

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Baum-Wallis Farmstead
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 132 Baum Rd not for publication
city or town Johnsonville (located in Town of Pittstown) vicinity
state New York code 083 county Rensselaer code 09 zip code 12094

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3		buildings
		sites
3		structures
		objects
6		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Pittstown Farmsteads

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- DOMESTIC, single dwelling
- AGRICULTURE, storage
- AGRICULTURE, agricultural field
- AGRICULTURE, animal facility
- AGRICULTURE, agricultural outbuilding

- DOMESTIC, single dwelling
-
-
-
-

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- MID-19th CENTURY
- EARLY REPUBLIC
-
-
-

- foundation: stone
- walls: wood
- roof: asphalt, metal
- other:

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Narrative Description

Summary Description

The Baum-Wallis farmstead (132 Baum Rd) is centrally located on rolling upland (about 650' above sea level) flanking Baum Road in the Town of Pittstown, Rensselaer County, New York. The property currently comprises four parcels including a small family cemetery. These, in addition to a ##-acre parcel recently sold to the neighboring Cannon farm (Cannon-Brownell-Herrington farmstead under the same MPDF as the Baum-Wallis farmstead) comprise the historic farmstead at the close of the historic period. Both properties have conservation easements. Most of the land is open, enclosed by hedgerows and stone walls. A portion of the land is under cultivation, while the remainder is fallow. Water features include a small pond in a wooded hollow on the west side of the road and a north-flowing creek (dry in summer) east of the buildings. The farmstead buildings all stand on the east side of Baum Rd. A short drive enters the property south of the front façade and runs to the wagon barn. A large garden plot occupies much of the space between the wagon barn and corn crib. The main barn group composed of two larger barns set in an L-plan is adjacent to the road and south of the garden. A milk house, formerly an ice house, faces directly onto the highway. A two-bay garage made from an old pig house is on the opposite side of the highway near the house. The small graveyard (Wallis family) set off by a snugly fitted dry laid stone wall is located south of the main barn group. There are no stone markers.

Building List

House (built ca.1811; contributing): The one-story frame house has a nearly square plan and rests on a stone foundation banked slightly to the north, or back eave wall, of the building. The west peak of its symmetrical roof faces the highway, so its south eave wall—the front façade—is perpendicular to the highway. A single-story, enclosed porch (added ca.1950) with wood novelty siding projects east from the main block. A recessed entrance porch spans the center bays of front façade. This is now enclosed. A narrow door with a long eight-light panel is flanked by large windows, each composed of three vertically oriented lights. The window casings rest on a low frame knee wall. The house retains much of its regular historic fenestration plan, with later two-over-two wood sash flanked by louvered wood sash. Long shed-roofed dormer windows (ca.1915) span most of the deep front (south) and back (north) roof faces. Paired windows with one-over-one sash flank single windows of the same configuration. Louvered wood shutters match those on the main part of the house. The main block of the house retains wood clapboard siding with cornerboards and raking cornices. The dormer windows are sided with wood shingles. A brick chimney (early 1900s) is located at the east end of the house, and concrete block one for a furnace was added to the west end in the 1960s.

Wagon barn (built ca.1900, contributing): The one-and-a-half-story, side-gabled, three-bay wagon barn (1880-1900) constructed of circular sawn lumber faces the road. It stands on a level stone foundation and has board-and-batten siding and a corrugated metal roof. The south bay is remodeled as a workshop and sheathed in metal siding. An addition (mid-1900s) with a lower-pitched roof continues the axis of the earlier building. This was a workshop/taxidermy studio and also housed tropical fish tanks.

Main barn group (north wing built ca.1826; west wing built ca.1815, with shed-roofed leanto connecting added ca.1945; contributing): The L-plan main barn group is composed of two nineteenth-century barns set at right angles to one another with a space of about ten feet between the northeast corner of the west wing and the southwest corner of the north wing. This gap is enclosed by a shed-roofed leanto (added ca.1945) attached to the

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north wall of the west wing and the west wall of the north wing. The west wing of the group is formed by a threshing barn on banked stone foundation. The north wing is a narrow (about 20'), side-gabled sheep barn with an added bay which was probably added when this structure was placed on its current banked stone foundation. The foundation of the threshing barn appears to incorporate the early foundation of the barn and later banked alterations.

The threshing barn is side-gabled frame building. Its frame is constructed entirely of hewn timber with somewhat tall (over 12') posts and dropped tiebeams. The fairly steeply pitched roof uses hewn common rafters, lapped and pegged at the ridge, with birdsmouth joints at the plate. The frame has no queen posts or purlin plates, although it is of typical width to use them. Soon after the barn's completion, a fourth bay was added to the south end. This appears to have provided a stable partially below grade and possibly a granary. The hewn posts of this fourth bay are sistered to those of the older bent, and its common rafters' birdsmouth ends are smaller. The plates in both the original three bays and the fourth bay retain siding grooves for the vertically laid plank siding. In addition to the fourth bay, the east roof face was later (mid-to-late 1800s) extended on pole rafters to shelter an additional several feet of floor space spanning all but the northern few feet of the east wall. This later east wall retains no evidence of a large opening in the east wall of the center bay and the threshing floor. Viewed from the south end of the barn, it provides the barn with an unusual asymmetrical roof profile.

The threshing barn appears to stand on a foundation altered and expanded in phases as the building was enlarged. On the west wall, a low earthen bank provides access to paired doors hung on sliders, which opens onto the threshing floor located in the center bay of the oldest, three-bay section. The portion underlying the added fourth bay on the south end is banked to allow full-height access to the stable located in lower level under this bay's southeast corner. Wide paired doors of vertically laid up planks and hung on strap hinges with bean ends open into this basement. Evidence of a second, similar pair of doors can be seen under the next bay north on this wall. Inside, concrete base for a row of metal stanchions has "1946" scribed in it.

The threshing floor laid up using heavy planks more than two inches thick is located in the center bay of the original building. A waist wall of sawn boards encloses the north bay, where the mow floor is about three feet below the threshing floor. The building retains girts for vertical board siding. In the north peak, a diamond-shaped vent cut out of the siding can be seen from inside the building. The building's exterior is clad in a variety of later vertical board siding suggesting repairs but no comprehensive remodeling.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, a passage was constructed to a silo (the foundation remains), which stood on the east side of barn. Two low, parallel, mortared cobblestone walls project from the west wall near the south end of the barn. These were meant as the foundation for additional stanchions, but the structure was never completed.

The north wing began as a three-bay sheep barn. Its fourth bay was added to its east end, probably when the barn was moved to its present location a short distance north and east of the northeast corner of the threshing barn. The three original bays of the sheep barn are built with hewn main timbers and up-and-down sawn braces. This barn's fourth bay uses sawn main timbers and braces. The older section has mortised girts for vertical board siding. The plate on the east end of the older barn appears to incorporate siding grooves. The entire barn has pole rafters, which may date to the building's move to its present site and its reuse as a stable. The later, easternmost bay incorporates slip stalls, and a narrow door opens at the far east end of the south long wall. Paired sliding doors adjacent open onto the passage adjoining the stalls. The third bay retains low hay racks for dairy goats added in the mid-1940s. In the same period, a shed-roofed leanto was added to the north end of the threshing barn, spanning the gap between it and the horse barn. The east peak has a later hay door, where a track and hay fork were used to load the mow of this section. The north and west walls were resided in 2000 using

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clapboards salvaged from another part of town, put up with their white-painted sides in. The entire building is roofed with corrugated metal.

Corn crib (built ca.1900; contributing): A narrow frame corn crib with outwardly pitched sides stands on concrete piers poured in the 1950s at the southwest corner of the wagon barn. This was moved to its present location in the 1950s.

Ice house/milk house/well house (ice house built ca.1900 and moved ca.1946 from the site of former pig house, now used as a garage, for use as a milk house; leanto added ca.1946 on this site; contributing): The frontal gable frame milk house with a later leanto (mid-1940s; for the barn's well pump) spanning its north long wall stands near the highway on a banked concrete foundation. It contains a concrete tank for cooling milk. Both parts of the building are constructed using dimensional lumber. The older milk house has novelty siding and a wooden louvered vent above the door. A reused house door is located in the east gable wall. The leanto is sided using rough boards laid up flush. This housed the well pump to supply the barn.

Pig house (built ca.1900; moved and reused as a garage, ca.1950-60; contributing): The side-gabled frame pig house (early 1900s) is nearly opposite the house on the west side of the highway. Its post-and-beam frame is constructed entirely of circular sawn lumber and has butted rafters. It is now used as a two-bay garage and stands on a later poured concrete footer. It retains board-and-batten siding and a metal roof.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

ca.1810-1962

Significant Dates

1810, 1826, ca.1875, 1944

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The Baum-Wallis Farmstead was first developed ca.1800 during the settlement period of the Third Tract of the Pittstown Patent. The period of significance extends to the 50-year mark to encompass continued agricultural use in historic buildings.

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Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The property incorporates a small family cemetery. It has no markers, but has been associated with the property since the historic period.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Baum-Wallis Farmstead, located in the Town of Pittstown, Rensselaer County, New York, satisfies National Register of Historic Places Criterion C as an intact and representative example of an historic farmstead in the Town of Pittstown. This property is being nominated in association with the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) entitled "Historic Farmsteads in Pittstown, New York." The Baum-Wallis Farmstead retains an intact assemblage of historic agricultural outbuildings and house embodying characteristic construction features of the region during the cited period of significance, and which exhibit distinctive and qualifying attributes as outlined in the associated MPDF context. These illustrate the variety of farm buildings constructed in the region from about 1800 through the middle of the twentieth century. As a group, they also illustrate how later generations adapted some earlier buildings to meet new requirements. Among the farmstead's contributing resources are a threshing barn (built ca.1815) and a sheep barn (built ca.1826) joined in a main barn group; a wagon barn; a milk house (built ca.1900 as a ice house); a former pig house (built ca.1900); a small corn crib (built ca.1900); and a vernacular Federal-era dwelling house (built ca.1811). These survive in an intact rural setting, which provides an appropriate context for this substantially intact Rensselaer County farm.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Ownership of the Baum-Wallis Farmstead, ca.1810-2012

The Baum farm is located an area of the northern section of Pittstown known as the Gore, which lies between the Hoosick Patent and Sawyer's Third Tract of the Pittstown Patent. This farm was owned by several generations of the Wallis, changed to Wallace ca.1900, family from the second quarter of the nineteenth century until 1942. John Wallis (1784-1870) assembled the farm of three parcels totaling slightly less than 100 acres in 1810. Wallis's grandson, John N. Wallace (1875-1945), sold the property to Ernest and Katherine Bell in 1942. Katherine was widowed in 1944, and she sold the property to Otto (1905-1990) and Thea (1906-1986) Baum in 1946. Their daughter Theresa (b.1941) still owns most the property today.

The Gore, where John Wallis bought his first parcel of 53 acres 3 roods 15 perches of land for \$1,150 from John Gifford in 1810¹, may have been partially settled before the American Revolution. Its early settlers appear to have been mainly people moving north from east side of the mid-Hudson Valley, where land pressure increased during the 1750s and 1760s. It appears that John Gifford and four others—Joseph Gifford (probably his oldest brother), Barnabas Bryan Maxwell of Pittstown, Edward Mosher, and Luther Squire of Hoosick—bought some or all of this tract from Aaron Burr on 3 August 1789.² Further transactions, like the John Gifford-John Wallis one, by these five individuals divided the tract into smaller parcels.

John Gifford (1760-1858) was born in the Beekman Patent located in Dutchess County. He was the son of Gideon Gifford (b.1719 in Rochester, Plymouth County, Massachusetts). Gideon was among a group of Quakers from eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island who moved to section between the Connecticut and Hudson rivers during the mid-1700s in search of new land. John served on the American side in the Revolution, and by 1779, he was living in the Hoosic district. After the war ended, he is found in tax records for the

¹ *Book of Deeds 11/320*. Troy, New York (Office of Rensselaer County Clerk). All subsequent deed references are located in this repository.

² Stephen Warling (swarling@coxnet). "Descendants of Gideon Gifford." Typescript of a journal report prepared in Master Genealogist for Windows 23 March 2011 and forwarded to author by genealogist Stephen Warling. Warling's genealogy of the Gifford family is better documented than some earlier work, and it should be used over the latter.

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Schaghticoke District in 1788 owning a small parcel of land and in 1790 federal census in Pittstown. About 1811, John Gifford and his wife Rachel removed to the Town of Mayfield in Montgomery County.³

John Wallis was born in New York State and moved to Pittstown 51 years before, ca.1804.⁴ John's circumstances before 1810 are unknown. The 1855 state census recorded John and his wife Armene (1795-1875), married and living in Pittstown 32 years, making her 23 years old when she moved there ca.1822. These dates may indicate that Armene moved to Pittstown when she married John. On 11 March 1826, John added 10.22 acres adjacent to his land on the north located in Lot 9 in the subdivision of Great Lot 47 in the Hoosick Patent. He bought this from John Welling and Theodore May and their wives for \$200. He added a third parcel of 30 acres bought from Philip and Maria Andrew and John A. and Maria Beeker, heirs of Christopher Andrew and all residing in Pittstown, in June 1845.⁵ John's son Nelson bought a half-acre parcel adjacent to the property from the heirs of Elisha Reed on 29 March 1854.⁶ These parcels total about 95 acres and, until 1910, formed the Wallis farm.

John and Armene Wallace had at least three sons—David E., Thomas D., and Nelson. By 1850, only 18-year-old son Nelson (1831-1880) still lived with them. A decade later, Nelson still lived with his parents and was also managing their farm. He married Amanda Sherman (1837-1911) later that year, on 22 December.⁷ In 1871, after their father's death, his brothers David and Thomas sold their inherited shares of the family farm to him. Armene outlived her husband John and died at the age of 80 on 28 September 1875.⁸ The 1870 census listed neither parent living with Nelson and his wife Amanda, 37, and their children, Charlie, 7; Harry, 3; and Josephine, 1. Josephine appears to have died an infant as she was not listed in the household in 1875. No burial is recorded for her. Perhaps she shares the family burial ground with her grandfather. By the latter year, Louisa, 6; and Eliza, 2½; had been born, and Mary Tilton, 35, lived with the Wallises. Nelson is listed managing property valued at \$8500 totaling 200 acres, but no deed is recorded for the other acreage.

The 1880 census listed Nelson and Amanda living with four of the five children listed in 1875. John N. (1875-1945), their youngest, was apparently born after the census taker visited. Of those enumerated that year, Charlie, 17, was listed as a laborer, and Harry, 14, lived "at home." Amanda's sister, Sarah, 40, lived with them.⁹ This census must have been enumerated early in the year as Nelson died on the 22 February 1875 and was buried in the Millerton Cemetery in Pittstown.¹⁰ Of Nelson and Amanda's children, Charlie died a young, unmarried man on 6 September 1889. Harry (1866-1934) married Lila Bradt (1871-1949) and they lived on a different farm in Pittstown. They had at least two daughters, Amanda B. (b.1896) and Emma (b.1901).¹¹ Harry may have managed the farm after his father's death, as the 1875 census shows he was already working there quite a number of years earlier. His youngest brother, John N., may have taken over management of the property after Charlie's death, even though John was only fourteen. Amanda Sherman Wallace lived until 1911; the 1905 census listed John as the son of the household she headed. By 1910, he had married Charlotte "Lottie," age 29. About a year later, based on the 1930 census, their daughter Mable L. (1910-1986) was born.

³ Warling, Generation Two of "Descendants of Gideon Gifford."

⁴ *New York Census for 1855*. First election district, population schedule, Household 110.

⁵ 62/140. This parcel, also located in the Gore, was sold to Christopher Andrew by John Gifford on 28 November 1810 via 11/318. This was only a few days before Gifford sold Wallis his first parcel in the Gore.

⁶ 121/547. Nelson paid \$125 for this parcel.

⁷ Pedigree file MM9.2.1/3M91-N8V at www.ancestry.com. Compiled for Nelson Wallis.

⁸ Rensselaer County cemetery list. (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyrensse/cemt4.htm>). Subsequent death dates in this nomination found at this source.

⁹ *New York Census for 1875*. First election district of Pittstown, population schedule, p.5, Household 51.

¹⁰ Rensselaer County cemetery records provides his birth and death dates for most of the Wallises.

¹¹ Information about Harry Wallis/Wallace comes from 1900, 1905, and 1910 census, and from Millerton Cemetery burial records.

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In 1942, John N. (1875-1945) and Charlotte B. (1880-1951) Wallace (the spelling of Wallis in the census changed ca.1900 and on gravestones with Amanda's burial in 1907) sold the parcels John Wallis purchased from John Gifford and from Christopher Andrew—totaling about 90 acres—to Ernest B. and Katherine T. Bell in 1942.¹² Ernest Bell died resident in Rensselaer County on 15 January 1944. Two years later, on the 6 February, his widow sold the property to Otto (1905-1990) and Thea Baum (1909-1986) subject to payment of two mortgages from the Federal Land Bank in Springfield, Massachusetts, totaling \$2,040.¹³

The Baums were German immigrants from near Munich. Thea Baum came from an agricultural background. During the First World War, while her father was in the military and also a prisoner, her mother ran the farm using prisoners-of-war. For protection, she carried a pistol. Otto's father was a banker, and his mother acted a little. Otto came to America with his father and worked as a machinist on Long Island. A few days before leaving Germany about 1926, Otto met Thea, whom he had known as a child, but had not seen in many years. He asked her to come with him, but she demurred, saying she hardly knew him. They corresponded for some time, and about 1928, she came over with his sister. Otto never returned to Germany, but eventually his mother and two brothers also settled in the United States.

Thea and Otto married and opened a pet shop in New York City. They then moved to Long Island, but they both had sinus problems due to the damp ocean air, and a doctor urged them to move to the country for drier air. Otto and his father came upstate to look at property. Otto's father chose a farm in Chestertown, New York, because he liked the mountains, which reminded him of Germany. Otto bought this 89-acre farm from Ernest Bell's widow. Otto and Thea's daughter Teresa (Thea) Baum (b.1941) moved to this property with her parents and younger brother Otto, Jr. She owns the property today, although she has sold a portion to Matthew and Margaret Cannon. The remainder is protected by an easement filed with the Agricultural Stewardship Association in Greenwich, New York.¹⁴

Architectural and agricultural development of the Baum-Wallis farmstead

The earliest documentation located for the Baum-Wallis farmstead is the purchase of 53 acres three roods and two perches of land located in the Gore by John Wallis from John Gifford (1760-1858) on 4 December 1810 for \$1,150.¹⁵ Gifford's ownership, given the acreage, appears to have been speculative. At roughly \$20 per acre, this appears to have been unimproved land with no buildings. Thus, the house and the threshing barn, the larger of the two barns in the main barn group, probably date to the earliest years of John Wallis's ownership. The small, plainly built, one-story, side-gabled frame house with a roughly square plan rests on a stone foundation banked slightly to the north or back of the building. An historic photograph (ca.1905) shows some details of the dwelling house since altered. It had a fairly small brick center chimney, which is now gone, and wood clapboard siding with corner boards. A single window was located on the south eave wall, adjacent to an unusual recessed open porch, which appears to have spanned the center bay. This porch was partially hidden by rampant vines, so it is difficult to be sure exactly how it was configured or if any of its details might be used to determine whether it was part of the earliest design or a later change. Today, this opening is glazed as a sunporch flush to the front wall of the house. Two evenly spaced windows are visible on the west side.¹⁶ Presumably, the Wallises considered the

¹² 655/185.

¹³ 734/478. This deed provides Ernest Bell's death date.

¹⁴ Information about the Baums provided by Theresa Baum in interview with author, 7 May 2009.

¹⁵ 11/320.

¹⁶ Photograph, ca.1905, based on costume of the family members standing and seated in front of the house and 1905 census data. The picture shows an elderly woman, Sarah Sherman, and a slightly younger one, her sister Amanda Sherman Wallace, seated. A younger woman, daughter Louisa Wallace, stands near two young men. One is surely son John N., who lived with his mother. The second may be Harry, who lived with his wife Lila and daughters Amanda B. and Emma on a different farm in Pittstown. A bicycle is just visible in the recessed open porch. Photograph in collection of Pittstown Historical Society.

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south eave wall the front façade as they arrayed themselves there. It is at a right angle to the highway. The 1855 state census valued the frame house at \$300, a typical value for a small and, by then, old-fashioned dwelling.¹⁷

The threshing barn is a similarly early building. It began as a fairly typically sized three-bay barn with hewn rafters with birdsmouth joints; grooves and girts for vertical board siding; and a lower mow bay in what is now the north end bay. These characteristics suggest predominantly New English influence in construction. The frame has dropped tie beams, a feature more commonly used after the turn of the nineteenth century. Their considerable dimensions combined with an unusually wide clear span lend these bents a massiveness reminiscent of the H-frames in Dutch barns. A fourth bay using similar construction and now the southernmost bay, was added soon after the main structure was raised. Large sistered posts and tiebeams adjoin the older bay at that end of the barn. This later bay appears to have housed a stable in a banked foundation and possibly a granary above. John Wallis might have begun farming with oxen, as was most common with New English immigrants. He may have acquired horses to draw a wagon. They may also have been used to thresh grain on the unusually heavy floor in the original center bay of the barn. It is unclear whether this barn stands in its original location. Its banked foundation may have been excavated in two phases, an early one dating to the construction of the fourth bay and a later one dating to the time when the second barn was placed near its northeast corner.

The three western bays of the four-bay sheep barn, now the horse and wagon ell of the main barn group, was probably built somewhat later than the threshing barn and the house. The introduction of merino sheep and the subsequent rapid increase in wool production in the 1810s and 1820s led to the construction of many such narrow, side-gabled buildings with walkout bays set below a narrow mow. Grooves on the outer side of the top plate and girts show that like the threshing barn, the sheep barn had vertical board siding typical of New English builders. This building's first site was probably somewhat remote from the house as many sheep barns were. John's ten-acre purchase in 1826 might have been to build a sheep barn and enclose a pasture for them.

Little is known about the agricultural use of the Baum-Wallis farmstead until the 1850 federal census. That census recorded John, age 66, living with Armene, 55, his wife and their youngest son, Nelson, age 18, a farmer.¹⁸ Implements were valued at \$150. In keeping with agricultural practice of the region, John raised diverse grain crops and hay and kept a variety of stock, some for domestic use and quite a lot more for bartering or selling. Like nearly every farmer in the Pittstown region, he turned his milk into butter and kept sheep for wool. His stock was valued at \$390 and included three horses, four milk cows, three other cattle, 18 sheep, and 10 pigs. These produced 400 pounds of butter and 60 pounds of wool; \$70 worth of stock was butchered for meat. Field crop harvests included 80 bushels of rye, 40 bushels of corn, 100 bushels of oats, 50 bushels of potatoes, and 15 bushels of buckwheat. John maintained an orchard, from which he harvested produce valued at \$12. He also cut 15 tons of hay. Armene made \$10 worth of domestic manufactures—probably woven textiles.¹⁹

In 1860, John Wallis's real estate was valued at \$5,000 and his personal estate at \$418. Nelson, 28, was listed as farmer with personal estate of \$168.²⁰ The agricultural schedule shows that while John remained head of household, Nelson managed the farm rather than his aging parent. Nelson kept two horses, three milk cows, 34 sheep, and 11 pigs—valued at \$360. These produced 400 pounds of butter and 120 pounds of wool. Stock worth \$110 of was butchered. In addition to field crops in 1850, he harvested 18 bushels of wheat, a crop uncommon in Pittstown after the 1820s. He quadrupled the potato crop over his father's in 1850, and had begun raising flax, like many of his Pittstown neighbors. In 1860, Nelson recorded 2,400 pounds of flax lint and 60 bushels of flax seed. The flax stems were processed locally in seasonal water-powered mills for raw fiber, which

¹⁷ *New York Census for 1855*. Pittstown, First election district, Population schedule, Household 110.

¹⁸ *United States Census for 1850*. Pittstown, Population schedule, p.145, Household 1017.

¹⁹ *United States Census for 1850*. Pittstown, Agricultural schedule, p.11, line 9.

²⁰ *United States Census for 1860*. Pittstown, Population schedule, p.60, Household 455.

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was then sold to mills along the Hoosick River, which made twine. Mills in the valley also crushed seed for linseed oil.²¹ The orchard recorded in 1850 had apparently matured, and Nelson harvested \$40 worth of fruit. He also cut 10 tons of hay.²² These statistics were fairly typical of farming in Pittstown in this period, where a diverse range of crops provided economic stability to individual farmers.

After John Wallis's death in 1870, Nelson acquired his older brothers' shares of the property via quit claim deed 1871.²³ Pittstown cemetery records do not list a grave marker for John, and he may be interred without one in the neatly enclosed lot south of the barns. His widow Armene died 28 September 1875, and she is buried in the Millerton cemetery in Pittstown.²⁴ That year's census shows that Nelson was married and had four children. John N., who eventually owned the property, was apparently not yet born, and both of Nelson's parents had died. The 1875 agricultural schedule shows that Nelson was farming 170 acres, but it is unclear where the acreage in addition to the 96 acquired by his parents were located because no deeds were recorded. It is possible he was managing another farm in addition to his own. Valued at \$8,500, the farm (or farms) was above the median in Pittstown, as was the \$1,000 in outbuildings. It appears that Nelson was also shifting his production to focus on fewer crops in greater quantities. He milked a single cow, which produced the typical 100 pounds of butter. He kept one horse. He sold \$12 of poultry \$5 of eggs. His orchard of 10 trees produced 24 bushels. He cut 20 tons of hay and dug 450 bushels of potatoes, both increases, but he listed neither flax nor wool. Previous censuses did not provide values for outbuildings, but in comparison to other Pittstown farms, the \$1,000 valuation in combination with the lack of sheep may indicate that he had recently moved the old sheep barn to its present location for use as a horse barn.²⁵ The increase of the value of the house from \$300 to \$500 between 1850 and 1875²⁶, but it is unclear whether this was merely an expected appreciation in value or whether some interior changes were made, possibly stoves. A somewhat later (ca.1905) photograph does not suggest notable enlargement or modernization even by that date.

Nelson Wallis died 25 February 1880 at age forty-nine leaving his widow with three sons—Charlie, 17; Harrie, 13; and John N., 5—and two daughters—Louisa, 10; and Eliza or Emily, 7.²⁷ Amanda never remarried. Whether Amanda or Charlie managed the farm is unknown. The latter died in 1889, when his middle brother Harry was in his early twenties. The latter may have managed the farm for some time, but by 1900, the youngest, John N., had taken over and Harry had moved to his own farm. Harry's older daughter, Amanda B., was born in 1896, and so he and Lila Bradt probably married and moved before that.

John N. Wallis apparently never left the farmstead until he at last sold it in 1942. His mother Amanda Sherman Wallace is recorded living on the property with him until her death in 1911. Based on construction technology, form, and use, it appears that John built one large outbuilding and several smaller ones. These reflect changing notions of agricultural practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the region. The last large extant outbuilding, the wagon barn, probably postdates Nelson's death but was standing before 1900 based on its fairly light sawn frame mortise-and-tenon joinery. It incorporates two wagon bays at the north end, grain bins in the fourth bay, and a shop in the southernmost bay. Attached to the east side near the north end is a

²¹ These mills, at Johnsonville and Valley Falls, were recorded in the industrial schedules of the federal and state censuses from 1850 through 1875.

²² *United States census for 1860*. Pittstown, Agricultural schedule, pp.11-12, line 24.

²³ 150/346. David E. Wallis of Warren, Herkimer County, and Thomas D. Wallis of Ellery, Chautauqua County, to Nelson Wallis, for \$5,800 for three parcels including the two parcels transferred via 655/185 and a 10-acre parcel.

²⁴ Armene Wallis's death date is noted on her stone. Rensselaer County cemetery list.

²⁵ *New York Census for 1875*. Pittstown, First Election District, Agricultural schedule, pp.1-4, line 26.

²⁶ *New York Census for 1875*. Pittstown, First Election District, Population schedule, p.5, Household 51.

²⁷ Rensselaer County cemetery records for death date; ages and names drawn from 1875 and 1880 censuses. The latter census accessed via www.ancestry.com. The younger daughter is variously named.

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three-seat privy, probably contemporary with the barn's construction. This provided a location near, but independent of, the house.

The ice house reflects the shift to fluid milk production, at least during the summer months, common throughout much of the Northeast. Ice was used to cool and store a day or two days worth of milk before it was carried to the milk station or creamery on the railroad. This lightly constructed frame was moved in the late 1940s and reused as a milk house. Like the wagon barn, the pig house uses late nineteenth-century construction techniques, but appears to have been built of new lumber. Many people built them at least partially with materials salvaged from older disused buildings in response to repeated advice to shelter pigs. It appears that until the turn of the twentieth century, while everyone kept pigs for domestic use, they were frequently not sheltered. The pig house, now retrofitted as a garage, was moved to the site of the ice house after the latter was moved near the barn. There were also a smoke house and a hen house. John Wallis probably also built the long, narrow corn crib with outward sloping sides.²⁸

Shortly before his mother's death, John N. Wallis married. It appears that he undertook some modernization of the house soon after that. The long, shed-roofed dormer windows with wood shingle siding set on the long roof faces lend a bungalow-form appearance to the building. The louvered wood shutters may also date to this renovation. The recessed porch on the south façade may also have been enclosed at this time to provide a sun porch—a popular improvement in this period. The center chimney shown in the ca.1905 photograph may also have been replaced with the brick chimney still centered on the east end of the house. This chimney probably vented a kitchen range and possibly heating stoves.

John N. and Charlotte "Lottie" Wallace sold the property in 1942 to Ernest and Katherine Bell. John was past 70 years of age, and died only three years later. The property had changed little since the first quarter of the twentieth century. It is unknown whether the Bells intended to make changes because Ernest Bell died soon after, and Katherine, his widow, sold the property to Otto and Thea Baum in 1946. Based on their daughter Theresa's (b.1942) recollection, the Baums may already have been tenants on the Wallace farm before their purchase in February of that year.

The Baums had run a pet shop in New York City, and in Pittstown, Otto worked as a taxidermist and part time as a machinist at Eagle Bridge. He kept a tropical fish tank in an addition he built on the south end of the wagon barn. Thea kept a large garden. She brought currants, rhubarb, and the magnolia in the dooryard up from Long Island, and she also grew grapes. When the Baums arrived, all of the buildings on the farm today were there, although Theresa's brother Otto, Jr., recalls that that the corn crib used to stand farther southeast of its current location. Like many immigrant families who took over farms in Pittstown, the Baums worked with the buildings in the configurations in which they found them, adding wings and connectors for efficiency and space, rather than demolishing and replacing buildings. They raised pigs, ducks, and geese for their own use and for sale. Since Theresa, their daughter, was allergic to cow's milk, they outfitted the west end of the north wing of the main barn group to keep dairy goats. Soon, they also had a few dairy cows. In 1946, Otto poured a concrete floor (the date is cut into the floor) in the basement at the south end of the west wing of the main barn group and put in eight stanchions. The ice house was moved to its present location for use as a milk house and a well house was added to its north wall.

The fields were open, but neglected. They began clearing the neglected fields for tillage—mainly hay and corn and some oats. They planted buckwheat once, but Otto said he never would again because it spread so easily. For a few years, he worked the farm with horses. Once a stout man, he lost about 100 pounds with all the exercise. His first tractor was an old one with iron tires, but he eventually bought a Farmall. He and another

²⁸ Teresa Baum states that the smokehouse burned. This suggests it may have been a frame one, which was not uncommon in Pittstown. A few frame smokehouses survive even today. The hen house was a small example, and probably dated to the same era as the ice and pig houses.

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German shared equipment. While more up-to-date practices by then included fencing with posts and wire, the Baums retained the old stone fencing, although it appears that some field divisions were removed to allow for a longer pass with a tractor.

The Baums also made some improvements to the house. They added the enclosed porch at the east end of the house. The current fenestration of the front porch appears to date to the 1960s or later.

Otto, Sr., farmed until about 1980, ten years before he died. He determined that the regulations were getting too difficult to meet. He had intended to add a stanchion wing to the south end of the west side of the barn, for which he built cobblestone walls mortared with cement, but he sold the herd instead. For many years, before her health declined, Thea cleaned houses for people. Otto, Jr., did not carry on the farm. He is a machinist presently living in South Carolina. Theresa is retired and now lives on the property. Like her mother, she keeps a large garden.²⁹

²⁹ Theresa Baum, Interview with author, 7 May 2009.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Please refer to MPDF bibliography. Additional sources related solely to this nomination are referenced in footnotes.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 85 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

Please refer to attached map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the historic farmstead as it was configured in the historic period. While a portion (part of tax parcel 34.1-25.11) is now owned by the adjacent neighbor, this piece of land is set off on tax maps as belonging to a separate conservation easement set aside by owner Theresa Baum.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jessie A. Ravage
organization Preservation consultant date 3 August 2012
street & number 34 Delaware St telephone 607-547-9507
city or town Cooperstown state NY zip code 1336
e-mail jravage@stny.rr.com

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Photographs:

List of digital photographs for NY_Rensselaer County_Pittstown Farmsteads MPS_Baum-Wallis Farmstead
Photographs of property shot by Jessie A. Ravage (34 Delaware Street, Cooperstown, NY, 13326, 607-547-9507, jravage@stny.rr.com), April 2012.

- 0001: House, wagon barn, and corn crib viewed from south
- 0002: Main barn group viewed from northwest; north wing (former sheep barn) on left, west wing (former threshing barn) on right
- 0003: Main barn group viewed from south
- 0004: Main barn group viewed from east
- 0005: Milk house made from former ice house (moved from different site on property for reuse), viewed from southeast, and cobblestone wall built for cow addition, but never completed
- 0006: Pig house, moved to site of former ice house, and reused as garage
- 0007: Wallis family seated in front of house, ca.1905 (copy of photograph in Pittstown Historical Society collections)

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Theresa Baum
street & number 132 Baum Rd telephone _____
city or town Johnsonville state NY zip code 12094

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Photographs of Baum-Wallis Farmstead, Pittstown, Rensselaer County



0001. House, wagon barn and corn crib from the south



0002. Main barn group from northeast showing old threshing barn (right) and sheep barn (left) with connecting additions

Photographs of Baum-Wallis Farmstead, Pittstown, Rensselaer County



0003. Main barn group viewed from south



0004. Main barn group viewed from east

Photographs of Baum-Wallis Farmstead, Pittstown, Rensselaer County

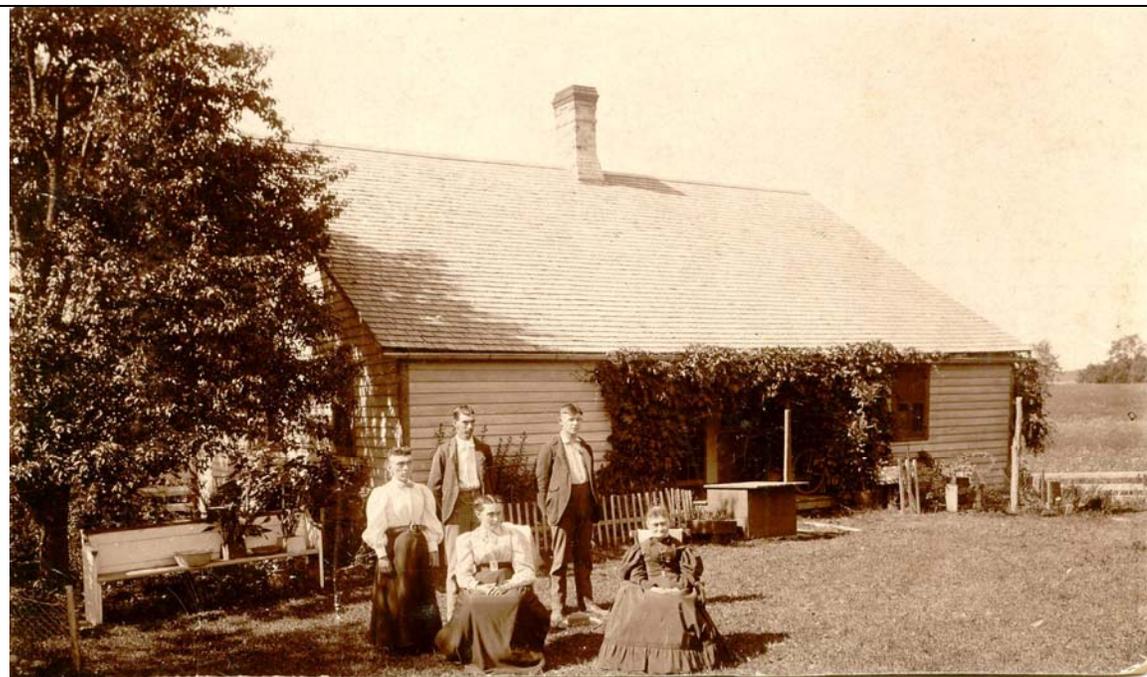


0005. Ice house reused as milk house with added pump house



0006. Former pig house reused as garage

Photographs of Baum-Wallis Farmstead, Pittstown, Rensselaer County

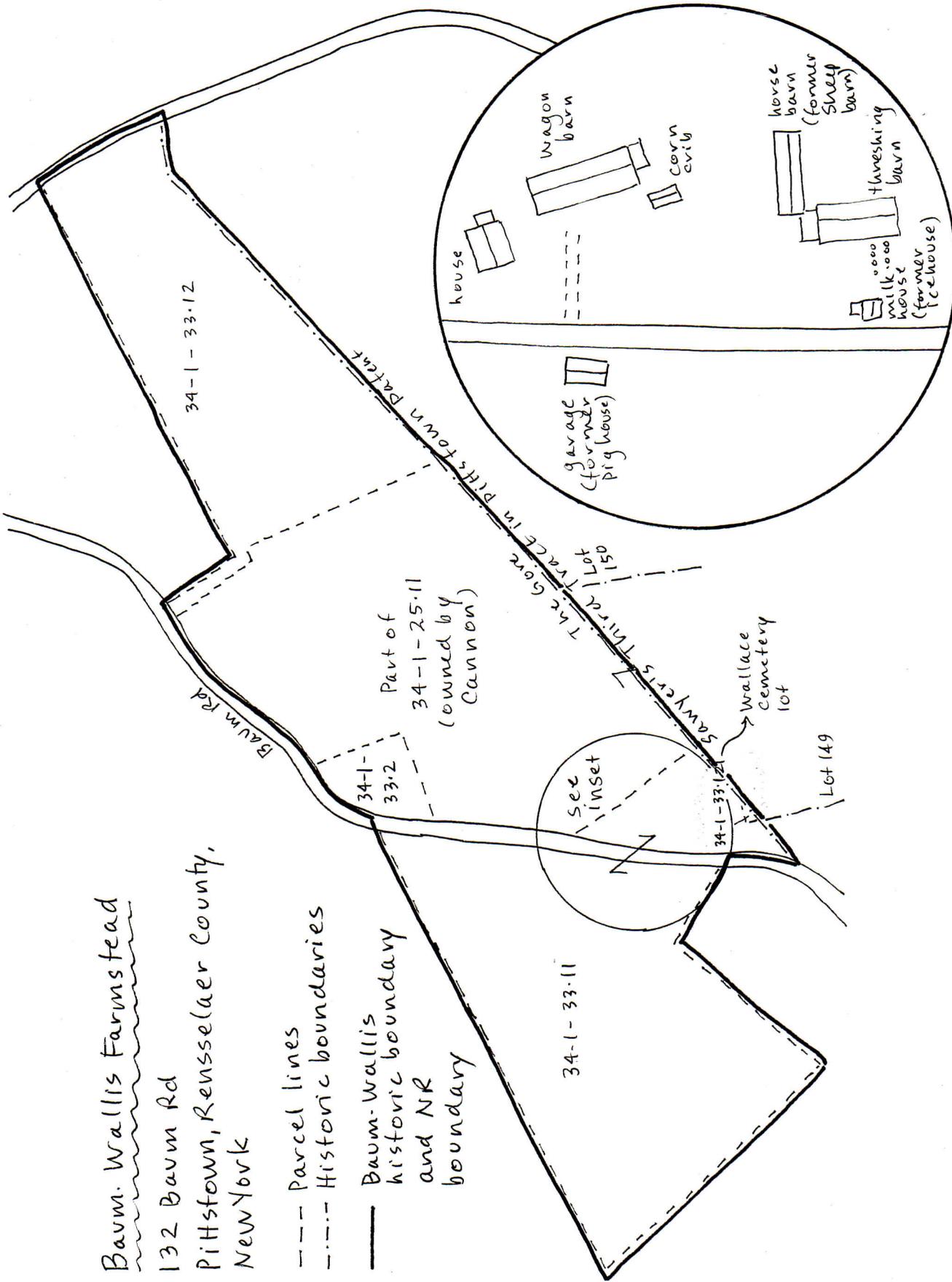


0007. Historic photograph, ca.1905, of house

Baum. Wallis Farmstead

132 Baum Rd
 Pittstown, Rensselaer County,
 New York

- Parcel lines
- - - Historic boundaries
- Baum-Wallis historic boundary and NR boundary



Jessie Ravage
 7 August 2012