

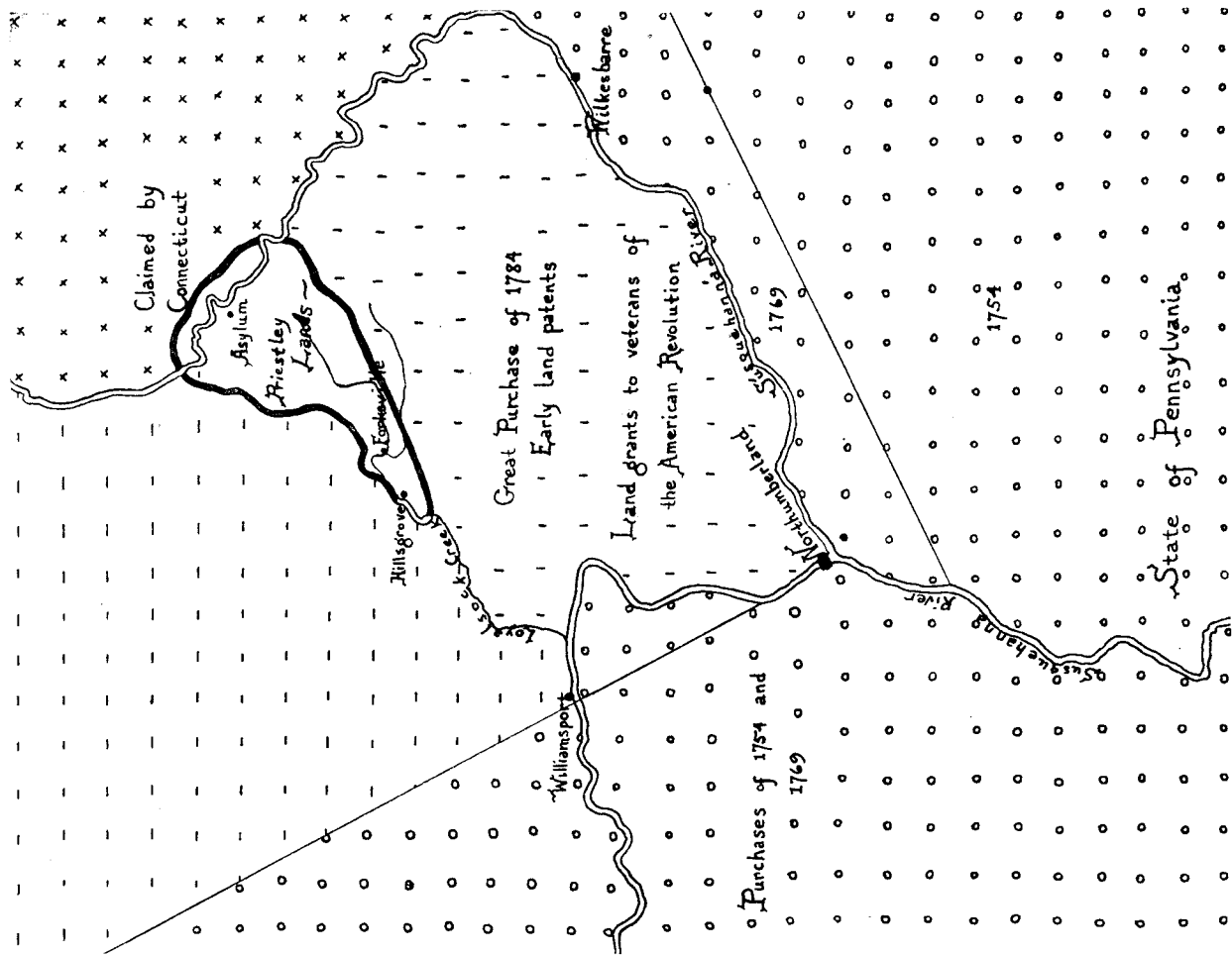
New York State. Below the forks of the Susquehanna and to the west of the West Branch, the lands had been opened for settlement since the Purchase of 1768 and the Treaty of Fort Stanwix.⁷⁵ This left only the last Frontier—the land lying in the forks of the Susquehanna—which was opened for settlement by the New Purchase of 1784.⁷⁶ This land within the Forks, constituting old Northumberland County, was opened only to veterans of the Revolutionary War, who between 1787 and 1791 took up all of it. All that remained open was the Loyalsock Valley and the land towards the North Branch of the Susquehanna River. This with other land to the west which joined the land patents of Samuel Wallis on the West Branch, and which was not for sale,⁷⁷ was what the Priestleys took. The part of Priestley's land, on the North Branch opposite Wyalusing—at a distance from Cooper's Town—was the only land to which the pantisocratists could readily have come, because all of the other land had already been patented. And patented land meant always land that was bought, land that was settled, and land that was cleared or built upon, and therefore expensive—a primary objection to the pantisocratists' settling land other than Priestley's, which was intended for their purpose and priced to their means. Furthermore, even Priestley's land was rapidly being preempted from its southerly bounds northward, and by March of 1795, at which time the poets and their friends counted on coming, it would seem that only the extreme corner of the river-front land, which was after all what they desired would have been left.⁷⁸ Finally, Southey, Coleridge and others of their friends

⁷⁵ The Treaty of Fort Stanwix was an agreement between the Colonial Government and the Six Nations, along with tribes in Western Pennsylvania, under French influence. These Indians sold the land from a line extending from Harrisburg eastward along the Blue Mountains to the Delaware River and up to the North Branch of the Susquehanna River, also all the land west of the Susquehanna River to the New York State line and westward to the Allegheny River and Lake Erie. By this treaty, the land in the forks of the Susquehanna northward was reserved to the Six Nations as a hunting ground.

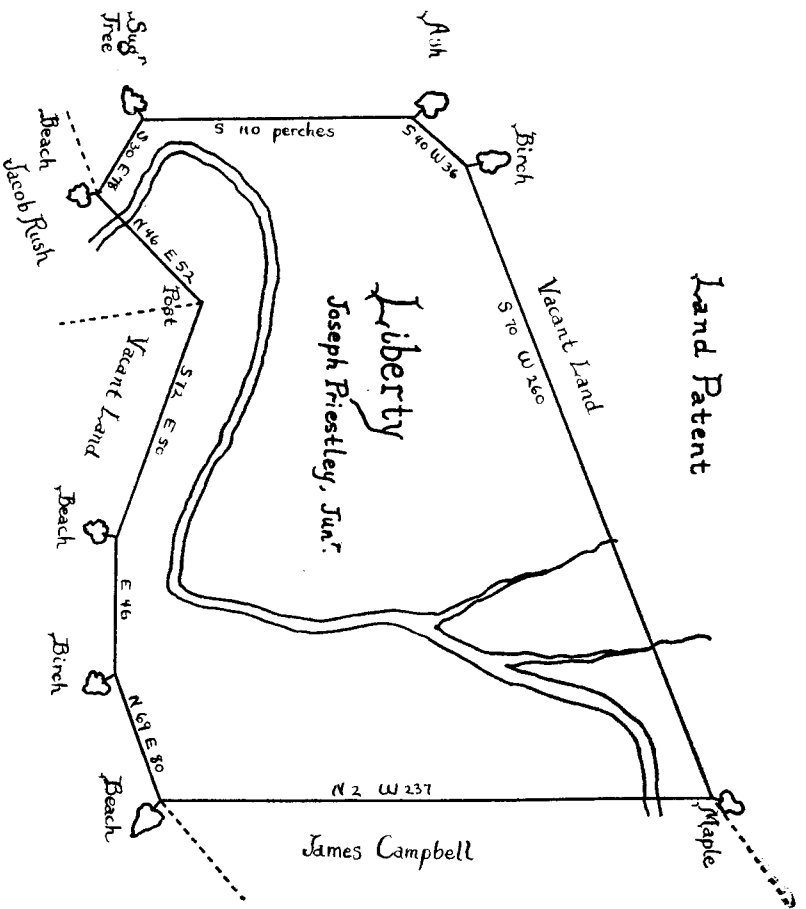
⁷⁶ However, white settlers had encroached on this reservation as early as 1769, and had made homes for themselves as far north as Watsontown and Muncy and eastward.

⁷⁷ Cooper, p. 114-115.

⁷⁸ Besides it was in the neighborhood of French Town [Asylum], the settlement where the French Girondin refugees, whom Southey and Coleridge so much admired, had been placed through the kindness of "several philanthropic persons in Pennsylvania"—probably Cooper, the Priestleys and their company—who entered into a subscription for the purpose, "as a place of retreat for the unfortunate French emigrants who fled to America." (Isaac Weld, Jr., *Travels Through the States of North America*. . . , 2v., 4th ed., London, 1807, II, pp. 350-355.)



Land Patent



First in consideration of the moneys paid by Dr. Benjamin Rush in the Receiver-General's Office of this Commonwealth at the granting of the warrant herein after mentioned and of the sum of £. 5 - 17 shillings being a balance allowed Joseph Priestley Junr in said Office, there is granted by the said Commonwealth unto the said Joseph Priestley Junr a certain tract of land called Liberty situated on Longlock Creek in Murray Town-ship, Northumberland County. Beginning at a Beach thence by land of James Campbell N 2 W 237 perches to a Maple thence by vacant land S 70 W 260 perches to a Birch S 40 W 36 perches to a Oak S 110 perches to a sugar tree S 30 E 78 perches to a Beach, thence by land of Jacob Rush N 46 E 52 perches to a post thence by vacant land S 72 E 50 perches to a Birch E 46 perches to a Birch, and N 64 E 80 perches to the beginning containing 337 acres and allowance of 6% for roads, &c. surveyed in pursuance of a warrant dated 1st July 1794 to Benjamin Rush to the Surveyor 1794 conveyed to the said Joseph Priestley Junr.

15th March, 1794

(signed) James Turnbull, Deputy Secy "

clearly wished to be together, and to realize this wish would have required a considerable body of land which by themselves they would have found it very difficult—if not impossible—to locate and acquire, especially since the Priestleys had already taken up most of the only available land there. Moreover, it seems clear that the pantisocrats fully intended to avail themselves of the opportunity presented by the Priestley settlement.

By September 22, 1794, the actual plans for pantisocracy seem to have been drawn up and its members were held back only by lack of funds. By this time, too, the form of contracts mentioned by Coleridge in earlier letters appears to have been known by talk and letter. In general, they followed the directions for settlement laid down in Cooper's *Some Information*. "By all means," wrote Coleridge to Southey, "read, ponder on Col[o]per, and when I hear your thoughts I will give you the results of my own."⁷⁹ The pantisocrats seem to have gone even further, by setting up a schedule of activity for the colony. They would have included provisos that the produce of labor beyond what was necessary to support the colony—in other words any surplus—should be laid up in common for the use of all. Leisure hours were to be spent in study, in the good library of books to be collected, and in liberal discussions. Plans for the education of their children were already laid down. And the employments of the women were to be the care of infant children and other occupations suited to their strength; at the same time, the greatest attention was to be paid to the cultivation of their minds. Finally,

Every one is to enjoy his own religious and political opinions, provided they do not encroach on the rules previously made, which rules, it is unnecessary to add, must in some measure be regulated by the laws of the state which includes the district in which they settle.⁸⁰

In July of 1794, three months after Joseph Priestley had left England for America, Coleridge and his college friend Hucks went on a walking trip in Wales. By then, enthusiasm for the scheme of pantisocracy was at its peak, with Coleridge writing,⁸¹ "I have positively done nothing but dream of the system of no property every step of the way since I left you . . ." In the same letter, Coleridge wrote of preaching pantisocracy and aspheterism with such great success that on one occasion two huge fellows of butcher-like appearance danced about

⁷⁹ E. H. Coleridge, *Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, 2v., Boston and New York, 1895, I, pp. 91-92.

⁸⁰ Mrs. Henry Sandford, *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, 2v., London, 1888, I, p. 99.

⁸¹ E. H. Coleridge, *Op. cit.*, I, p. 79. To Southey, July 16, 1794.