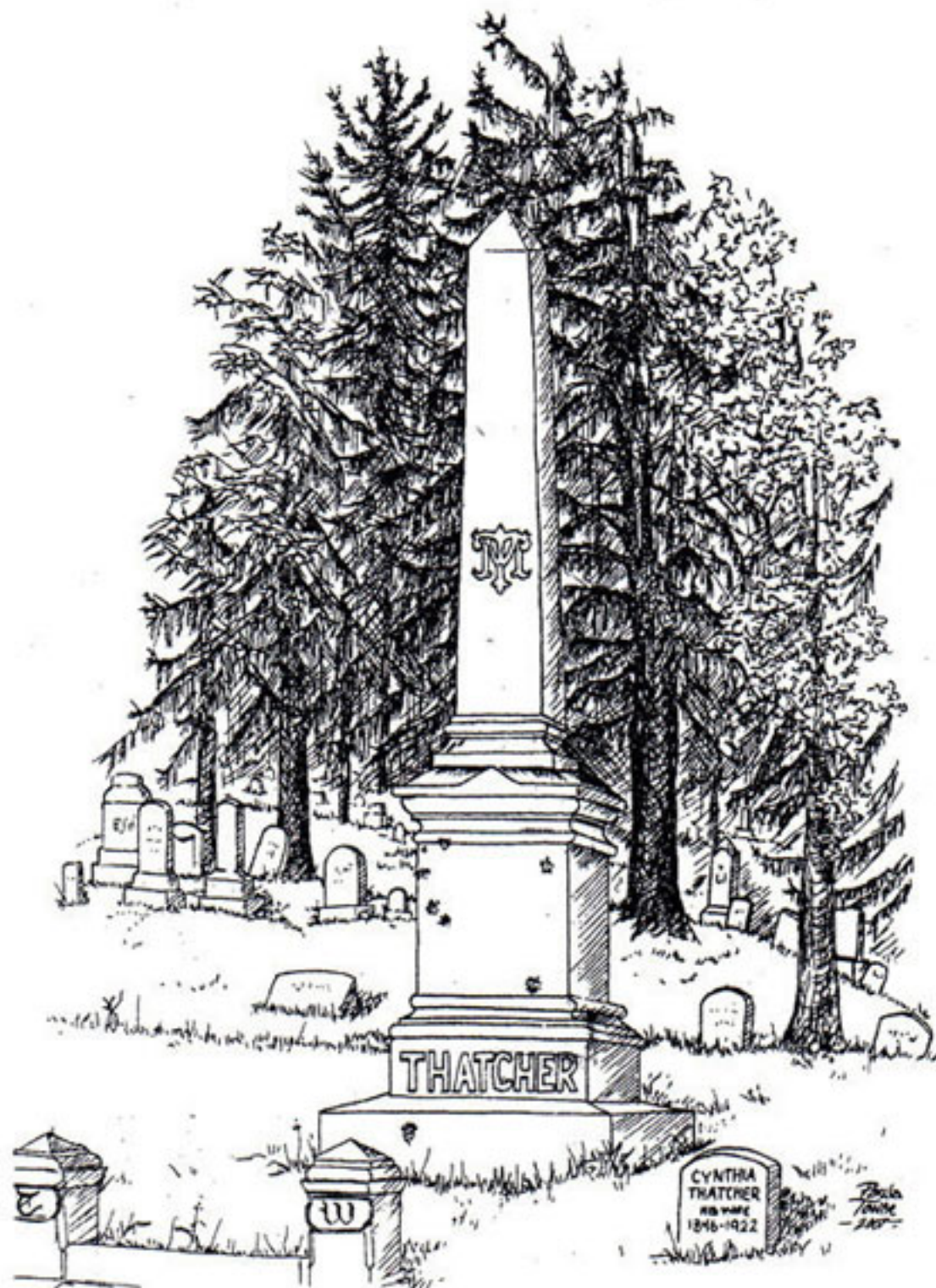


SESQUICENTENNIAL TOUR

RIVERSIDE CEMETERY

GOVERNEUR, N.Y. OCTOBER 13, 2007



Officers of the Association - June 23, 1857

B.B. Beckwith, *President*

Charles Anthony, *Vice President*

Stephen B. Van Duzee, *Treasurer*

Cornelius A. Parker, *Secretary*

Trustees

B.B. Beckwith

Thomas M. Thayer

Edwin Dodge

John Bolton

Erwin S. Barnes

Milton Barney

S.B. Van Duzee

Wm. H. Bowne

Charles Anthony

Harvey D. Smith

Cornelius A. Parker

Richard Parsons

Landscape Gardener and Civil Engineer

Benjamin F. Hathaway

Superintendent

William Miller

Gouverneur Cemetery Association 1857-2007

Early in August 1808 a shadow came over the settlement of Cambray in the sudden death of Emily Porter, a sprightly little girl of 2 years, and daughter of Isreal Porter. She had been out during the day with some other children gathering peas; and it is believed ate a quantity of the half-ripened kernels, which swelled in the stomach causing her death. This occasion led to the selection of the first burying ground, which was in the area of the present Presbyterian Church in a hemlock grove. Here Emily Porter was laid to rest in a pine coffin.

This first cemetery was ceded to the inhabitants of Cambray by Gouverneur Morris and consisted of 2 acres bounded by the Oswegatchie River and roughly by what are now John, William, and Church streets. In 1857 it became apparent a new and larger cemetery was necessary.

After looking over the various lots offered for sale, a committee settled upon the former Pardon Babcock farm, which had become the property of Harvey D. Smith. It lay southwest of the village on the banks of the Oswegatchie.

Thirty acres of this farm were purchased at a cost of \$1500.00 and "one burying plot" from Mr. and Mrs. Smith by the Gouverneur Cemetery Association, which had been organized on June 23, 1857. B.F. Hathaway of Brookline, N.Y. was employed to layout and grade the new ground. More than 600 lots were prepared for use with miles of walks and avenues - trees were planted and everything to make the cemetery attractive was done. The first burial - Joseph B. Smith August 25, 1857. (19 B31) By 1860 records indicate 11 acres had been added, and in 1866 there is an entry in the minutes of the annual meeting noting \$800 spent that year for land.

By 1860 the public mind became reconciled to transferring the dead from the old burying ground. The most picturesque portion of the new cemetery was selected for this purpose, boxes were provided, and the whole accomplished in two weeks at the expense of the corporation. In all, 637 removals were made under the direction of Thomas Thayer. Emily Porter was relocated to her family plot. (9 H75) Many of the removals were from unmarked graves.

The new cemetery adopted the name Riverside at a meeting of the association held April 14, 1858, and the dedication ceremonies took place Sunday, June 23 that year.

The earliest available printing of the By-Laws is dated 1908. In that year the president was Newton Aldrich with Amon B. Cutting as Vice President and Henry Sudds the Secretary and Treasurer. In addition to the 12 articles of by-laws the publication includes rules and regulations covering purchase and care of the lots, interments, visitors (for instance - driving on the grass and on the avenues or bicycle riding at a rate faster than 4 miles per hour is forbidden; horses must not be left on the grounds unfastened), also rules for workmen, duties of the superintendent, fees for perpetual care of lots, and the establishment of trust funds.

Riverside was enlarged again in 1941 by adding 2 acres from the south side obtained from the Walter Perrin farm. Back in 1860 the Town of Gouverneur purchased 3 acres from the association for the sum of \$600.00 and some of the transfers at that time were buried thereon. A portion of this acreage is set for use by indigents - an area commonly referred to in early days as Potters Field. (1) It contains marked as well as unmarked graves and the association maintains the entire 3 acres.

In the year 1954 it became apparent to the officers and trustees that more ground was a necessity. All 1676 salable lots in Riverside had been purchased, and using a figure of 3 burials per lot (actually probably more) it can be said that the population of Riverside is greater than that of the village.

A site on the east bank of the Oswegatchie was finally selected which consisted of 10 acres purchased for \$3500 and a perpetual option was granted for up to 30 more acres. This addition is designated as East Riverside and should serve the area for many years.

Within the last few years Riverside has been designated by a D.A.R. bronze marker as the burial ground of Revolutionary war soldiers.

References: 1890 History of Gouverneur by Mrs. Cornelius A. Parker
1905 Centennial History of Gouverneur by Jay S. Corbin
Original Secretary's Record Book of association meetings

Footnotes: The Gouverneur Cemetery Association is the second oldest non-religious organization in Gouverneur.

(2) **JOHN GARRETT 1757 - 1853** **F-54**

John Garrett was born in England about 1757. He came to America as a British Soldier during the Revolutionary War. While fighting with the British, his sympathies began to turn, finally he deserted and joined the Continental Army in Connecticut.

At the time he deserted the British, he was in the woods for several days without food or water. He was nearly starved when he went to a log house to ask for food. While eating bread and milk from a large bowl he heard the British Soldiers, who were trying to capture him say, "Here is Garrett now." He dashed out of an opposite side door and hid in a nearby cornfield.

According to records in the Adjutant General's office in Connecticut, he served as a private in Captain Hinsman's Company. He was discharged August 25, 1775. He then became a private in Captain Pettibone's Company from March 26, 1777 to his date of discharge May 5, 1777.

His name also appears as a pensioner and private residing in New York, under the act of 1818. He was married twice and had at least three children, possibly more. His daughter Lucy was the wife of Willard Smith one of the first Gouverneur settlers. Another daughter was the grandmother of Dr. George B. Barnes and wife of James Barnes.

He died at his granddaughter's home, Mrs. William Rutherford, on February 16, 1853. He was buried in the old cemetery which was on Church Street, approximately where the Presbyterian Church is today. He was moved to the G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) plot. Today this plot is known as the D.A.R. plot.

(3) GARRETT S. CONGER 1847 - 1919 F-54

Conger, born in Canandaigua in 1847, was a private in Battery D, 1st N.Y. Light Artillery (Winslow's Battery) and participated in many Civil War Battles, including Appomatox. He received a shell wound in the left knee at Bethel Church. His father and three brothers were also in the service; together they participated in 50 battles. Mr. Conger was a member of the G.A.R. and was repeatedly elected Commander of Barnes Post. He was Junior Vice Commandant of the Department of NY in 1884. He was also attorney for the Legislative Committee that investigated Expenditures of Armories & Arsenals of the State. After graduating from the University of Michigan Law School, Conger studied Law in the offices of Charles Anthony and later practiced in the firm of Conger, Orvis, & McLearn. He was a Special County Judge from 1880 to 1897.

(4) EMORY W. ABBOTT 1819 - 1909 F-27

Abbot came to Fowler in 1836 as a boy of 17 to clerk in the store of Justus Rickit at a salary of \$50 per year plus board. Marrying Hannah S., youngest daughter of his employer, in 1839, he continued in business with Rickit until his death in 1842, and later, in connection with farming, until 1867.

Abbot held almost every office of responsibility and trust in the town. For many years he was Justice of the Peace. He represented the town as Supervisor from 1860-64 and the First Assembly District of St. Lawrence County in the State Legislature in 1856 and 1857. While Assemblyman, he assisted in procuring the necessary Legislation for the creation of St. Lawrence University. During the war his efforts resulted in the supply of the full quota of troops from St. Lawrence County. He moved to Gouverneur in 1871 and engaged in the manufacture of woolen goods. His son, Vasco P., practiced law in Gouverneur from 1871 and was elected Special County Judge of St. Lawrence County in 1875.

(5) DR. JOHN SPENCER 1780 - 1884 F-114

Spencer brought his family to Gouverneur in April 1807 from Windsor, Ct. and was the first practicing physician in Cambray.

On April 5, 1810, Cambray was detached from Oswegatchie and erected into the Town of Gouverneur, the name being given in honor of Gouverneur Morris, proprietor of the land.

The first Town Meeting was held at his house on March 5, 1811 and resulted in the election of Town Officers. He brought with him men slaves, a not unusual event at the time in St. Lawrence County. In 1810 St. Lawrence County had 5 slaves. Slavery was legal at that time in New York, a repeal of the Slavery Act not happening until July 4, 1827.

The Spencer House, on Main Street in the east part of the village, was built in 1828-29 and opened as a Public-House in the Spring of 1830 by Dr. John Spencer, who kept it for 14 years and was succeeded by his son, Col. James Spencer. Dr. Spencer died in the house in 1855.

(6) HARVEY D. SMITH 1789 - 1864 F-107

Born in Pawlet, Vt., Smith arrived in Gouverneur in 1824 and opened the first "Apothecary" store which operated until 1850. He held many positions of public trust. He was the Town Clerk for most of his adult life. He was elected Justice of the Peace in 1827, holding that position until his death. In 1829 he was elected to the State Assembly. He was Supervisor of Gouverneur from 1827 until 1835. In 1858 he was elected Surrogate of the County of St. Lawrence. He was a Trustee of the High School and Deacon of the Presbyterian Church, as well as an original Trustee of The Riverside Cemetery. Smith was a man of extensive reading and fine culture with a sensitive and refined manner. His advice and opinions were often sought and followed.

MAJOR JOHN BOWER PRESTON

(7) 1832-1898 F-107

Preston was a well-known figure in Gouverneur almost his entire life. At age 18 he entered the family of his adopted brother, Judge James M. Smith of Buffalo and studied Law. At age 22 he was admitted to the Bar and after two years moved to Hastings, Minn. When the Civil War broke out he enlisted as a Captain in the 3rd Minnesota Regiment which fought in Tennessee, and in 1862 surrendered for lack of ammunition. The Regiment ended up in a southern prison and suffered greatly. Four months later Preston returned to Gouverneur. The following summer he was commissioned as Major of the 20th N.Y. Cavalry, which was sent to join the army of the Potomac. Major Preston continued in the service as a brave and able soldier until Lee's surrender. He returned to Gouverneur for the remainder of his life as a practicing attorney.

(8) CHARLES ANTHONY 1816 - 1892 F-1

Anthony, an attorney, was the first Vice-President of Riverside Cemetery when it was incorporated on June 24, 1857. He was also Postmaster from 1853-55, when he resigned. The private banking-house of Charles Anthony & Company was established on October 1, 1860 on the corner of Main and Park Streets (later becoming the Bank of Gouverneur). Anthony was President of the Village Trustees in 1861. The Gouverneur Agricultural & Mechanical Fair was initiated in 1859 with Anthony as President. The first fair was held on September 14, 15, & 16 with 2,000 tickets sold at the gate and more than 200 family tickets sold. The fair was held in the northwest corner of Main Street and Rock Island Road which the Gouverneur Agricultural & Mechanical Society leased for five years from Anthony. Anthony was also a founding Director and Treasurer of the Gouverneur Waterworks on August 1, 1867. The Works were powered by a water-wheel located on the island in the river, below the bridge. The company laid about one mile of pipe and put in 16 hydrants. Gouverneur Hose Company No. 1 was organized on April 29, 1868 with a hose-carriage, hose, hooks and ladders.

(10)

PARDON BABCOCK

H-76

Pardon Babcock, along with Willard Smith, Eleazer Nichols and Isaac Austin was one of the first four families that left their home in Hartford, NY to settle in Cambray, today Gouverneur. Babcock was a blacksmith.

In 1810 Cambray became officially known as Gouverneur and at that time Pardon Babcock became one of the first three assessors. Farming interests were of great importance to these early settlers and a committee of five, Babcock being one of them, were appointed to superintend the destruction of noxious weeds. The duties of these men were to see that daisies, thistles, burdock and mullein were doomed. This committee had the power to levy heavy fines for flagrant violations, however there is no account that any action was ever taken.

In 1815 the Gouverneur Union Library was incorporated and Pardon Babcock was once again on the first library board of trustees. Babcock died October 29, 1834 of consumption at age 57. He had long been an invalid, bent and feeble, but pursued his business of blacksmithing until just a few days before he expired.

Pardon Babcock was remembered as a cheerful spirit, full of humor and never allowing his failing health to interfere with his business or amusements. In 1889 a monument was placed in the cemetery by the Cemetery Association with the following inscription: "In memory of Pardon and Martha Babcock." Martha died March 29, 1856, 22 years after her husband.

(11)

ORISON DEAN 1821 - 1903

H-1

Dean came to Gouverneur in 1866 as a partner in the firm of Weston, Dean & Aldrich, operators of a saw-mill at Natural Dam, later converted to a paper manufacturing plant around 1900. This firm conducted the most extensive business for over 40 years that Gouverneur had ever known. The company owned 45,000 acres of timber land to furnish the logs for the vast plant. They also constructed 1-1/4 miles of railroad track to connect the mills to the W&O Railroad Line. They employed about 100 men, a large portion of the village's then 265 population. There were 30 dwellings, exclusive of shanties, which later were also quite numerous. The firm was known for its square dealing and exact treatment of its customers, and to this reputation Mr. Dean contributed greatly. He was broad-minded, well-informed, and charitable, yet quite and unassuming and well-liked by all.

(12) DR. JAMES B. CARPENTER 1824 - 1895 F-150

Dr. Carpenter came to Gouverneur in 1867 after the Civil War. He was a son of Jonathan and Lucy Carpenter of Fowler, being one of a family of ten children. He was educated in the old Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary and Cassleton Medical College in Vermont. He practiced for 20 years in Theresa, except the time spent as an army surgeon of the 25th Regiment NYS Volunteers. In 1849, he married Roxaline, a sister of the future NYS Governor, Roswell P. Flower.

During the Civil War he was involved in the Battles of Gettysburg, The Wilderness and Fredericksburg, retiring from the arduous service with honor. For many years Dr. Carpenter was the leading physician of the town. He was highly esteemed and was a very generous contributor to many causes. He served as President of the Village.

(13) REV. BARUCH B. BECKWITH 1805 - 1870 E-3

Rev. Beckwith, the first President of the Gouverneur Cemetery Association, was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church from 1843-66. A division occurred within the church in 1842-43, which resulted in the secession of certain members, and the formation of the 2nd Congregational Church of Gouverneur in 1843. In 1843, Beckwith became pastor of the Presbyterian Church and this appointment seemed to end the troubles of the church and it entered a steady and prosperous growth. That same year, the building of a new house of worship began and was completed in 1844. In 1863, during his pastorate, the church emerged from its former condition of a "Presbyterian Congregational" organization and became wholly Presbyterian. After a long and fruitful pastorate of 23 years, Rev. Beckwith resigned due to failing health.

(14) WILLIAM E. STERLING 1801 - 1861 E-2

Sterling ran a dry goods and general store in the Brick Block which was demolished to make room for the Union Hall Block, the site of his store later occupied by the VanDuzee Furniture Store. In 1857 he moved to a new store which he had built on the corner of Main and Gordon Streets. He continued trade there, adding a considerable line of hardware, until his death. Sterling was one of the four members of the Building Committee for the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary.

(15) WILLIAM H. BOWNE 1824 - 1887 E-7

Bowne was born in Gouverneur in 1824. His parents came to Gouverneur in 1814 from Flushing, L.I. and his family was identified prominently with the growth of Gouverneur. William and his three brothers engaged actively in business as merchants in Dry Goods and Hardware. They built the portion of the Union Hall Block occupied by themselves. William served as Postmaster under President Buchanan and was President of the Village. He was an original Trustee of the Gouverneur Cemetery.

(16) EDWIN DODGE 1801 - 1877 E-8

The Hon. Edwin Dodge was born in Kent, Ct., in 1801, moving to Northern NY at an early age with his family. In 1829 Gouverneur Morris engaged the young attorney to be his agent in charge of large land tracts in St. Lawrence County and he moved to Gouverneur with his wife. In 1830 he was appointed Postmaster and held that office for 19 years. In 1832 he was elected a Member of the Assembly and in 1845 was appointed a Side Judge of Common Pleas for a term of two years. Under the New State Constitution of 1846 he was elected the First County Judge of St. Lawrence County, holding that office until 1855.

Dodge was also one of the First Trustees of Gouverneur upon its incorporation as a Village in 1850, an original Trustee of Riverside Cemetery, a Trustee of the Gouverneur Seminary, and one of the incorporators of the Water Works Company. He was largely instrumental in organizing and financing the Potsdam and Watertown Railroad, of which he was the First President. He also showed much interest in investigating and encouraging the mining industry in St. Lawrence County. He gave freely of his time and money to the improvement of Gouverneur along educational, charitable and religious lines.

(17) CAPT. GEORGE PARKER 1826-1883 E-13, 14, 15

Parker was born in Watertown in 1826 and grew up on a farm. In 1852 he came to Gouverneur and established a grocery business, also dealing largely in furs, at that time numerously trapped by local St. Regis Indians and Woodsmen. He founded the Gouverneur Agricultural and Mechanical Society of which he was the first Secretary in 1857 until entering the army, and in later years again served as Secretary and President. Among the foremost to respond to the Union's defense, he enlisted at the first call for troops and was elected Captain of the Infantry Company which originated in Gouverneur. The departure on May 5, 1861 of the company, which became Co. D 16th N.Y. Volunteer Infantry, was a prominent incident in Gouverneur's history. Capt. Parker commanded his company from the first Bull Run to Charles City Cross-Roads, where he was severely wounded in both limbs. At the expiration of the 2-year term of service, Company D's homecoming was another notable event in Gouverneur's history.

In 1863 Capt. Parker was elected to the Assembly and re-elected the following year. He later became a land surveyor and supervisor of the U.S. Census in 6 counties. At the time of his death in 1883 he represented Gouverneur on the Board of Supervisors. Few men in Gouverneur has so wide and varied circle of friends.

(18) MARTIN THATCHER 1811 - 1882 D-39

Martin Thatcher was the founder of St. Lawrence University. He was born in the Town of DeKalb, September 23, 1811. The Thatchers were among the first families who settled in DeKalb in 1803. From his birth until 1842 little is known about Martin Thatcher. In 1842, at age 31, he moved to Somerville, N.Y., the proprietor of one of the four country stores. He was a very popular and well liked man and in 1842 he was elected St. Lawrence County Clerk, serving from 1843-1849.

He moved with Almira, his wife and son, Charles to Canton when he began his new job. Their son died shortly after moving to Canton. A daughter Cynthia was born in 1846.

He became an admirer and supporter of Gov. Silas Wright and they became fast friends. Thatcher's acquaintance and influence broadened over the years. He became an associate of Preston King of Ogdensburg, a political protegee of Silas Wright. It was in this period that he led the movement that resulted in the founding of St. Lawrence University.

Martin Thatcher was of the Universalist faith and there was a movement

of Universalists in New York State to establish a theological college, and Thatcher played a major role at St. Lawrence from 1848-1869. In 1867-68 he served as president of the university's corporation (board of trustees).

In 1848 just before his term as county clerk was to end he began reading law in preparation for entering that profession in Canton. His career as a lawyer never materialized once he became a Universalist and involved in St. Lawrence. Thatcher died in his daughter's home in New York City in 1882.

(20) PETER VAN BUREN 1803 - 1870 B-1

VanBuren was a relative of Ex-President Van Buren. He came to Gouverneur in 1819, married in 1831, and commenced his life as a successful hotel keeper. From 1831 - 1848 he kept the Old Brick Hotel until it burned and immediately built the "VanBuren House" the two-story white frame building on Main Street which later became the site of The St. Lawrence Inn. No one in Northern New York was more favorably or better known. "Uncle Peter", as everyone endearingly called him, was a favorite with the travelling public, and his house was known for its good food, cleanliness and comfort. The ancient wood fireplace was a cheery attraction during the chilly months. His beefsteak, always broiled by himself, was a connoisseur's delight. The townsmen often spent the evening with VanBuren to discuss events with this well-read man. The park opposite the hotel owed its beauty, and in great measure, its very existence to his enterprise. He planted and watered nearly every tree there. A familiar sight was "Uncle Peter" with a team and driver, water-tub and wagon, carrying pails of water, during the heated seasons to refresh the growing trees.

(21) MILTON BARNEY 1808 - 1895 B-1

Born in Adams, NY in 1808, Barney moved to Gouverneur in 1829 and opened a shop for chair-making and painting, which for many years was the only business of its kind in Gouverneur. Early in his career Barney erected a building for his business which was destroyed by fire a few years later at great financial loss to him. He soon built a much larger factory, but disposed of it soon due to ill health. Soon after he built the house at the corner of Barney and Clinton Streets. He died there in 1895 at the age of 97 years. Barney was one of the most solid businessmen in Gouverneur. His word was sacred and his integrity unquestioned. He was an original Trustee of Riverside Cemetery.

(22) SAMUEL C. WAIT, M.D. (1807-1875) B-41

Many old burying grounds have unusual or off-beat material for the genealogist or casual visitor enjoying a seminar in history. Riverside Cemetery in Gouverneur, established in 1857, is no exception. Interest in one of this cemetery's attractions was recently revived by an article printed in the magazine section of a Syracuse, New York Sunday Newspaper. The account therein had to do with unusual anonymous testamentary wills, one example of which was attributed to an early Gouverneur physician. The author also touched on

the fact this same doctor was buried in a Gouverneur cemetery along side of his six wives.

Local historians immediately identified the subject as Dr. Samuel C. Wait whose medical practice was based in Gouverneur for 40 years in the middle of the 19th century and who died in 1875. The only obituaries available locally are those of Dr. Wait and his final spouse, Jane E., neither of which is very enlightening. They contain no mention of wives, children, or other possible survivors. The last sentence of Jane's death notice in the Gouverneur NORTH-ERN TRIBUNE merely states she was the 6th wife of Dr. Wait. She outlived him by 18 years, having passed away in July 1893 at 58 years of age. In spite of having on-the-spot health care, the average age of those wives who predeceased this dispenser of medicines was 37 years, that of the children was 14 months.

According to the Gouverneur TIMES of November 2, 1875, Samuel C. Wait was born in Mayfield, Fulton County, New York, June 1, 1807. He received his medical degree from Fairfield Medical School in 1833 and located in Somerville, New York that same year. In 1835 he moved to Gouverneur and practiced medicine here until his death October 30, 1875.

The 1905 Gouverneur CENTENNIAL HISTORY adds the information that he began his life work as a public school teacher, including that of music which occupation was not suited to his taste. Here he became the leading physician of the Town with active interests in the schools and the Presbyterian church of which he was a member. At his death he left a widow and four daughters, three of whom were still living in 1905. They were Mary J. Oakes and Katherine A. Farnsworth both in Colorado, and Sarah E. Scott residing in Black River, New York.

Now we encounter some contradictions. The above history states that Mrs. Oakes was the daughter of Electa Keyes, the second wife of Dr. Wait. The cemetery headstone indicates Electa was the first wife. The history also includes the information the Mrs. Farnsworth and Sarah E. Scott were daughters of Polly Thrall, the doctor's third wife. Again, according to her headstone Mary was the third wife. Either Polly lies in an unmarked grave on the Wait Lot or she was buried elsewhere. Were there seven instead of six wives? Local legend gives credence to that possibility.

Dr. Wait's office and residence, from 1841 to his death, was at 21 John Street, now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. William Richard. According to their abstract of title (more mystery) Katherine A. Cole, presumably Farnsworth later, Minerva Burnham, and Sarah E. Wait legatees and heirs at law of Polly Wait, deceased, by warranty deed recorded November 13, 1875 turned over their shares of the real property to Jane, wife # 6.

The above seems to indicate that Katharine (or Katherine), Sarah, Minerva and Mary were the original survivors. We don't know which wife was Mary's mother. Could she have been Jane's child in view of the fact she is not listed as a legatee and lawful heir of Polly on the abstract? It would further indicate there was a total of eight (8) children born to Dr. Wait and his six (or seven) wives.

The doctor's will written in January 1875 states that Mary Jane Oakes was a resident of Black River, Katharine A. Cole lived in New York City, while Minerva Burnham and Sarah Wait resided in Cape Vincent. As previously noted, Katharine became Mrs. Farnsworth and had moved to Colorado by 1905. Sarah married Byron Scott and lived in Black River by 1905.

Remains of the first 2 wives and all but one of the babies had to be transferred to Riverside from the old town cemetery, the land for which had been acquired from Gouverneur Morris. Some of that earlier site is now a part of the Gouverneur central business district.

This large Wait lot in Riverside, bought in 1859 for the sum of \$25 and without perpetual care, has an obelisk type monument about 10 feet high made of local marble. Except for those of the doctor and the surviving widow, the headstones are slab marble eroded to the point some of the engraving is not readable. Fungus growths and weather stains are also present to further impede legibility. Dr. Wait's name is on the front and that of wife #6 on one side of the monument. Four slab markers for children are on the same side of the lot with the doctor's widow. The first 5 wives are numbered as such on their headstones.

The following information is taken from the cemetery gravestones. Both town and cemetery records for the period of this research were destroyed by fire many years ago.

WIVES

# 1	Electa S.	Died March 31, 1841	Age 29 Years
#2	Catherine Ann	Died July 20, 1842	Age 34 Years
#3	Mary	Died February 23, 1861	Age 49 Years
#4	Nancy	Died May 5, 1863	Age 30 Years
#5	Patience M.	Died June 16, 1865	Age 44 Years
#6	Jane E.	Died July 9, 1893	Age 58 Years

CHILDREN

Sarah R. - Daughter of Electa S. -	Died Oct. 10, 1839	Age 1 Yr. 5 Mos.
Electa K. - Daughter of Electa S.	Died Sept. 16, 1841	Age 7 Mos.
Philinda - Daughter of Mary	Died July 28, 1852	Age 1 Yr.
Samuel F. - Son of Nancy	Died March 25, 1864	Age 11 Mos.

By comparing dates of death it could be surmised that wives Electa S. and Nancy died from complications of childbirth.

The life expectancy of an adult in the era of Dr. Wait was probably considerably less than today, and infant mortality rate was higher. It does seem, however, that this doctor of medicine who most likely prolonged the lives of many, adults and children, was himself the victim of an unusual number of family deaths at early ages. Facts and figures at hand, it might be said, raise more questions than are answered.

Nelson B. Winters
Gouverneur Village Historian
October 1981

Jay Corbin was the son of Amasa Corbin and Phebe, born 1840 in Gouverneur. In the Centennial History (375 pages), which he wrote almost entirely himself, he simply described himself as "Inventor". He was educated along with his brother Amasa Jr. in the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary, which stood where the Community Bank is located today.

As a boy he showed a great amount of inventive genius and was always making useful tools. In 1859 he invented a machine to make tickets for the first Gouverneur Fair. His most well known invention is the disc harrow system that farmers still use today all over the world, whether drawn behind a team of horses or an air conditioned diesel tractor.

He and his brother Amasa formed the St. Lawrence Manufacturing Company, where the downtown Kinney store is at the corner of Main and Clinton Streets. Jay made many improvements to this system during its years of production, always trying to make it better.

When his partnership dissolved with his brother in 1886, he took his patents to Prescott, Ontario, Canada and set up a manufacturing plant there. In 1893 he sold his rights of the disc harrow system to the Massey-Harris Company and came back to Gouverneur to retire. He was soon bored, his mind never stopped.

Jay was later noted for his writing and especially his articles on political economy. He never aspired to political office, but was prominent in the Democratic Party and became friends with William Jennings Bryan, campaigning against McKinley.

During his life he was also a teacher, and mineralogist. He married Christine Ann Hill in 1865. They had four children, one dying as a youngster. Corbin died December 31, 1914 on his 74th birthday.

STEPHEN BROWN VANDUZEE 1809 - 1893

Born in 1809, VanDuzee came to Gouverneur in 1817. He was an active, enterprising businessman, greatly interested in the town. He was a founder of S•B•VanDuzee Manufacturing Company which built and manufactured furniture. He became very successful financially. VanDuzee was also influential in the promotion of the Talc Industry and one of the founders of The Gouverneur Marble Company, of which he was once president. He held many prominent positions in town and was President of the village and also Postmaster. He was an original Trustee of Riverside Cemetery.

COL. JAMES SPENCER 1811 - 1884

Col. James Spencer was born in Gouverneur in 1811 to Dr. John Spencer and Elizabeth Burnett. He married Cassendana, a daughter of Ezekiel Bullard and Eunice Boyden, early settlers of Gouverneur. He lived in the house built by his father in 1829, known as the Spencer House, which burned in 1889. He was prominently connected with the State Militia, as well as being very active in village and county affairs. Col. Spencer was a prominent property owner and the land on which the Depot and buildings now stand was given to R.W.&O. Railroad Company by him for that purpose. The Potsdam and Watertown Railroad was opened to Gouverneur in 1856, and the date of the first train from Watertown being September 12, 1856. His son, Dr. James M. Spencer, was a practicing Dental Surgeon in Gouverneur, beginning his practice in 1876.

ERWIN H. BARNES

F-54

Grand Army Post Gouverneur was named in honor of the first soldier from Gouverneur to fall in battle mortally wounded - Erwin H. Barnes. He was the Son of the late Erwin S. Barnes and Lucretia Allen Barnes and was born here November 22, 1843. He answered Lincoln's first call for volunteers in April, 1861, at the first recruiting meeting held in this village. He volunteered as a private in Company D, 16th New York Volunteer Infantry, commanded by the late Captain George Parker, and he fell mortally wounded at the battle of Gaines Hill, June 27, 1862.

The Post has always had the confidence and the loyal support of Gouverneur people, and its membership comes from all the surrounding towns. Its special purpose has been the rendering of assistance to destitute and needy soldiers, and the families of those deceased and the proper observance of Memorial Day.

The Woman's Relief Corps, auxiliary to the post, was organized February 15, 1892, and is composed not only of the wives and relatives of soldiers, but of many prominent and patriotic ladies in town. It has been of great service to the post in its charitable and patriotic work.

In 1900 the post and corps by joint effort erected a granite monument, in Riverside Cemetery on a lot presented to the post by Comrade Lorenzo Smith, and the same was with impressive ceremony dedicated to the soldiers of 1861-5.

REFERENCES

Centennial Souvenir History of Gouverneur
The Hungerford-Holbrook Co., Watertown, NY
1905

History of St. Lawrence Co. New York
1749 - 1878
Published by L.H. Everts & Co.
1878

Officers of the Association - 2007

Ron Taylor, *President & Superintendent*

George Love, *Vice President*

George Love, *Secretary*

Jane Scott, *Treasurer*

Trustees

Tim Matice

Charles Bartholomew

Mike Villeneuve

Booklets provided by

Joe Laurenza, Village Historian
who along with Gale Ferguson
are tour guides for the day.

