



Private Joel Molyneux, Company K, 141st Reg.

July 5, 2017

### **TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY'S MUSEUM . . . while dusting**

The Sullivan County Century Farm awards, in cooperation with the Sullivan County Conservation District, are still going on yet this year. The museum received seven applications for the award last year and we are in hopes of a few more this year. One such farm from the 2016 awards was the Lime Ridge Farm, presently owned by Clifford Molyneux, Jr., great grandson of Joel Molyneux. The farm was originally purchased from Richard Biddle who died in Hillsgrove in 1899. The following is Cliff Molyneux's dissertation of his farm's history.

"Having survived the Civil War, Joel Molyneux made the original purchase of the farm in 1868.

After the purchase, he immediately began farming in earnest. The original house was across the road from the present day home which he built in 1875. The original giant stone slab that covered the root cellar was moved and serves as the ground level step for the side walk at the bottom of the farmhouse steps. All that remains of the original house is some of the stone foundation and a large lilac tree which still blossoms.

He was successful to the point that at one time both a dairy barn and another out barn for the other farm animals was present. There were also several other out buildings such as a shop, corncrib, and several storage buildings.

In addition to dairy, Joel was also a sheep farmer, and owned prize winning sheep for both wool and breeding.

At one point a large apple orchard was present but as the trees aged and decayed their stumps were removed for tillable land. One remaining tree is still surviving although it only produces enough apples for several pies!

The farm name Lime Ridge, was found in an old ledger of Joel's where he kept a running journal of all the activities on the farm.

While Lime Ridge is certainly a unique name for a farm, it was not without merit. Joel found a ridge of limestone in the one field that was rich enough that he built a lime kiln on the property and used it for a number of years to not only provide lime for his own farm but also to sell it to other local farmers. The remains of the quarry site is still present and the remains of the kiln are on the property of Richard Krause.

In later years, the dairy barn was later converted to raising chickens and thousands were produced there over the years. The barn met its fate in the mid 1980's when it was struck by lightning and a large portion of the barn burned. It was at that point the remaining portion was

made into a sloped roof barn only used for storage. It currently sits on the property of Michael Molyneux. All the other structures from the original farm have been dismantled and removed over the years.

A good portion of the property is still used as hay fields, and other grain crops.”

Joel Molyneux’s obituary appears on Dec. 16, 1915 and states that he died “aged about 85 years”. No date of birth can be found for Joel, but he enlisted in the 141<sup>st</sup> Regiment, PA Volunteers, in the Union Army of the Potomac from August of 1862 to June 5, 1865 and served continually as a private. In 1996, Kermit Molyneux Bird, grandson of Joel and Elvira McCarty Molyneux, published Joel’s 136 transcribed letters home to family and close friends. This insight to a Civil War soldier’s life goes beyond interesting to intriguing. And to think; he came from little known Sullivan County.

For those of you interested, an application for Sullivan County Century Farm awards can either be picked up at the museum or copied on line at our website [www.scpahistory.com](http://www.scpahistory.com) And for this and more information, you can phone 570-946-5020 or also visit the website.