

This Week in Saratoga County History

Putnam Place Goat Dairy

Submitted by Dave Waite September 24, 2025

Dave Waite has written many articles on upstate New York history, and has recently published two anthologies, [Thrilling Attractions and Weird Wonders](#), and [A Place called Pauley](#). Dave is also the videographer for several films produced by the Saratoga County History Center, including the [Forgotten Crossroads](#) series. He can be reached at davewaitefinearts@gmail.com



Putnam Goat Dairy Cart on Broadway

In July of 1940, Harry & Eunice VanAlst Brower & Eunice's twelve-year-old son Carleton Chadbourne, left their home in Mount Kisco, Westchester County, New York, to reside for the summer season in Saratoga Springs. The family would be staying at Putnam Place, the ancestral home of Mrs. Brower, a three-story, 25-room mansion that sat on a parcel of land that is now Saratoga Hospital's Myrtle Street Park complex. The former Miss Putnam, Eunice, was heir to the Putnam line that can be traced back to the earliest days of Saratoga Springs.

Eunice moved to New York City with her mother after her father had died in World War I. She later reminisced about her return to Putnam Place in an interview with Saratoga Historian Jean McGregor published in the September 20, 1946, *Saratogian*: "I had never forgotten the beauty and peace of Putnam Place and I had cherished the many memories that on my return became reality again." Putnam Place must have had a strong pull on the Brower family as by the end of the year they had left Westchester County, taking up residence at Putnam Place where they soon started a family business raising goats and selling their milk.

So, why did this middle-aged Ivy League educated downs tate society couple choose to pursue farming? My search uncovered no clear answer, though when interviewed after a year and a half

in business, both were clearly pleased with their decision. As the couple sat together in the dairy's outdoor seating area Mr. Browers shared his pleasure with the way those in the area had begun to realize the benefits of goat's milk with their products being used as far away as Schenectady. The article, published in the July 2, 1942, *Saratogian* told this about Eunice Brower:

Mrs. Brower is quite as much in earnest about the business as her husband, who told me "She has turned out to be a regular veterinarian in case any of the goats are taken ill. She knows just what to do." She loved the work as well as her husband, and so pleasant and delightful is their new venture that over the weekend both had to turn in to help with the numerous parties there.

The advertising of both the dairy and the benefits of goat's milk was a large part of the Browsers' marketing plan. In 1941 the dairy ran at least a dozen different ads, with catchy phrases and gimmicks that were sure to catch the attention of those reading the *Saratogian* newspaper. Another part of their strategy to bring their product into the public eye was what today we would call direct marketing. In the *Saratogian* during June the dairy ran the following advertisement: "Young girl or boy, must be 16 to 18, about 5 ft. 6 in. tall with sales personality. To sell goats milk during season. Apply in person, 12 to 1 p.m. Putnam Place Goat Dairy, Inc."

The search for a salesperson was successful and that summer a young man wearing the same uniform worn by employees in the goat milk processing room guided a goat-powered cart selling cups of fresh goat's milk on the streets of downtown Saratoga Springs. We are fortunate that a photograph of one of these carts, as it sat in front of the Edelstein Jewelry store in downtown Saratoga, has survived and can be included in this story.

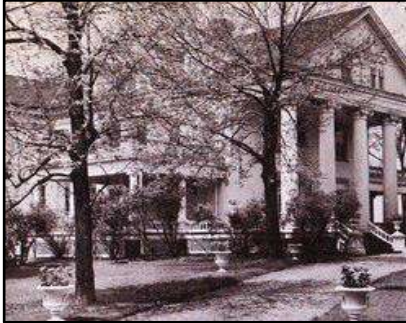
In another effort to promote the value of their product that summer, the dairy published a brochure extolling the science supporting goat milk's safety and benefits. This eight-page pamphlet with its whimsical goat logo on the front weighed heavily on scientific charts and calculations comparing the fat content, curd tension, and vitamin content of cow and goat milk. If nothing else, this promotional tool would overwhelm the average reader with information leading them to believe that countless experts recommended the milk of goats. The last page reinforces this by giving the names of thirty physicians, scientists, and government organizations as sources for the tract. To ensure that the reader would patronize Putnam Place Goat Dairy, these Road Directions were included:

The dairy is situated about one and a half miles from the center of Saratoga Springs. It may be reached by proceeding along Church Street from the west or east to Myrtle Street which is adjacent to the Saratoga Hospital. On entering Myrtle Street proceed north for about five hundred yards, to the dairy.

In 1942, their second year of operation, the Browsers opened an outdoor milk and ice cream bar at Putnam Place. To accommodate their customers, tables with oversized umbrellas were placed under the large trees surrounding the mansion. This cool and shady spot soon became a

destination for young and old alike. To draw in even more customers, in early summer they added “Beefburger Heaven” and began offering a full menu, waitresses, and hours that extended as late as 11 p.m. As with their goat’s milk, advertising for their menu choices was highlighted with names guaranteed to grab the reader’s attention such as CubanBurger and WineBurger.

Unfortunately, this expansion of their business was short-lived as only a week after closing the outdoor restaurant for the season, the Browers posted a notice in the *Saratogian* that they would be closing their dairy operation for the “duration of the war.”



Putnam Place aka Iceland Hotel

Behind the scenes at Putnam Place, the family had begun to raise chickens and with the closing of the dairy focused on raising the poultry and selling dressed ready-to-cook birds. As with the dairy operation, help wanted advertisements went out for people to work in their processing plant and to assist with the clerical work. Soon even the business name was changed to Saratoga Poultry. In 1946 the Brower family put the whole operation up for sale, advertising an “exceptional broiler farm completely equipped to raise and dress for market 50,000 broilers yearly.”

At the same time, the family began selling off the contents of Putnam Place and in 1947 the mansion itself was sold to Morris Eisland, ending nearly 150 years of ownership of the property by the Putnam family. Eisland who had owned another hotel by the same name on Phila Street during the 1930s, operated the Iceland Hotel into the 1960s. After years of abandonment and deterioration, the historic building burned to the ground in 1973.

Sources:

newspaper archives at nyhistoricnewspapers.org and fultonsearch.com.

Rachel Clothier, Town of Corinth Historian