

Greene County Gleanings

by Raymond Beecher

It is one of those rarities drawn on paper which has survived in reasonably good condition down the generations, one reflecting a major aspect of Greene County history. Entitled "A Map of the Contested Lands & Agreed Upon Division Between Major Prevost and the Proprietors of Coeymans Patent," the one by three foot framed map is dated 1803. Cockburn, the surveyor, used the scale of 10 chains to the inch. This paper rarity comes to the Greene County Historical Society's Vedder Memorial Library, the gift of Anthony Van Bergen Blaisdell of Coeymans, and is given as a memorial to his father, Robert Van Bergen Blaisdell (1879-1957), a man intensely interested in area history. The original owner of the map was Levi Blaisdell (1757-1833), the great-great grandfather of the donor.

The Cockburn survey map was an attempt to resolve the conflicting claims of the Coeymans heirs (Ten Eyck, Blaisdell, etc.) with Major Augustine Prevost; the land lay in the town of Greenville (then Greenfield). Earlier, as a result of a complaint on the disposition of properties by descendants of Andries Coeymans, the Chancery Court had

ordered the Coeymans survey of 1786 which was to establish the western boundary survey with the Augustine Prevost survey of 1768, there being considerable overlapping. As a result of the Cockburn survey of 1803, the disputed acreage was divided, recognizing plots already sold.

Of special interest is the map's location of the Greenville Presbyterian Church. Whether it actually had the depicted steeple and weathervane is uncertain. Neatly lettered in is "GreenField Meeting House." (The township was Greenfield until 6 April 1808.) Clearly discernible are the early roads, now routes 81, 26 and 32. Five buildings are drawn in at the four corners. Elsewhere are the houses of S. Jones, Hinman, Smith Sutherland, the Baldwins, J. Blakesley, G. Dudley

and S. Woodford.

The lack of natural landmarks led to the use of "crooked black ash, beech, and small walnut trees," as well as stakes and piles of stones. In 1803, Augustine Prevost's southeastern corner of his patent was still denoted by a small tree surrounded by a pile of stones and the A.P. mark.

The Prevosts had petitioned for land grants in the county of Albany on the west side of Hudson River to the south of the Manor of Rensselaerwyck and the west of the Coeymans grant. The Prevost surveys were made by deputy surveyor Adolphus Benzell and confirmed by Alexander Colden, surveyor general, on June 16, 1767. Cockburn uses the date of 1768 but is apparently referring to the same Prevost survey.

GED class meeting October 5

COXSACKIE — The GED class meeting at Coxsackie-Athens Central High School is sponsoring a guest speaker on Tuesday, Oct. 5 at 6 p.m. All community members are invited to this presentation on opportunities at Columbia-Greene

Community College for post-GED education. This will be an opportunity for those interested in pursuing post-graduate training to learn about various options available and to discuss them in an informal setting.

