

# 1828 - 1838 Saugerties - the Showpiece of a New Age

With the introduction of Henry Barclay's mills Saugerties took on an entirely new character. At the same time the whole of the Hudson Valley and New York City would experience a similarly dramatic change. Just as the arrival of a new people two centuries before stressed the millennia-old culture of the native Indians into decline the new ways of life brought in by the technologies of the industrial age were beginning, in 1825, to press their own inexorable dynamic on the present land-based natives of Saugerties.

November 3, 1825 a flotilla of steamboats celebrating the opening of the Erie Canal passed the land that would, within a year, contain Barclay's dam and mill pond on the Esopus Creek and his mills within sight of the Hudson. That same fall surveying had begun on the Delaware and Hudson Canal that would bring coal from the mines of Pennsylvania to the Hudson at the Rondout Creek.

For nearly 200 years the tide waters of the Hudson River provided a natural and effortless link between its shoreline inhabitants and the world at large. The movement of its waters needed no human intervention. With the Erie Canal water transportation took on an engineering focus and the power of water in general began to drive the broader imagination of the time.

Water power ran many mills over the past century at the two falls where the

Esopus Creek reached tide water at Saugerties. Each fall had a 15 to 20 foot drop supplying force to their water wheels but high banks, solid rock cliffs and three right angle turns limited the number of natural mill sites there.

On the west bank, below the last fall before tide water, where a hundred years before John Persen operated one of the first mills, Robert L. had invested \$10,000 in a new mill building. At this fall Henry Barclay constructed a 30 foot high dam that loomed over this 3 story mill building and through the high cliff on the opposite east bank he cut a deep channel in the solid rock. This channel directed the enormous pressure of the water the dam backed up over the second fall and up the long gorge to its south into a system of mill races to support the more extensive acreage available for mill sites on the east side of the Esopus.

For the time the engineering

that controlled the waters of the great Esopus through these serpentine channels was an incredible feat. It was equal to the present concept of the Power Plant. Power was leased to the mill sites based on the potential flow through pipes and smaller distribution channels. The volume of water behind the dam continuously replenished by the Esopus watershed made this resource at Saugerties the most valuable in the state, and perhaps in the world when it was built.

While the water systems were being completed Henry Barclay was building two factories. A mill for rolling and slitting iron was first put into production and immediately sold to have the capability of "100 tons of Iron from Pigs by Puddling per

week" added to it. The sale amount was then used to purchase and install equipment for machine-made paper into the second plant. Before the close of the decade two smaller factories for making axes and barrel hoops were operating next to the paper mill.

The two main industries of Saugerties, making purified iron and machine-made paper, both

anticipated directions and manufacturing needs that the next decade would bring. Iron making would explode in demand with the coming of the railroads. The economy that the westward expansion generated stressed the supply of paper required by the increase in transactions. It was not only for innovations in the application of waterpower that Saugerties



Post 1837 images of the Barclay dam and the record-length 262 foot Burr Arch bridge at Saugerties.

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## Overview: The Making of a Village

A community has to have a soul and in the founding of the village of Saugerties this was Henry Barclay.

Henry Barclay's grandfather was the second rector of Trinity Church in New York City. His great grandfather had come to Albany in the late 17th century as an overseer of the port there. In 1831, the year he incorporated his village of Ulster, Henry Barclay also saw to it that a church in that village was incorporated as Trinity Church.

The land he donated for the construction of this church provided a view over all of the land that would be the village and the expanse of the Catskills as a backdrop. Within the village, on a hillside that would provide a view focused on the mills that he had constructed on the tidewater where the Esopus Creek meets the Hudson he donated land for the construction of the church of the mill workers, most all Irish Catholics.

Near the Trinity Church, looking over mills, churches, the fledgling village and the scenic backdrop of mountains and river was a large house Henry Barclay built just for his visitors. Here would stay a continuous stream of investors and like-minded boosters of industrialization and also the major engineering minds of the age as they arrived from Europe to apply their technologies to his mills.

Here too would stay the intellectuals of America and its cultural elite that had made their pilgrimage to Saugerties to mingle at this vortex of innovation. The Livingston reputation for intellectual curiosity and their connection to this project attracted scientists and painters and from the vistas of Clermont and Saugerties an appreciation of the landscape these views presented came the American focus of a movement that was already being expressed in the cultural vocabulary of the European visitors. (An engraving of "The Barclay Mill" published in England in 1831 is stylistically identical to the work of the founder of the Hudson River School of painting, Asher B. Durand.)

For the first half-dozen years after Henry Barclay arrived at Saugerties everything that happened was under his direction. In April of 1831 the state approved an Act of Incorporation of the village of Ulster passing responsibility for the hundreds of worker households that occupied the building lots, mostly that he still owned, to an elected body. Gradually, over the next few years the resolutions of this body show the laying of sidewalks, building of fire houses, planning of sewers, overseeing of public wells and the finalization of the streets that were only found on the Livingston and Barclay division map previously.

Thereafter, Henry Barclay, now in his early

60's enjoyed the position of elder. He essentially placed his estate under the direction of his brother, George, and occupied himself in the last years of his life overseeing the growth of the village he had founded and receiving to Saugerties those who came to seek his advice, to copy the new processes and carry his ideas out into their own enterprises. It was the complete relationship of the technology to the workers and the workers to the place where they lived that was the base of this idea of an ideal community which he sought to promote.

So involved was he in showcasing this community concept that the more historically important aspects of his accomplishments, the introduction of innovative industrial production processes into America, often are not credited to him and instead placed in secondary enterprises rather than in Saugerties; the Fourdranier process for papermaking is connected with Connecticut and iron making by the puddling process with Virginia.

However, his continuous communication with the most enlightened individuals of the day did bring to Saugerties the many practical insights that made it the strong community it was. For instance, public health concepts applied in Saugerties brought early intervention that allowed the heavily populated village to avoid the Cholera outbreak of 1832. And the

integration of economic policies independent of the speculation of the day made it possible for Saugerties to avoid the panic of 1837 and its mills to remain productive. As much as Henry Barclay freely exported his intellectual properties from Saugerties to future competitors, an equal benefit from concepts that made Saugerties secure was added through his intellectual exchanges.

Henry Barclay's legacy is in the high level of interest he established in Saugerties. This attracted business entrepreneurs not just to his own mill sites but also to the many other places with manufacturing potential in the town. These not only brought capital into the community but these industries added the skills to the population necessary for easing its transition from the farm economy, making life in the new village as well as the hamlets possible. Before Henry Barclay and his village of Ulster the rural economy of Saugerties required hundreds of acres to support a family. By the time he died in 1851 the population of the village itself was approaching 2,000 with the town outside the village almost equaling that. In the 32 square miles of the town the average requirement per family had been reduced to only 20 acres and that basically remains the proportion of residential lot to open space in the town to this day.



Drawn by G. Wall.

Engraved & Printed by Yeaman, Seavey & Co.

BARCLAY'S IRON WORKS, SAUGERTIES.

London: Published Jan 1838 by T. Agnew & Sons, Printers & Stationers.

Period views of Henry Barclay's dam, the mills below on both sides of the falls and Henry Barclay's 262 foot long Burr Arch bridge. The color engraving is on Barclay Company-made banknote paper.

# 1828 - 1847 The mid-Hudson follows Saugerties

would be a showcase but also the concept of being ahead of the demand curve. It was also ahead of the curve in the social changes that were taking place in the Hudson Valley.

Both the Erie and the D&H canals provided a focus on the Hudson River that would see the population of New York City balloon by the end of the decade. Within a year after the opening of the Erie Canal 40 barges a day would carry thousands of passengers and tens of thousands of bushels of grain per year from western New York and Ohio farms to the port of New York past Saugerties.

The farms of the Hudson Valley and especially the large tenant farmlands of the Livingstons had provided the flour, meat and firewood that sustained New York City's population since the end of the Revolution. By the close of the 1820's competitive prices bypassed them for this market. The growing grain belt of the mid-west and its meat packing houses were supplying an endless flow of product along the Erie Canal and D&H Canal coal was revolutionized heating and cooking in the City.

The change brought about by the canal boom was nowhere more apparent than at Glasco. It brought an end to the great activity there that, for a short time, made it a major port on the Hudson. For a decade cargoes that came down the Ulster and Delaware turnpike by team lined the long parallel streets on its heights awaiting the sloops that would take it down to the New York markets. The great bay between Glasco and Tivoli allowed for a high level of river traffic in the day of sail and Glasco was primed to have the commercial advantage of the

best land and water assets. The U&D was for this period the shortest link between the wheat belt of central New York and the Hudson and since the Esopus had always been the center of wheat trade Glasco was the center of its interest.

Now, with shipping dropped from \$100 a ton on the turnpike to under nine on the canal, hundreds of teamsters, carters and market sloop captains, professions dominated by the Dutch since early colonial days, were put out of work. With the loss of the wheat trade Glasco declined right along with the prestige and fortunes that both the old Esopus and the Manor families enjoyed from their long hold on the agrarian economy of the Hudson Valley.

With this decline the legendary power center of Esopus and its Kingston Commons fell into obscurity to be nearly erased from memory within a generation.

A new standard of wealth was to take hold on the West bank of the Hudson. This new wealth was still based on the land but on land that had been of no special importance to these early agrarian families. It was from what they regarded as worthless barrier palisades in South Kingston that a cement industry would grow. It was from the impassible high woods ledges they found so annoying in the Kingston Commons that there would blossom the bluestone industry. And from the bluffs along the river where the soil clung to their plows like lard would come the material for the brick industry.

This same time brought an enormous shift in the basic levels of society. The actual planting and herding activities had long been carried out by the slaves of the large landholders or the tenants of the large manors. With the gradual emancipation of slaves enacted in 1799 finally removing all slavery in the state by 1827 and other changes in the state constitution in 1847 recognizing life tenancies in the manors as deeds in actuality, the basic systems of labor that made large land holdings profitable no longer existed. With the subsequent breakup of the agrarian dynasties over the mid-decades of the 19th century the Hudson Valley would begin to look toward other ways to grow

Saugerties and the establishing of the Villages of Rondout and Saugerties the freed slaves of the early Dutch families nearly all left to live in New York City and the influx of Irish immigrants into the City came upriver to fill the new limestone and bluestone quarrying jobs here. Like the workers they replaced, these new residents owned no land. But there were other Irish emigrants that came before them to work on the Erie and D&H canal, and that were brought in for the new industries of Saugerties. By the late 1830's an Irish culture was present to welcome them, help them to settle and see that they had access to ownership of the many small farmland plots being

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The workers that this new economy attracted to Rondout and Saugerties were the Irish. During the short period between the founding of the Town of

parceled off by the earlier Dutch and Palatine landholders.

In the 1840's as the demand for bluestone grew scores of shanty towns sprung up as quarrying spread to every outcropping between Russell's Clove in Saugerties and the heights of Mead Mountain in Woodstock. Nearly every one of these quarry sites was purchased through loans from Jeremiah Russell, every slab of Bluestone quarried from these lands went to market by way of Jeremiah Russell's Saugerties and Woodstock Turnpike and nearly every cent paid for the slab at the dock was spent at a Russell store.

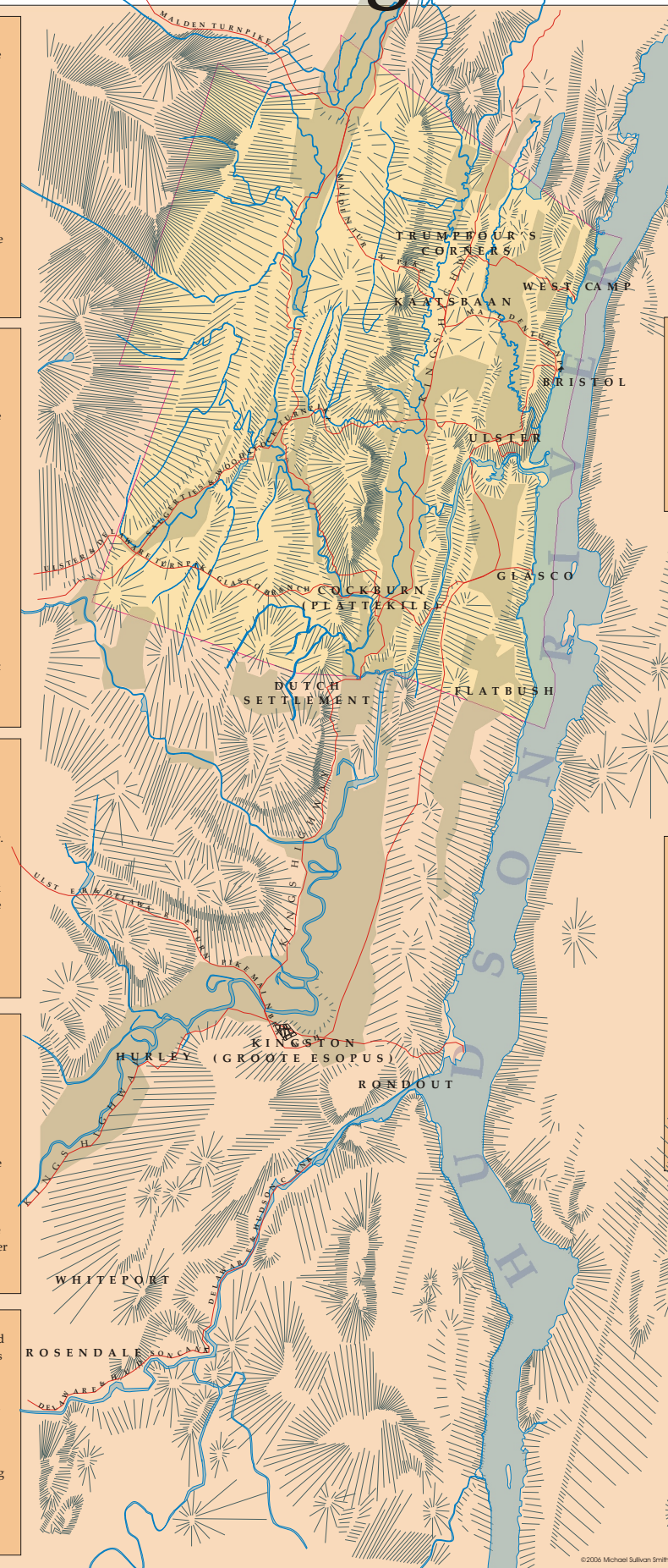
The **Malden Turnpike** was chartered in 1813 by Asa Bigelow to support his incorporated Village of Bristol at a deep water access on the Hudson River. In 1817 when the legislature permitted large-scale tanneries in Greene County the turnpike was extended to the village of Hunter for their transport needs. By the 1830's Asa Bigelow had received another charter for the development of a railroad along its course. The economic downturn of the 1830's brought a collapse of the tanneries and made the railroad impractical but the opening of bluestone quarries at Quarryville along its path soon made the Bigelow Bluestone Company, the turnpike and the village of Malden-on-Hudson (nee Bristol) prosperous.

The **Saugerties and Woodstock Turnpike** was chartered in 1828 by a consortium of businessmen led by Jeremiah Russell. It was routed along a previously developed wagon road used to access the Hardenburg lands of the Livingstons in the Woodstock Valley. This road in turn followed an ancient Indian trail that linked Shandaken with the Hudson River at the Esopus outlet at Saugerties. Its antiquity meant that many farms and hamlets already lined its path. It became a major asset to the town when Bluestone quarrying began at numerous locations along the roadside making it the most immediate means of transporting the quarried stone to the docks. Known locally as the "tram road", the turnpike was paved along most of its course with "belgian bridges", grooved stone slabs set to wagon wheel gauge to carry the heavy loads of stone. The well maintained turnpike remained a business until 1900 when it was bought by the state to make into an automobile road.

At the turn of the 19th century major investments were placed in the **Ulster and Delaware Turnpike**. By 1806 new facilities and access roads were being built between its end at Kingston and the Rondout on the Hudson River. Congestion there brought about the improvement in 1810 of the road that a glass manufacturer in the mountains over Woodstock had made to the Hudson at Glasco. This became the U&D First Branch Turnpike or Glasco Turnpike. The Delaware Street and Delaware Avenue of Glasco and Kingston reflect the course of this road to their docks.

Cement-quality limestone deposits were first discovered in 1826 at High Falls by James McEntee and used to make cement for building the D&H Canal. In the 1830's production increased after it was specified for the Croton Aqueduct and the reservoirs for the New York City water supply. This was supplied by Hugh White of Whiteport but the cement soon became known as **Rosendale Cement** once large operations opened there. The Newark Lime and Cement Company began quarrying the limestone base of the Vlightberg in Ponckhockie in the mid-1840's changing the physical character of Rondout and Kingston forever.

The **Delaware and Hudson Canal** was chartered as a stock company in 1824 to link the coal fields of north-eastern Pennsylvania and the Hudson River at Rondout. Phillip Hone, the mayor of New York City, was its first president. The canal was constructed between 1825 and 1828. The villages of Eddyville, Rondout and Port Ewen grew up around the explosion of traffic from both the canal barges and the vessels forwarding the coal down the river. Major businesses making barges, steam engines and tug boats were established there to support this traffic.



The hamlet of **Malden-on-Hudson** was incorporated under the name "Bristol" in 1812 and, like Glasco, had great expectations. Its founder, Asa Bigelow, chose the location because of the deep water channel of the river ran right up to and along its shore. For a while it thrived as a center of shipping for the Greene County tanneries. After the development of the industries a mile south on the Esopus centered commercial investment there Malden had to settle as a satellite of Saugerties village. When the Malden Turnpike became the transit route for the Bluestone quarries at Quarryville Malden became a center of bluestone finishing and shipping. It was also a shipbuilding center and later the home to a major brick making industry.

The village of **Saugerties** was incorporated under the name "Ulster" in 1831. In 1825 before Henry Barclay introduced industrialization there were no more than a dozen households at this place. It was not even central enough to the population to have the meetings of the new Town of Saugerties government held here. They were held at Kaatsbaan. Within six years it had become the center of population and also the center of commerce and government.

The village of **Glasco** grew as a terminus of the Ulster and Delaware Turnpike until the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825. With the rapid drop in the cost of shipping from the central part of the state all the turnpikes declined in use. An 1810 plan for Glasco shows it as preparing to be a large city. The earliest known map of Ulster County (1828) shows it as a major center of population even though it never was. The same map depicts a wide and deep Hudson River shoreline at Glasco and shoals at most other ports. These speculative impressions only became fact in the 1850's when the development of clay deposits at Glasco and the creation of a large brick industry brought in a stable population and final development of its streets.

A change in the constitution of New York after the rent wars of the early 1840's brought about a breakup of the large landlord's holdings by the end of that decade. It became vogue for them to display conspicuous estate houses on the east bank of the Hudson River overlooking the majestic Catskills in the distance. This soon became known as the "right" side of the river referencing its position coming north from their center of wealth in New York City. The new wealth the industrial activities of the opposite shore produced made this the "wrong" side. This attitude prevailed throughout the period of steamboat travel as the scenery of the mountains remained hidden behind the large icehouse structures and massive brickyards that lined the west shore and the grounds of the mansions on the east attracted the gaze of these travelers.

**Rondout** remained within the sphere of Kingston for nearly two decades after the completion of the Delaware and Hudson Canal. It was only after the population explosion from the cement industry and the commerce that came from the concentration of shipyards along its strand that it broke away and was incorporated as a village in 1849. The south bank saw the development of Port Ewen as a company town for the Pennsylvania Coal Company at the same time. With the increase in its power as the largest transportation hub in the mid-Hudson Rondout became the center of much population dwarfing Kingston in political importance. Friction between the banking interests of Kingston and the growing electoral power of the workers at Rondout and in the other quarrying communities led to the absorption of Rondout into the City of Kingston and the breakup of the Town of Kingston in the 1870's.

# 1832 - 1855 Saugerties Integrates Old and New

By the 1840's the Russell family was establishing its fourth generation of influence in the Saugerties community. The founder, John Ludwig Roesle, arrived before the Revolution and married into the fourth generation Palatine Fiero family. By 1833 Jeremiah, his youngest son, had amassed a fortune as a merchant and was already passing this activity on to William F., a third generation Russell, then only 21.

From 1828 forward Jeremiah Russell engaged himself increasingly in the field of finance and related commercial development. This was a time known for politicization of banking and one of the reasons Saugerties was able to grow independently was because of the private banking services that Jeremiah Russell provided. His speculative insights on the value of land accessed by the Saugerties and Woodstock Turnpike caused him to be the largest holder of mortgages in the town.

Over a period of three decades the growth of the town can be traced in the hundreds of deeds through which Jeremiah Russell moved subsistence farm families into hamlet and village residences opening their lands to quarrying, re-selling their land to new families engaged in this livelihood. As this happened hamlets grew becoming a focus of small blacksmith, wheelwright and carpentry businesses built on the skills of the earlier farmers as they were directed toward new livelihoods supplying services to those working the quarries. Jeremiah Russell's profits from his land ventures were used to support their banking needs and also those of the larger industries and businesses of Saugerties Village. By the end of the 19th century

nearly three generations of Saugerties' inhabitants had lived knowing no other system than this locally interactive economy.

The tides of social change that accompanied the industrialization period of the 1830's and 40's profoundly effected the native culture of Saugerties. Up until this time the predominant language was Dutch. It was the language of the farm worker, the teamster, the boatman. When the many slaves of the mid-Hudson Dutch were freed in 1827 they went to New York City mainly because they knew only Dutch and that was still the language of the carters and dock workers and the boatmen there. With the importation of workers for the mills and the opening of the quarries the predominant language of Saugerties had become almost overnight English.

Native Dutch-speaking Jeremiah Russell had an English-speaking wife. By 1833 he had transferred all his merchant activities to his son whose wife and brother-in-

law partner hailed from Connecticut. Their newly reformed merchant business engaged in the sale of bluestone to the docks of Manhattan on sloops captained by the Dutch families of Saugerties. By the 1850's the fourth generation, the grandchildren of Jeremiah Russell, were marrying into the oldest Dutch families of the town, the Russell wealth helping to reestablish the influence of the threatened Dutch culture. In 1855 the name of the village of Ulster was changed to Saugerties as an expression of a desire to preserve this association with a pre-industrial Dutch heritage. In the 1880 History of Ulster County a grandchild of Jeremiah Russell, Frederick T. Russell, is heralded as the current exponent of Dutch culture having married Julia R. Mynderse and

occupying the ancestral John Persen 1712 stone house on the river in the Village of Saugerties.

The influence of the landed Dutch in Saugerties stayed apace with the new industrial-based wealth simply because the value of their land increased with the demand of its output. The farms of Saugerties fed the exponential increase of its non-farm population growth. In the post-Civil War census Saugerties farms, still owned at the time by the original Dutch families, were valued far higher and had higher output than any other farms in Ulster County and Saugerties had the highest population of all Ulster County towns.

An enclave of "Yankee" culture had established itself in Malden by 1812 and was gaining wealth and influence in the

tanning trade by the 1820's. Asa Bigelow from Connecticut had formed a merchant business and incorporated the village of Bristol there and soon his wife's family, the Ishams, followed. After that the families their children had married into moved in and by the 1830's their combined numbers rivaled that of the earlier Dutch that surrounded them. Connections with the Yankee families that owned the large tanneries to the west through their Malden

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## Overview: Owning the Soil of Saugerties

When Henry Barclay made his initial land purchase it was from Tjerk Schoonmaker and he was buying an active farm. All of the flats and bluffs that stretched five miles south and five miles north and two miles west in from his mills on the Hudson were farmlands. Right through the 20th century, even as the population that worked the mills spread over them, these lands continued to be hayed or used for grazing. The continuity of ownership of these farmlands right back to colonial times remained stable right through the industrialization of Saugerties.

Many names like Snyder, Trumpbour, Wyncoop, Post, Brink, Wolven, Miller, Myer, Mynderse, Marterstock, Oosterhout, Overbaugh, Freleigh, Hummell, Diedrich, as well as Schoonmaker continued to own and work the farms of Saugerties for generations and in some cases right up to the present day. Even after a farming family had ceased to work its acreage and divided it up it would continue to be worked by another one of the ancient families to continue a tradition of maintaining the land as open. The large estate farms of the late 19th and early 20th centuries; that of the tugboat magnate G. W. Washburn, of the master dam builder J. O. Winston and of the local factory owner Martin Cantine; were re-consolidations, respectively, of Wolven, Wyncoop and Post family farms that had been broken up but had been maintained as

open fields by their neighbors. Trumpbours and Snyders maintained Winston Farm fields straight through the latter decades of the 20th century.

Ownership of land in Saugerties has always been a relative concept. Lands tended to blend one into another. By law rights of trespass were included in deeds from the Corporation of Kingston and up to the latter decades of the 19th century all publically traveled roads through privately owned lands had to be maintained by the property owner.

Seasonal demands of farming and the fact that most of this early community was related by marriage made the working of the land of Saugerties for over two centuries a communal activity. Wyncoop-Myer-Schoonmaker and Trumpbour-Cockburn-Fiero family co-ops were unofficial but recognizable to each other in their techniques of keeping their land. Deeds of parcels often bounced back and forth between these family groupings based on financial necessities or gifting between generations.

A tradition of sharing out land, or land leases, that dated back to the Corporation of Kingston, was maintained as a method of admitting new farming members into the community particularly as the demands of working the large farms stressed the capacity of the older families. But the ownership generally remained intact,

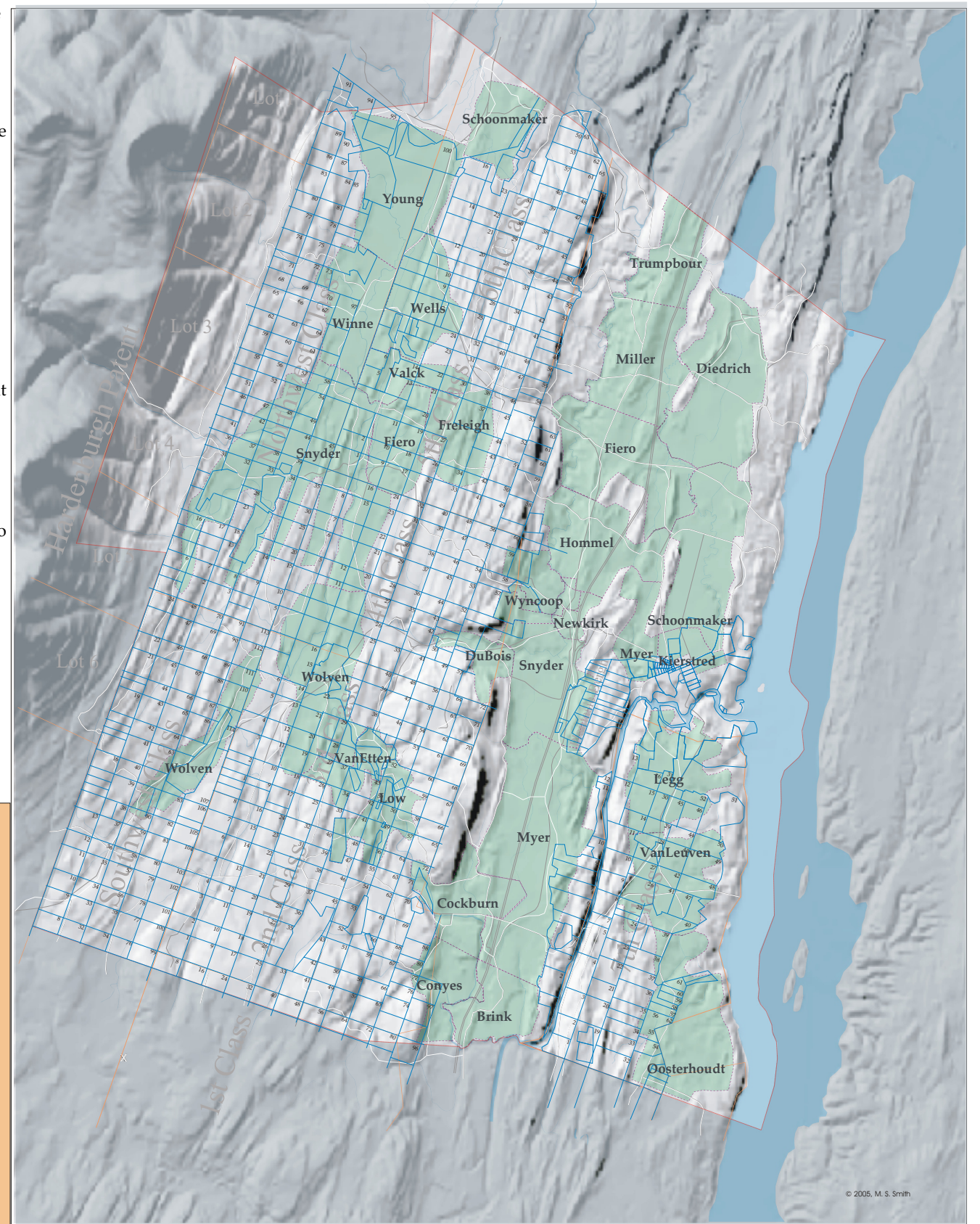
continuing the concept of accessibility to lands a constant between generations well into the mid-20th century. It was not until the financing demands of subdivisions and a trend toward non-farm residential use of multi-acre lots that the rights of trespass that had been assumed by generations of these early farmers ceased to be accepted as a right of the community by law.

Contributing to the fluidity of ownership recognition was bluestone quarrying. All of the quarries fell within the Kingston Commons lots that were transferred mainly to the large land-holding families in the early decades of the 1800's. The lots at the time were considered useful only for grazing and as woodlots and they remained unrestricted and commonly accessible. Miles of herding paths and wagon roads crossed them. When quarrying began these became heavily traveled but still remained for decades unrestricted. The earliest deeds to quarry land, when made to the newest members of the community, included reference to rights to follow seams of a quarry across an adjacent border in a like manner to the sharing of an unfenced pasture or a stream for watering cattle. This concept of owning what you worked was in the blood and unquestioned by those transferring this ownership after generations of their living in the Kingston Commons. In effect these rights even harkened back in a way to the

mores of the original inhabitants, the native Indians, who had no concept of land ownership.

Virtually every deed recorded prior to the most recent time references lines bordering or crossing the many extinct roads that once were daily traveled between the hamlets and the farms, quarries or other workplaces of Saugerties. Remnants of these roads when found on a wooded lot along overgrown stone walls, are a reminder of the time when a population could sustain itself and when generation after generation harmoniously passed from one part of the land to the other freely.

The population Henry Barclay's industrial economy created in Saugerties did not have to live off the land. However, by the second generation of these workers many, especially the retired, were choosing life on a small farmstead near the hamlets and alongside the turnpikes. It is with the purchase of these lands that a new approach to ownership takes hold. This signals the beginning of a boarding house economy in Saugerties and with it the recognition that a house can be a source of income. Though at first the unexclusive access to the winding paths and wood roads was a major asset to attract summer visitors, eventually the privacy of the boarding house took on more the tone of an exclusive right and with this the "no trespassing" sign prevalent today first appeared.



Post-industrialization Saugerties turned its farmland output to the nearly exclusive support of its expanding village and hamlet populations. Three fifths of the land was in agricultural production for this purpose, mainly worked by two dozen of the original families of the town.

# 1831 - 1865 Saugerties' Landscape Begins to Change

Turnpike expanded their influence further into these mountain communities.

Asa Bigelow had purchased the DeWolffen patent and the adjacent VanSteenberg farm, a combined 500 acres of river front land hugged by the deep channel of the Hudson, making his improvements at Malden the most accessible for shipping in the area. His stores and those of the Ishams held a dominant position over all the trade of Saugerties because of this access. The first bluestone quarried by fellow Yankee Silas Brainard was shipped from these wharves and this soon saw a multitude of new land routs destined for Malden line the countryside. These early bluestone sales were direct to dealers that had stone yards up-river at Coxsackie.

At the same time the early village records of Ulster (Saugerties) show an increase in its awareness of the infant bluestone trade. It was closer to the quarries and was beginning to show this off with its extensive sidewalks and curbed streets. The first location for these pedestrian improvements was at Jeremiah

Russell's store, before 1831, and had spread from there up Market Street, down Main Street and along Partition Street by 1833. The large population of Ulster, its growing commercial presence and its frequent visitors attracted by the manufacturers allowed it a strong association with bluestone through this display.

By 1837 William F. Russell had focused his father's business

toward the direct purchase, sale and transport of bluestone and in 1846 Jeremiah Russell purchased the Silas Brainard quarries and other lands north and south of this original site.

Quarrymen were not hired to work these sites. The land was leased to them and they operated the quarries as partnerships or families. It was generally Irish hard rock workers from the canals experienced in cutting and finishing the stone of the dikes, dams and locks that came to the quarries. They not only extracted the stone but also finished it to marketable shapes and transported it to the dealer ready for the sidewalk. They were each their own craftsman and entrepreneur.

The Irish were attracted by the availability of land they could purchase. A vast amount of land had become available after the death in 1846 of Robert L. Livingston when his two sons and heirs,

Eugene and Montgomery Livingston, sold all the leased farmsteads they owned to their tenants. This represented all of the lands of the Woodstock Valley between Saugerties and Shandaken and the mountainsides that lined it. To these mountainsides flocked Irish quarrymen where they could purchase speculative quarry sites from the former Livingston tenants in their uncultivable upland acres. Jeremiah Russell carried hundreds of mortgages on these sites and they paid off many fold as the bluestone of Woodstock made the long trip over his Saugerties and Woodstock Turnpike to his docks on the Hudson.

Just as Jeremiah Russell developed quarry sites along his turnpike the Bigelows similarly

were supportive of quarrying along their Malden Turnpike at what would become Quarryville and at sites up the road's mountain route in the Kaaterskill Clove. By mid-century these two turnpikes had become among the most active thoroughfares in the state carrying an unending flow of bluestone from the quarries to tidewater. One eight-ton wagon at a time multiplied by hundreds, day after day, moved the hillsides of Saugerties to far off cities as hundreds-of-thousands of flat, 2-inch thick slabs to pave their miles and miles of sidewalks.

Most of the landscape that would have been familiar to its inhabitants when Saugerties was born in 1811 was completely changed by the time Jeremiah Russell died in 1867. Hills were removed, ledges were flattened

to become pasture and passages were opened between valleys. This, as it would turn out, would be only the beginning. Another half century of quarrying was yet to come punctuated by ever increasing output until hardly a spot between upland Saugerties and the lower fringes of the Catskill Escarpment would be unscarred by an open quarry. But bluestone brought continuous economic benefits to Saugerties over the first century of its life and this added a stable population base to its countryside, hamlets and village and indirectly also to its national exposure as both Jeremiah Russell and his son William were elected to Congress and the son of Asa Bigelow, John, became ambassador to France under President Lincoln.

***It was generally Irish hard rock workers from the canals experienced in cutting and finishing the stone of the dikes, dams and locks that came to the quarries. They not only extracted the stone but also finished it to marketable shapes and transported it to the dealer ready for the sidewalk. They were each their own craftsman and entrepreneur.***

## Overview: Location of the First Bluestone Quarry

The 1880 History of Ulster County states that Silas Brainard established the first commercial bluestone quarrying operation in 1831 on the VanValkenberg farm in Saugerties. Deed records show that in 1834 Silas Brainard purchased a 34 acre section of this farm north of the Saugerties and Woodstock Turnpike for \$1,955. The deed references the road and a "stone dwelling house". The 61 acre section of the VanValkenberg farm south of the turnpike was purchased the previous year by Nelson Brainard, a nephew of Silas, for \$1,300.50 and this is the land that was likely already being quarried at the time.

The deed for the southern section of the farm references the east sections of lots 33 and 41 in the 4th class of the Kingston Commons as well as points on the turnpike. Each deed has measured bounds and these, together with the Kingston Commons and turnpike references, precisely locate not only the earliest quarry site but also the original 1828 roadbed of the turnpike and the stone house that still stands, already in place in its original pre-1834 form as the "stone dwelling house" corner marker of the northern section VanValkenberg farm deed.

The VanValkenberg farm occupied the most westerly recess of a small clove that cut through the Hoozebergs at what is now Veteran. An early footpath and later wagon road rose up to the

second plateau through this farm after passing the more level land of the farms of Schoonmakers, DuBoises and Snyders east of it. Deeds reference a sawmill of Marius Snyder on an upper branch of the Beaverkill bordering the northwest corner of the VanValkenberg farm near the wagon road.

Natural forces over many centuries had bared an ancient strata of extremely dense sandstone at the west wall of this clove. A succession of ledges at its exposure allowed a pathway to ramp in a zigzag fashion up from a 220 foot level in the clove to the 300 foot plateau above. A ravine following the northeasterly line of ledges carried the course of the Beaverkill over this rock until it turned abruptly eastward to be mainly absorbed into the level base of the clove made up of a broad fan of gravel washed down from under the last great glacier.

In 1831, before quarrying began, the road leading up the clove would have turned sharply south at a ridge where the "stone dwelling house" of the VanValkenberg deed stands today. A high ledge diverting the flow of the Beaverkill east into the clove would have partially hidden the stream from the road at this house. All of this and all of the landscape surrounding are now, quarried down to the level of the clove floor during the earliest decades of the Bluestone industry.

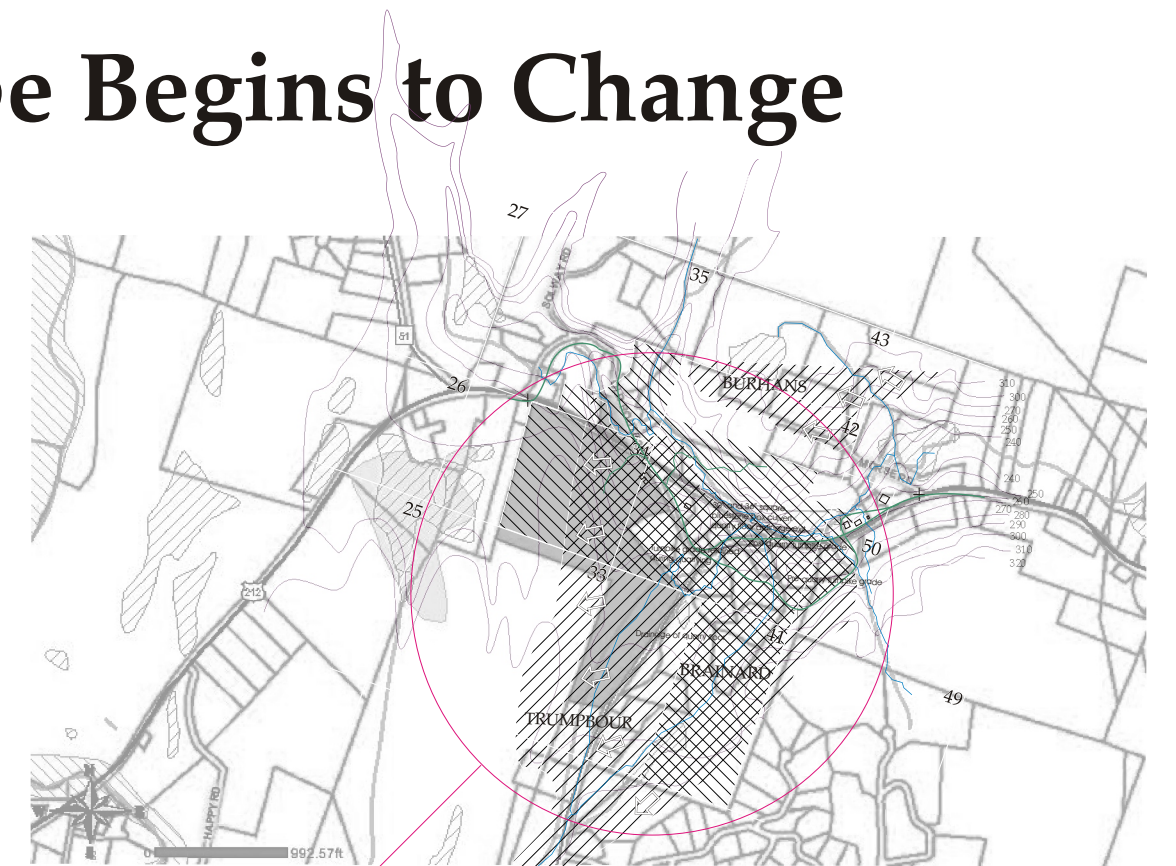
Silas Brainard was a stone cutter and mason already familiar with the stone trade from his native Connecticut. He saw the commercial potential of this Bluestone for sidewalk slabs and capstones. It is likely that he discovered the stone already in use here as retaining walls for the inclines of the wagon road as it was made turnpike-width up over the ledges. Evidence of a construction date of the "stone dwelling house" earlier than the beginning of commercial quarrying means that he was likely impressed with the use of bluestone in this structure also. The value of bluestone was probably well known to William VanValkenberg since the price paid for the farm was high by the standards of the time and also by the fact that he immediately reinvested in land that would become Quarryville where he took as an apprentice John Maxwell who would become in the next quarter century the greatest of the Bluestone merchants.

The Brainards were still listed as owners of quarries and finishers of market stone products fifty years later. Their finishing processes employ planing machinery patented by their principal engineer and they are shown shipping some of the largest dimensional stone (Rock) from their Saugerties docks well into the latter half of the century.

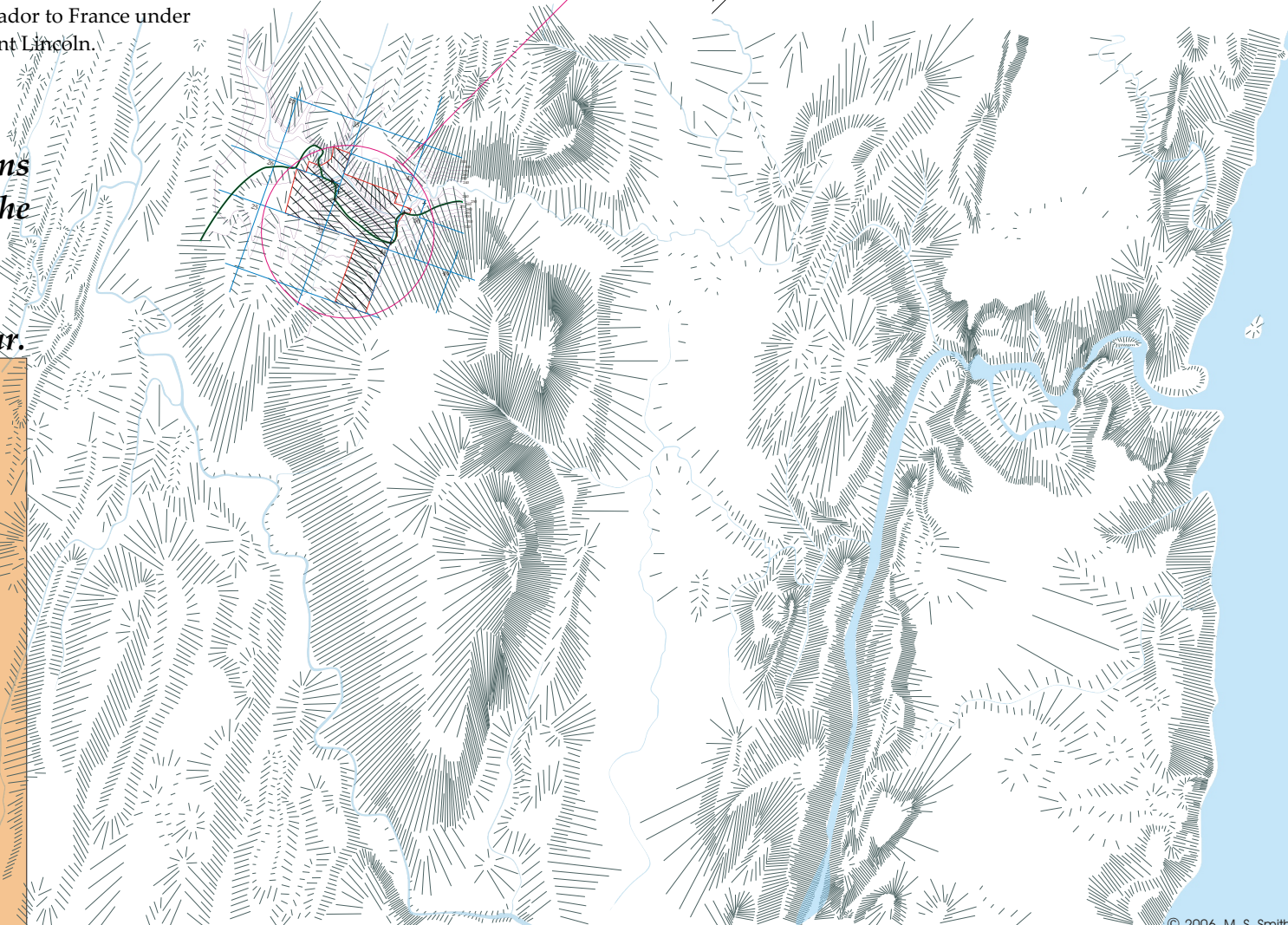
In 1847 a deed was filed dated May 1, 1846 for the sale of the original Silas Brainard land to

Jeremiah Russell that referenced the "stone dwelling house". At this time the quarrying had removed so much of the ledge that the turnpike was being redirected through the lowered land west of the house. This once rough terrain now had begun to be divided into building lots paralleling the new roadbed and a hamlet of quarrying and road-based dwellings and businesses was taking form. This same year Jeremiah Russell donated a lot of land for the building of a Catholic chapel for the Irish quarrymen on the opposite side of the hill to the south, at the time reached only by going around or over the hill to Fishcreek where they lived.

As demand for the Bluestone expanded in the late 1840's the quarrying extended its reach beyond the naturally exposed stone of Silas Brainard's first quarry to follow this seam under the heights to the south. A hundred feet of hillside over the distance of nearly a mile was lowered there over the next twenty years. At the time of his death in 1867 all of this hill was being quarried by individuals, mostly Irish, owning their lands under mortgages to Jeremiah Russell. The deep groove they left in the hill through which Fishcreek Road now runs was known as Russell's Clove. The church constructed on the site of the Catholic chapel was known for a century as the Clove Church.



Russell's Clove Quarry extending the first quarry of Silas Brainard of 1832



This terrain map depicts the landforms of Saugerties before they were altered by industrial activities. The first of the four that are most obvious in this section of the town is Barclay's pond submerging the Esopus Bend. The second is the Russell's Clove cut at the Veteran bluestone quarries. The third is the removal of the gravel fan at Veteran for building the railroad. The most recent is the leveling of the north of Souers Hill by the Solite quarries.