, bought the house in 1948 for use as a summer residence. Ruth, having spent many joyful summers at The Shanty with relatives Harriet Berry Tyson, (Aunt Patty, sister of Ruth's father Romeyn Berry) felt the need for additional space as The Shanty was filling up with children and getting crowded. Ruth couldn't live without regular Canaan visits and found Glengarry a mile down the road, completing the purchase in 1948. The construction of Glengarry is unusual as it is held up with cables attached to a ridge pole and a beam. Willem and Patsy credit the chestnut joists and beam for keeping the house upright to these 100 years. The Glengarry name is derived from the McDonald castle in Scotland.

Chatham Courier, 3 February 1921

Ira Finch is able to resume his duties, in the railway signal service.

August 21, 1918

He was taken to the Pitcher residence in Red Rock by the Canaan authorities, Ira Finch, Town Clerk Frank Curtis, Justice of Peace and E. Hall, constable.

The Columbia County registry of deeds contains Patsy McDonald's 1995 deed (Book 802, Page 284) which refers to the 1948 deed into Ruth McDonald

Being the same premises conveyed by William K. Gimlich and Edith M. Gimlich, his wife, to Ruth Berry McDonald by Deed dated September 8, 1948 and recorded in the Columbia County Clerk's Office on October 1, 1948 in Liber 288 of Deeds, at page 476.

ON THE SHORES OF FAMOUS
QUEECHY LAKE.

The premises in the town of Canaan, known as the Henry Pinch farm, lately owned by Harry Miller and Alexander Henderson of Claverack, passed, Wednesday morning, into the possession of Anton H. Muller of the Allen-Stevenson school of New York city.

The purpose of "Boyville", as he outlines it, will be to give a boy physical, mental and character development. Mr. Muller will be the director of physical activities; John L. Miner, director of mental activities; Thomas Whewell, assistant director and John J. Gahde, assistant.

The farm consists of about 20 acres, with a 1400-foot frontage on lake Queechy. It has a five-acre grove near the lake, the remaining 15 acres being level land suitable for out-of-door sports. The headquarters will be in a nine-room house with dining room and lounging room. There is also a six-room cottage, infirmary and playroom 18 by 50 feet. The boys will sleep in tents. There will be baseball diamonds and tennis courts and a field for general sports. Water sports will be provided by power boats, rowing boats, canoes, rafts, etc. A physician will be available at all times.

Boys between the ages of eight and 15 years will be accepted and Mr Muller expects to provide accommodations for about 35. "Boyville" will open about the middle of June.

Last week Wednesday evening, at the schoolhouse, a men's social club was organized. Dr. Ira J. Schilling was made temporary chairman and Ira Finch was made temporary secretary. Robert A. Weir, Ira Finch and H. S. Johnson, Jr., were chosen as directors for three months, and Dr. Bartley was elected secretary and George D. Walker, treasurer. A house committee consisting of Dr. Schilling, O. T. Shook, Percy Fingar, Wm. M. Hall and Minard E. Fowler was appointed. It is intended that the club shall have a social room open one or two nights a week. Members are to be of the age of 18 years or over.

The Yundwell Farmer's House



Snip of a photo from Mary Stoddard dated 1906

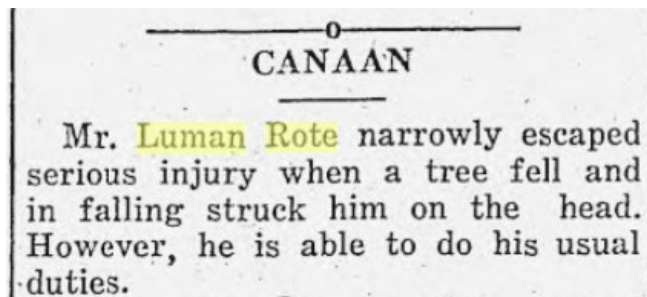
Based only on its similarity to some others and no kind of documentation, this may be an example of either a Sears & Roebuck, Aladdin or some other brand of mail order house that was delivered and assembled on site from a kit. Sears provided that service from around 1908 into the 1940's along with several other retailers. We know this one arrived on the early side of that range as it is photographed with Sanford Stoddard's new-looking 1906 Locomobile car. It may also have been built locally without benefit of a mail-order house given the early date.

Occupants of it over the years included Luman E. Rote (Lived 1876-c. 1946, worked here from 1910-1946, addressed as Lu by SS in one letter), Frank and Millie Santoro (1965 - c. 1980), Ken Wiggins (1988-2014) and as of 2015, our current caretakers and farmers, Mike Yund and Michele Maxwell. This house was renovated after the departure of caretaker Ken Wiggins with yeoman duty done by Stephen Truslow again (See below) as well as some family volunteers. It is unknown whether a tenant farmer lived in Hillcroft or elsewhere prior to construction of this house.

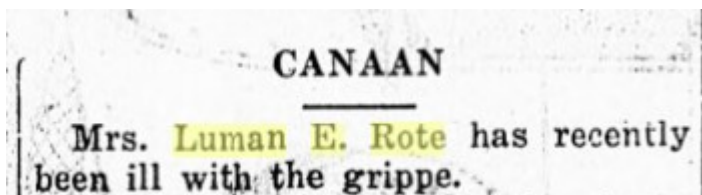
Plaque in Hay Barn.



Chatham Courier, 10 February 1921

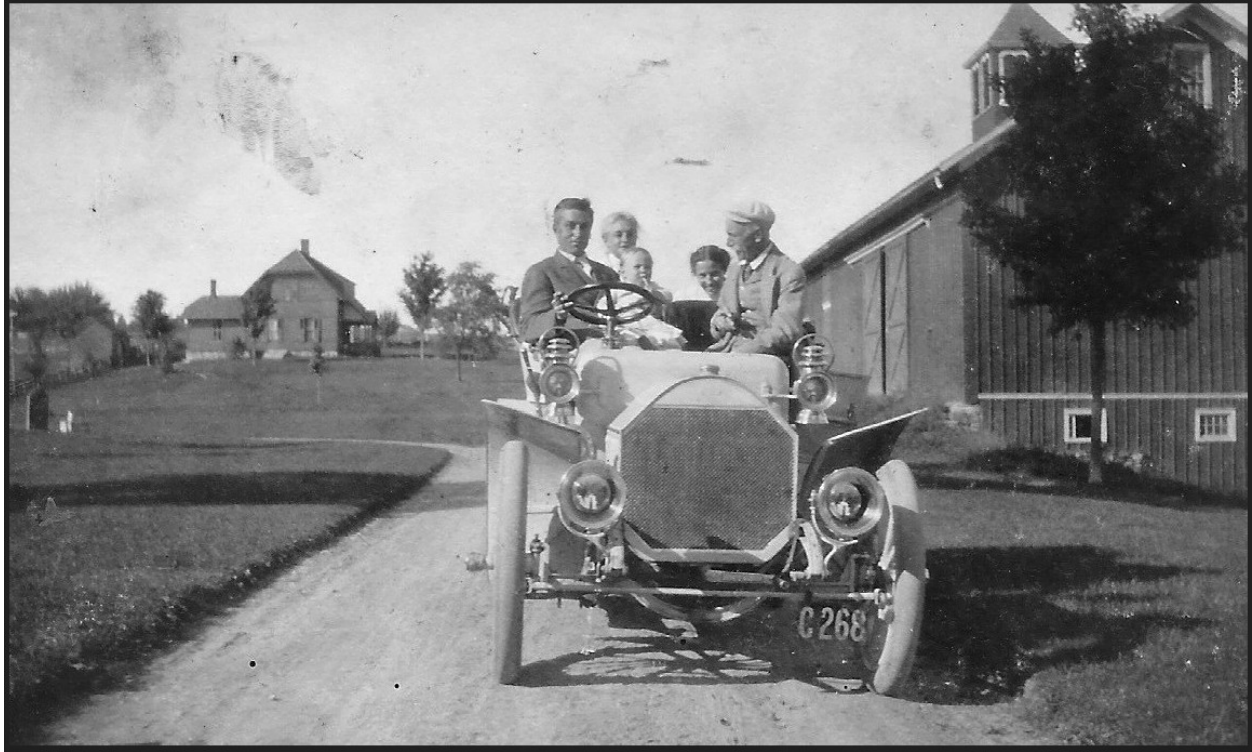


Chatham Courier, 2 February 1922



(Grippe being the flu)

Photo dated 1906 in the possession of Stu and Mary Stoddard, depicting Sanford, Johnson (born 1904) and Goodwin Stoddard (The elder) in the front seats, Julia and Hannah Stoddard in the back. The automobile appears to be a 1906 Locomobile, a Bridgeport, CT car company Sanford had an interest in.



Barns



Painting by Jessie Stuart Stoddard, c. 1950. Note that the corn crib in the foreground and hay barn on the right remain in place but not the three buildings on the left of the painting. See the 1939 insurance company plan for more information about them.

The weathervane on the Hay Barn bears the date of 1886 which is probably but not certainly the construction date. Recollections of family members living at that time (likely Hannah Gould Johnson Stoddard and Hilda Sherman Johnson Truslow) and recounted in the 1960's, indicate a prior barn was burned around that year on a Sunday morning while the family was attending services at the Congregational Church just down the hill. The barn was built to house dairy cattle as seen by the stanchions in the lower level, the concrete stave silo at the rear and by the milk room formerly attached to the southeast corner. Cows were present until the 1940s while hay baling in the field behind the barn continued into the 1970s based on recollections of family members. This barn was the subject of a New York State preservation grant in the 2000s that (along with family members' generous assistance) funded structural repairs and a new foundation. This involved an administrative challenge that was met by the trustees at the time, Ron Johnson and David Truslow.

The weathervane was removed, restored and replaced at some peril by the talented metal fabricator Shannon McDowell (father of Brandon and Skylar) in the 1980s and remains functional today. Note that the weathervane contains the initials H and DB.



The Car Barn is treated with details of the Italianate style, a common residential architectural mode that was somewhat unusual for a barn and is suggestive of a prosperous farming operation. The style was a common choice for houses in the region from around 1850-1875. Anne Finney told me that she once drove her grandfather Sanford's Cadillac in and out of the barn as a 17-year-old, suggesting 1950 or so as a date by which modern vehicles were stored there. Windows placed high up in the first-floor walls of the southwest corner of the Car Barn would be typical for lighting the interior of barn meant for a horse (and carriage) shelter, while window openings placed lower in the walls, as in the south end of the hay barn, would suggest it as shelter for cows.

Plaque in Car Barn. This and the Luman Rote plaque above were placed by Johnson Stoddard. Percy Fingar had a gas station on Rt 295. Bilfelt and Copperthwaite were chauffeurs and respected factotums.



Smaller Outbuildings

The “Think House”, or Office, was built, as I understand it, for Benoni S. Johnson, nicknamed “Skeezix”, around 1910 as a place for him to conduct business while away from his Hudson office. This is currently undergoing restoration by the Truslow brothers.

The Pagoda was built around the turn of the twentieth century and appears in photos in Hillcroft that may have been taken around 1900 (?). On the 1939 plan it is labelled as the “Summer House”

The Lean-To on High Thyme was built in the 1930s as a summer project by Goodwin, Johnson and David Stoddard, Benoni Truslow and others their age as a place to gather the family and for shelter in case of weather. A date of 1939 appears on some photos of the construction provided by Mary and Stu Stoddard. Faces are difficult to recognize but there was a “Woodie” station wagon in the picture.



This same group may also have dug out the flat space behind Hillcroft for a tennis court in the 1920s. The Lean-To was rebuilt by Stephen Truslow in the 1970s.

Corn Crib and Outhouse: These diminutive, undated and timeless buildings were both restored to some degree of utility and solidity in the late 1990s or early 2000s by our former caretaker, Ken Wiggins. The corn crib appears on the 1939 insurance plan but not the outhouse.

The silo behind the Hay Barn, probably built c. 1905, is concrete and at one time had a roof, likely a dome made of metal. I have not seen a picture of it prior to loss of the roof.

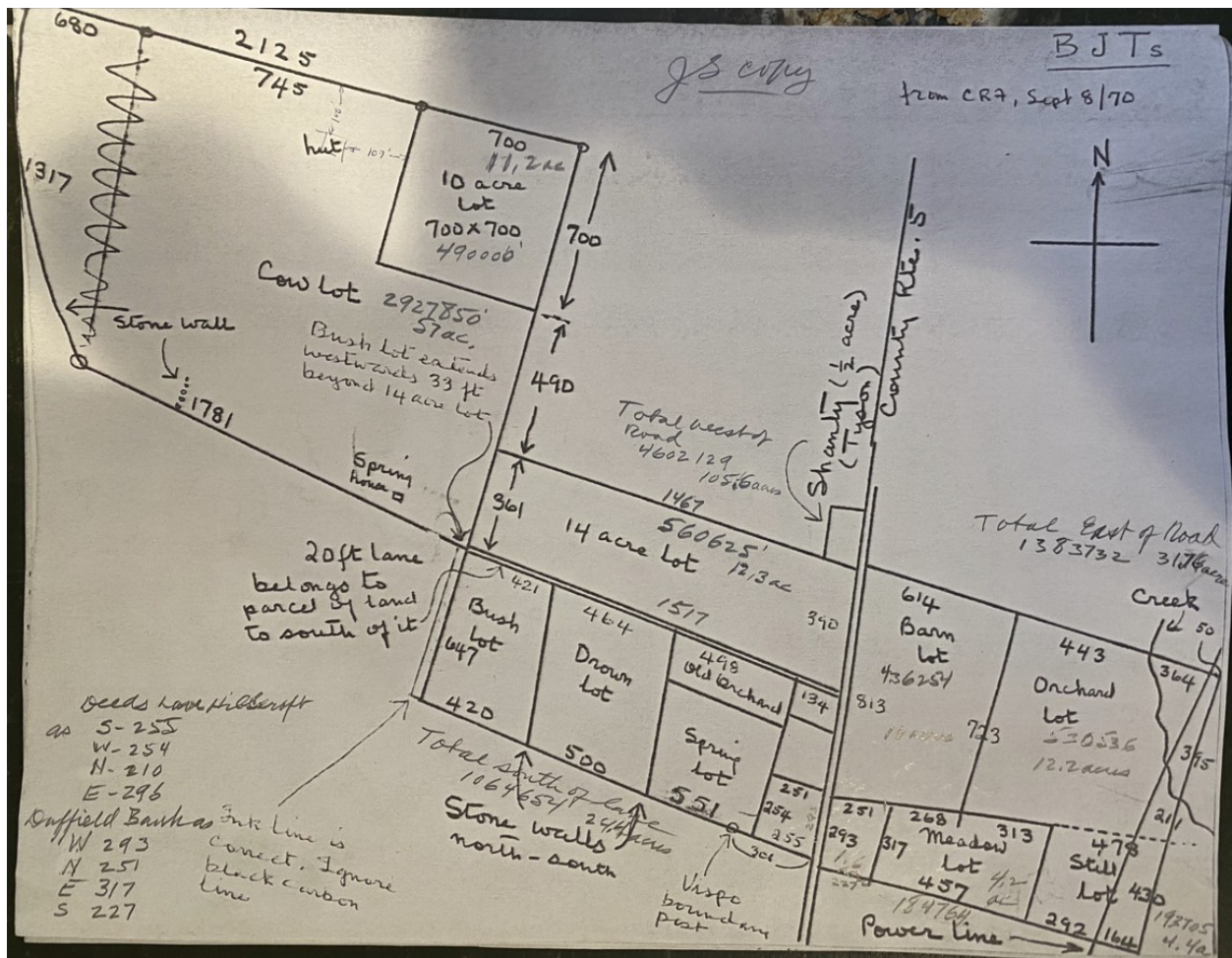
Note: There were multiple additional outbuildings on the property at one time. There was an icehouse north of the hay barn based on the 1939 insurance plan, an implement storage shed north of the car barn in the 1930s and a chicken house and storage shed off the rear of the Hay Barn until the 1980s when it was removed for safety reasons. The freestanding sheep shed east of the Hay Barn was demolished in the 1990s as well since it had succumbed to rot. There was a milk room attached to the southeast corner of the Hay Barn until approximately ten years ago.

The Land

Charles Feilding, (husband of Anne Truslow, brother in law of Benoni Johnson Truslow), drew a plan of the land in 1970 and included labels for the various lots and fields. These are helpful in recalling the uses the land was put to, as in “Orchard Lot”, “Still Lot” (Yes – that kind of still according to one note), Drown Lot (Named for a neighbor family) “Cow Lot” etc. Livestock pastured on the property also included sheep according to comments by the forester, Mike _____, in the early 2000s. He determined this by observing the mode of soil compaction and by the surviving sections of sheep fence attached to various trees along the perimeter.

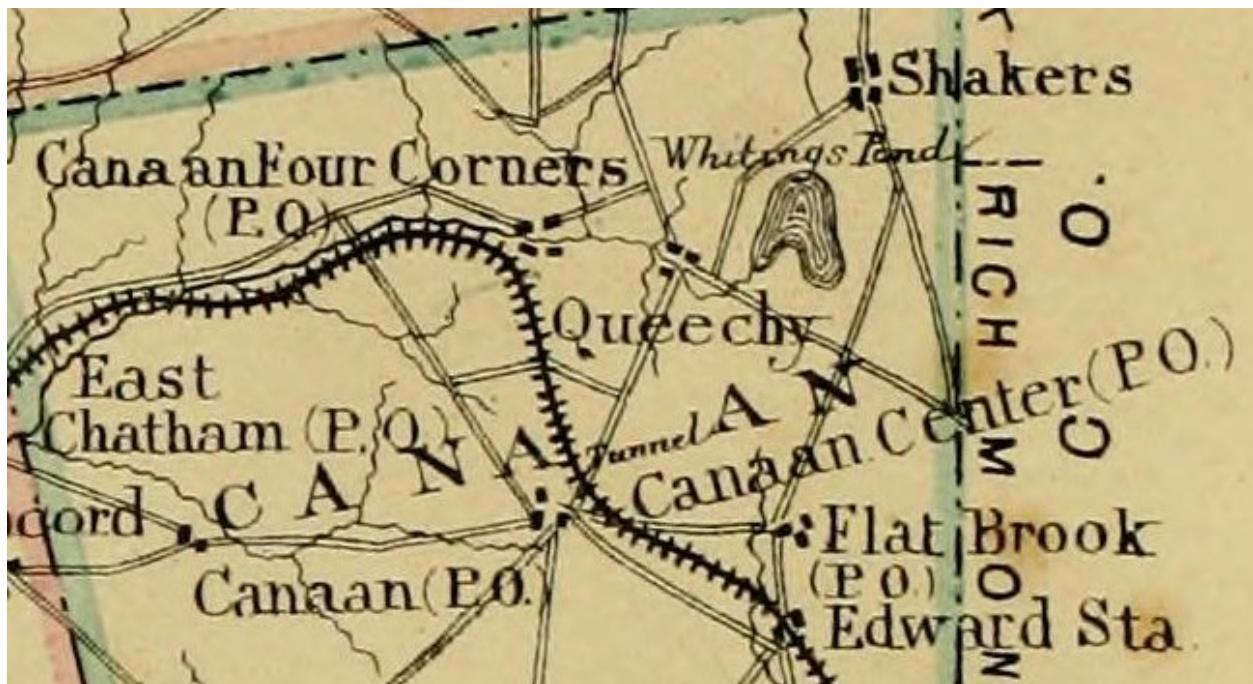
Census information provided to SJ by Canaan Town Historian Dodie Gearing in September, 2025 from the non-population schedules from 1850-1880 and other sources, tells us that at one point during that period, there were four horses, no mules, four milk cows, four oxen, four other cattle, no sheep (In contradiction to the statement by the forester Mike), six swine and stores of rye, corn and oats. The acreage was approximately the same then as it is now: 140 improved acres and ten unimproved acres, all valued at \$6000, which is high compared to other farms at that time.

Plan of land by Charles R. Feilding, September 8, 1970

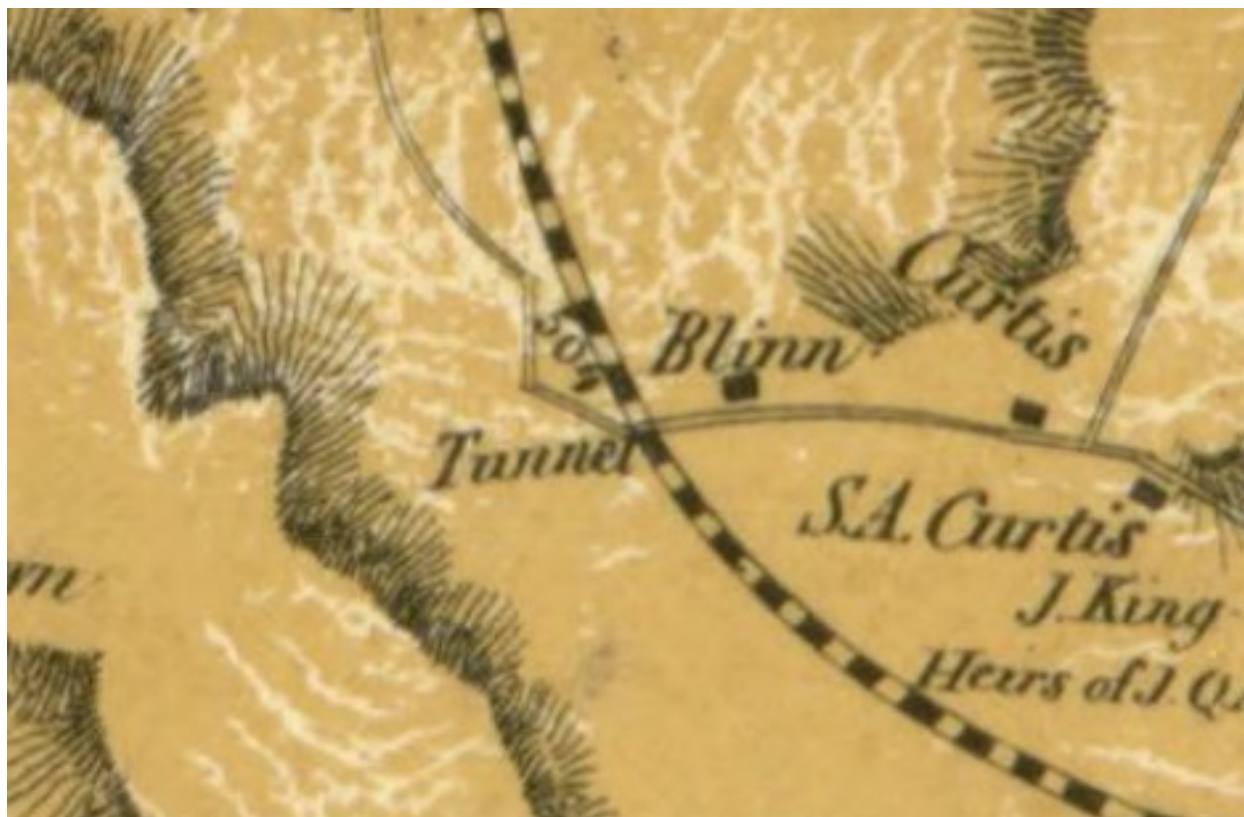


Canaan, map detail from History of Columbia County, New York, Everts & Ensign, 1878.

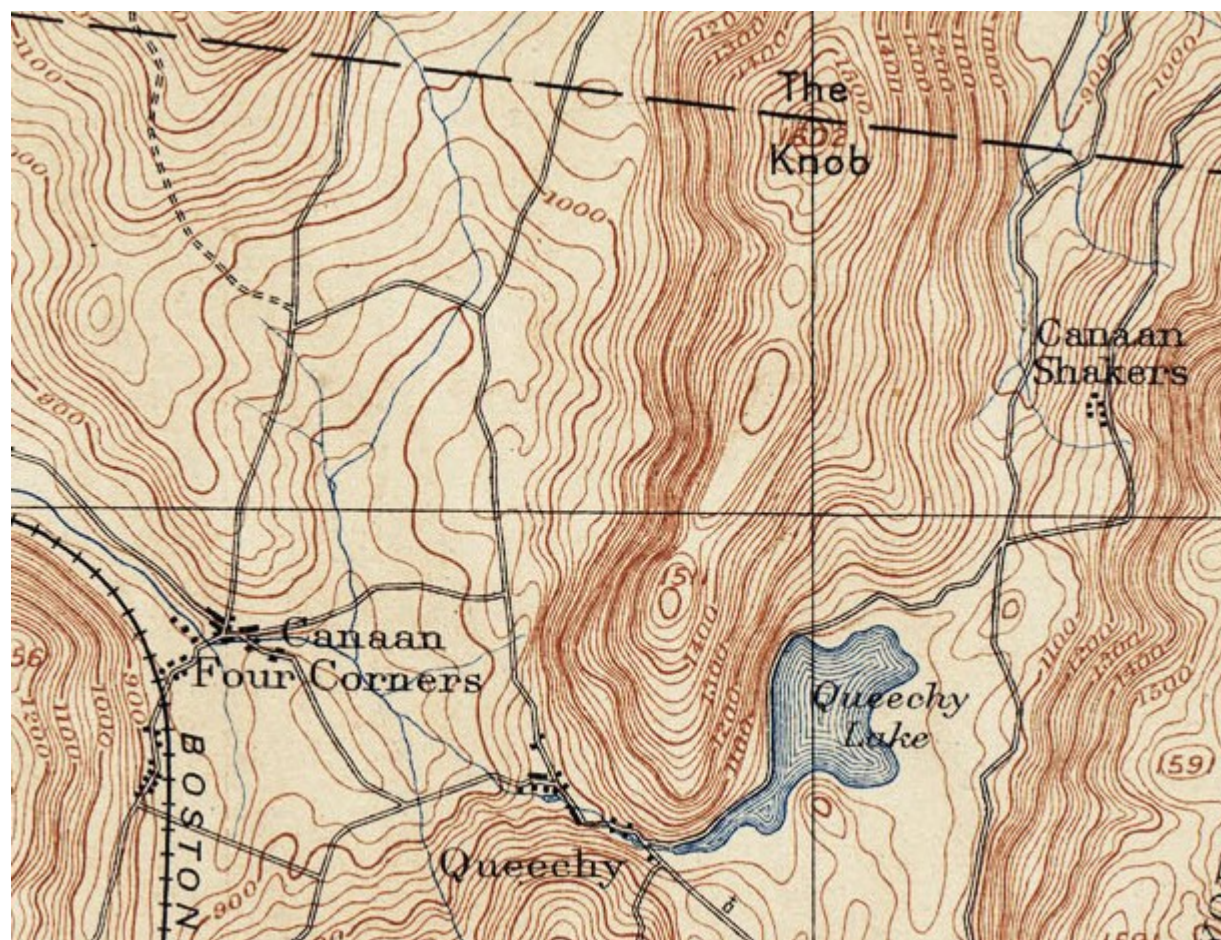
Note the railroad tunnel label



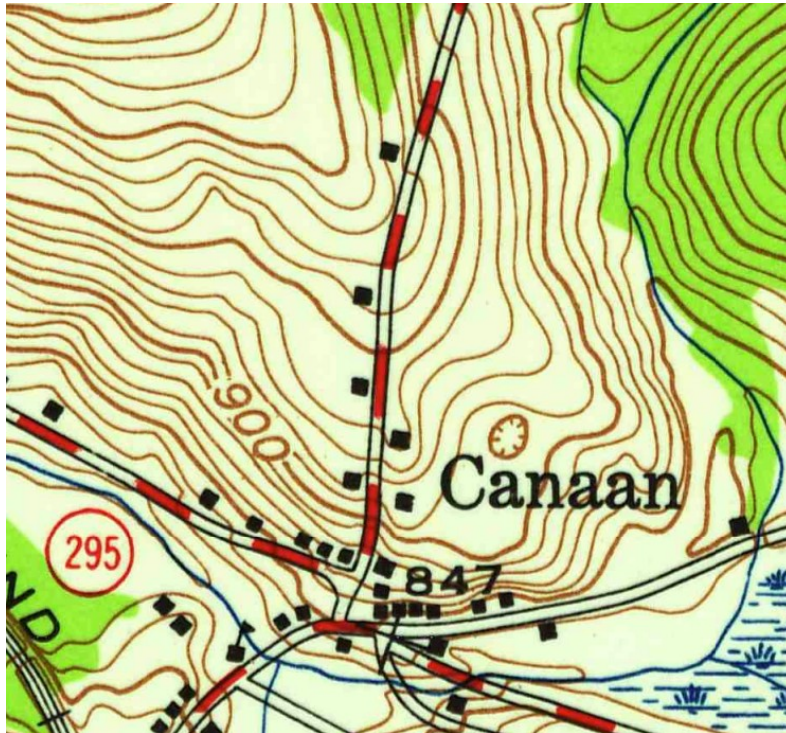
Tunnel, 1858 map:



USGS Map, Pittsfield, MA 1888.



Note the prior alignment of NY State Route 295 at the Four Corners.



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1946
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on New York (East) and Massachusetts
(Mainland) coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty.....	Light-duty.....
Medium-duty.....	Unimproved dirt =====
 U. S. Route	 State Route

To find more along the lines of the above, visit these websites:

<https://www.nyshistoricnewspapers.org/>

<https://historian.columbiacountyny.com/resources-for-study-of-local-history-museums-exhibits/additional-historical-resources>

<https://news.hrvh.org/>

<https://www.loc.gov/newspapers/collections/>

<https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/browser>

<https://www.hathitrust.org/>

Compiled by Sanford Johnson, March, 2026. Updated, June 2026.