

Sarah Holmes, PhD
Archaeology Consultant
860 501-1446 slh@att.net

Tri Town Trail Association
Karen Parkinson, President
860 464-1559
karen@thepaddockinc.com

November 21, 2022

Annotated Report on Land Deed Research for the Spicer Homestead in Ledyard, CT.

The earliest 17th century land deeds granted to Peter Spicer from New London only provide a vague description of the actual metes and bounds and in many instances are incomplete.

Initially, Peter Spicer's lands were bounded with a swamp on the west and south. Other early land records identify a brook on the northern bound. Although it was not definitively proven through title search where Peter Spicer's first dwelling was located, the landscape in the vicinity of the "Spicer Rock" contains extensive field systems enclosed within stonewalls, along with a well and cellar holes that suggest great time depth.

Peter Spicer's descendants, Edward (2) and John (3) Spicer lived in separate residences in 1723

John Spicer's (4) farm included the land recently purchased by John Spicer (4) from Daniel Whipple of approximately 16 acres 11 rods.

The Whipple purchase became the north line of the Spicer farm measuring 115 rods in width (east to west) and provided the location of the northeast corner bound at the brook and highway (located near to the newly installed footbridge on the northwestern side of the large field at 1025 Colonel Ledyard Highway).

John Spicer's (4) last will and testament, dated May 6, 1769, stated he left his two sons, John Spicer (5) and Cyrus Spicer (5), his farm. The estate was equally divided, although John (4) left Cyrus the house.

The division of John Spicer's (4) in 1772 describes a 146 acre farm.

John Spicer (5) also receives one half of the orchard lying east of the dwelling house on the eastern side of the 146 acres.

Survey of division agreement/line:

- to begin the division line at a heap of stones in the north line of said farm 55 (52?)¹ rods westerly from northeast corner
- running south from said heap of stones 11 degrees east 150 rods to a **heap of stones south of the barn**
- south 7 degrees east 95 ½ (15 ½?) rods to an heap of stones
- south 5 degrees west 22 rods to an heap of stones
- south 7 degrees east 14-1/2 rods to heap of stones on **north line of Capt. Robert Geer land**

Survey of John's orchard:

- **one half of orchard lying east of dwelling house**
- beginning at southwest corner of George Geer land
- running south 13 degrees east across said orchard to heap of stones by a wall
- east 22 degrees north 11 ½ rods to George Geer's land
- with said George Geer's land to the first mentioned bound
- containing 1 acre 20 rods

The title search indicated the abutters on the Spicer property remain constant over time in regard to Cyrus Spicer's inheritance from his father John Spicer (4) in 1769. Benjamin Geer and George Geer's property abutted the Spicer land on the east, often with a brook as a boundary.

To review, the clearest survey regarding the location of any appurtenances including the Spicer dwelling is from the last will and testament of John Spicer's (4) in 1769 and the division of his estate totaling 146 acres inherited by his sons Cyrus and John Spicer in 1772.

Suggestions:

If the Town is interested, a request for an archaeological site number and an archaeological site form could be filed with the Office of State Archaeology. The site form would describe, at a minimum, the immediate area to the south of the bridge near "Spicer Rock", the possible cellar holes and the stone-well. The archaeological site description could also include the field system in this area.

¹ The ink is faded on this page and difficult to decipher, the dimension could be 52 rods, although 55 rods is the more likely candidate

Maps related to Spicer landholdings.

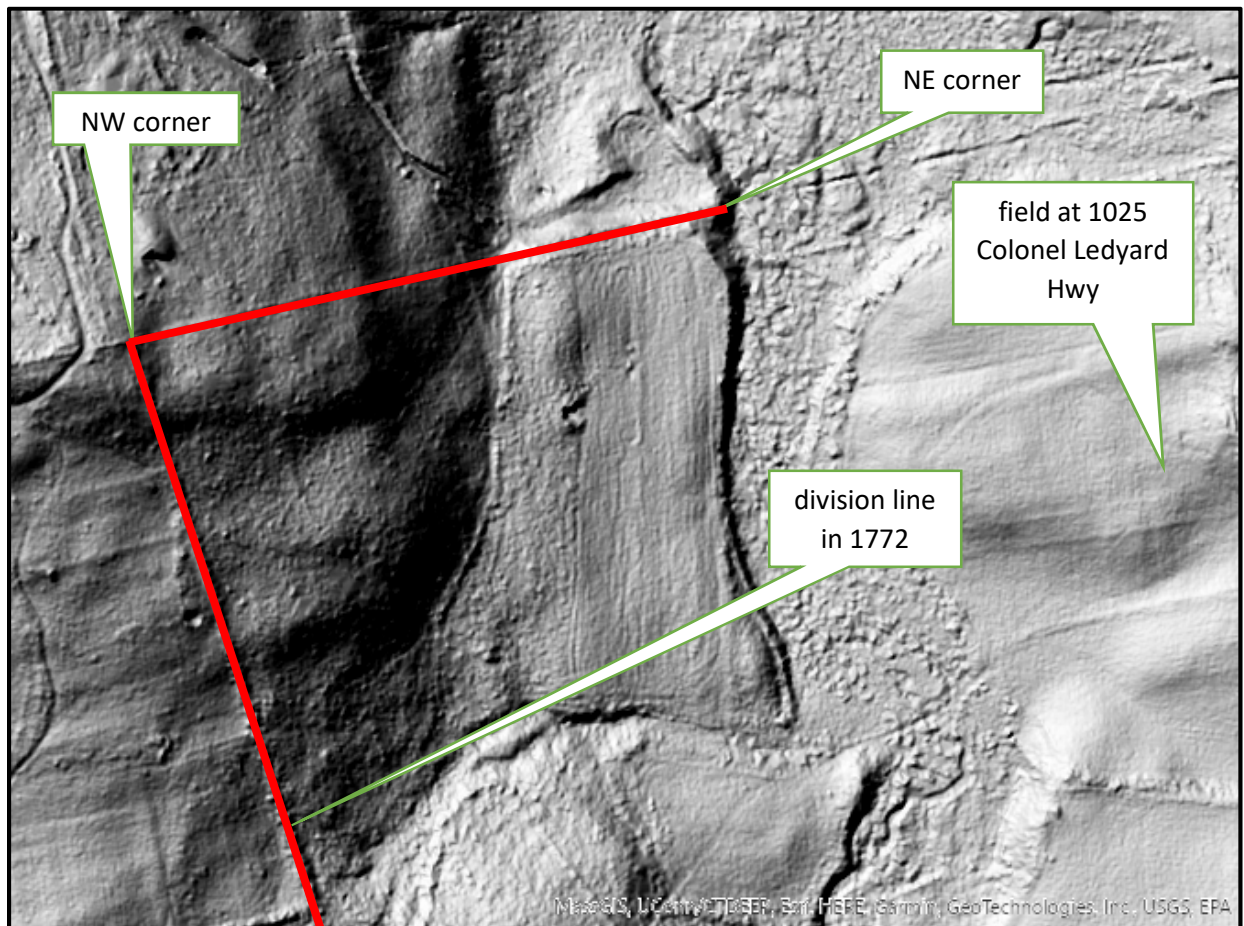


Fig 1. LIDAR of northern bound established for Cyrus Spicer's division of his father Hon. M. John Spicer's estate in 1772 measuring 55 rods in length beginning at the northeast corner at the brook just above or at the newly installed TTT bridge. Also note two anomalies or depressions visible in the middle of the field. (<https://cteco.maps.arcgis.com/>)

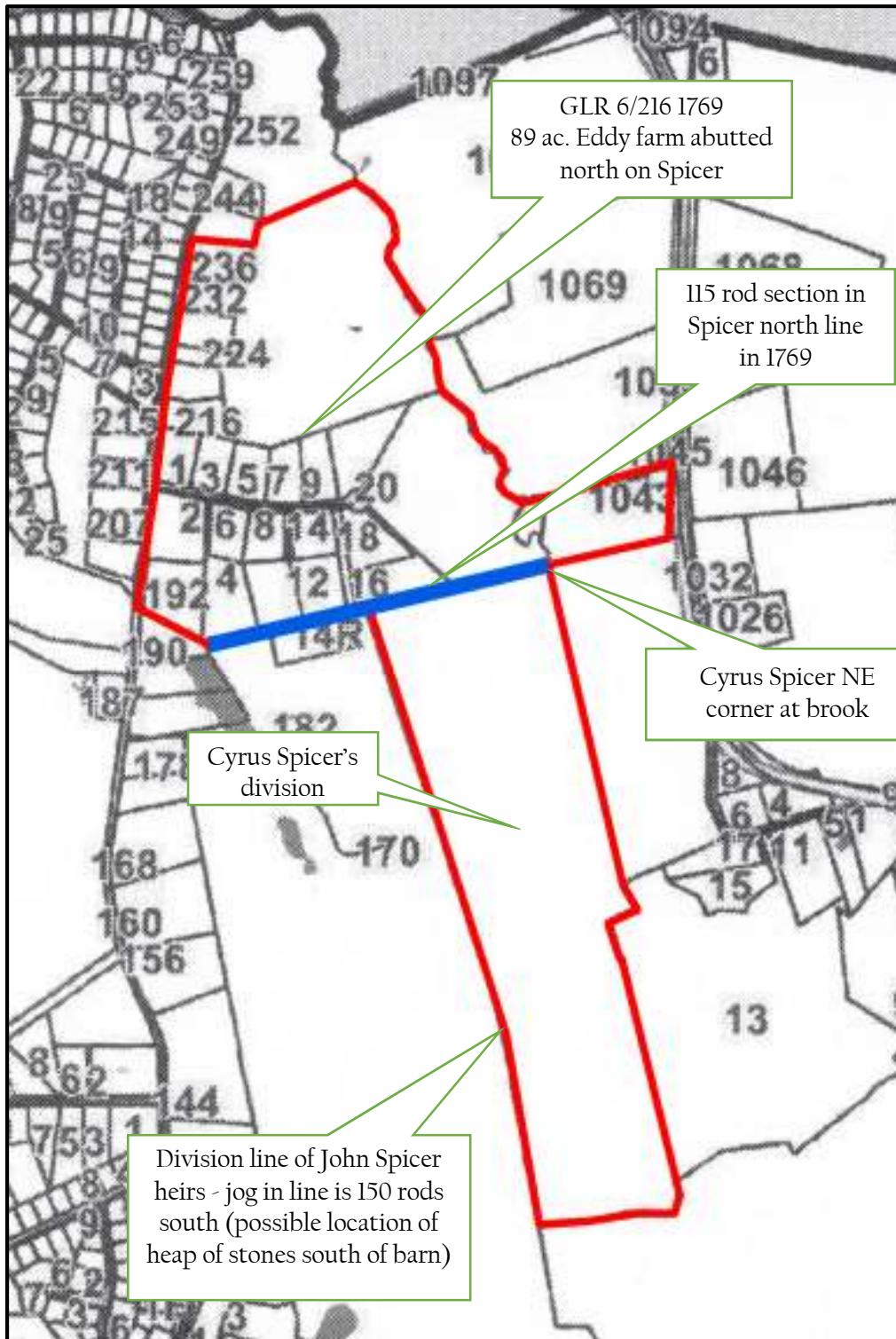


Fig. 2 Mark-up of Ledyard GIS property map. (<https://www.mapsonline.net/ledyardct/>)

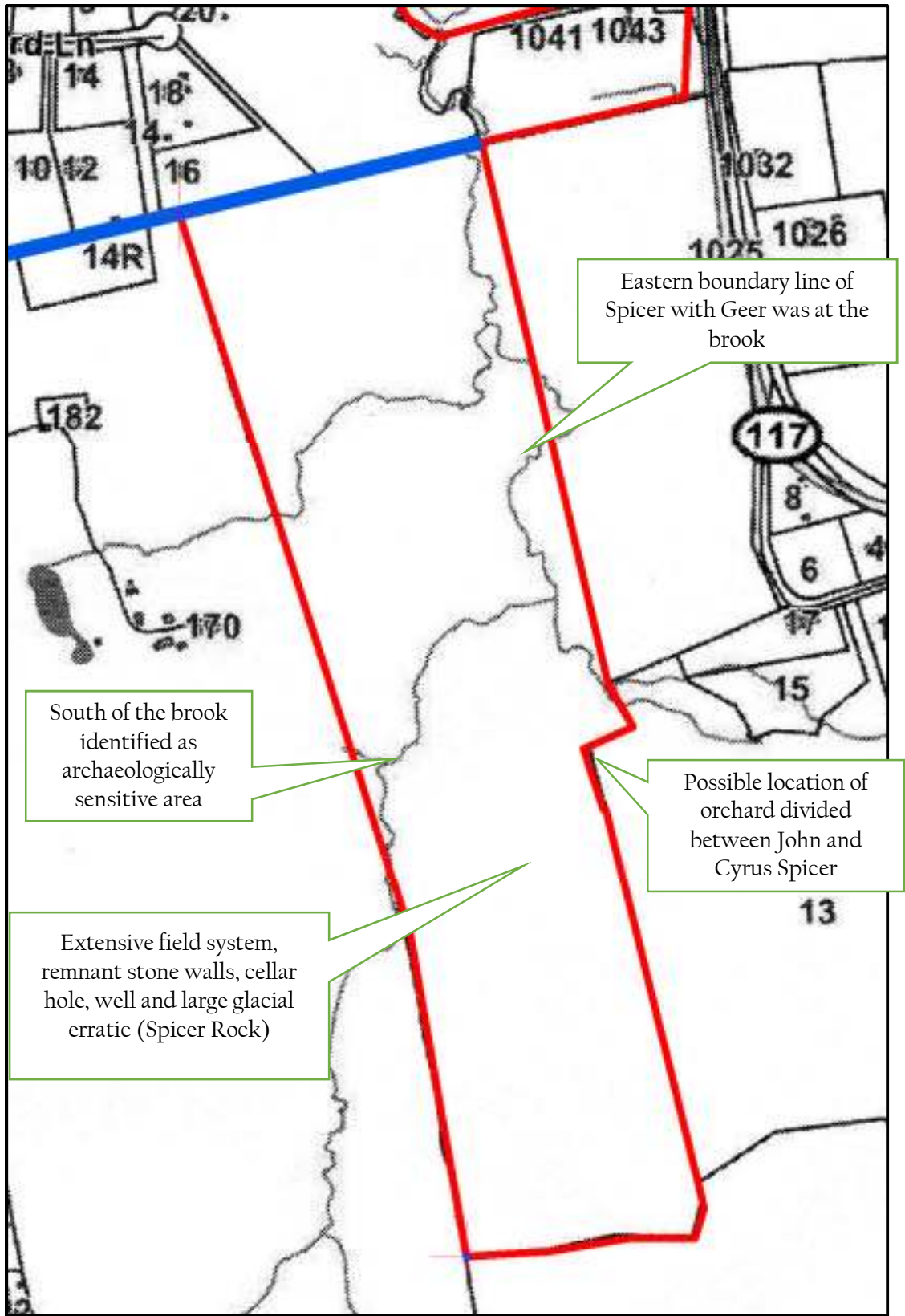


Fig. 3 Mark-up of Ledyard GIS map (<https://www.mapsonline.net/ledyardct/>)

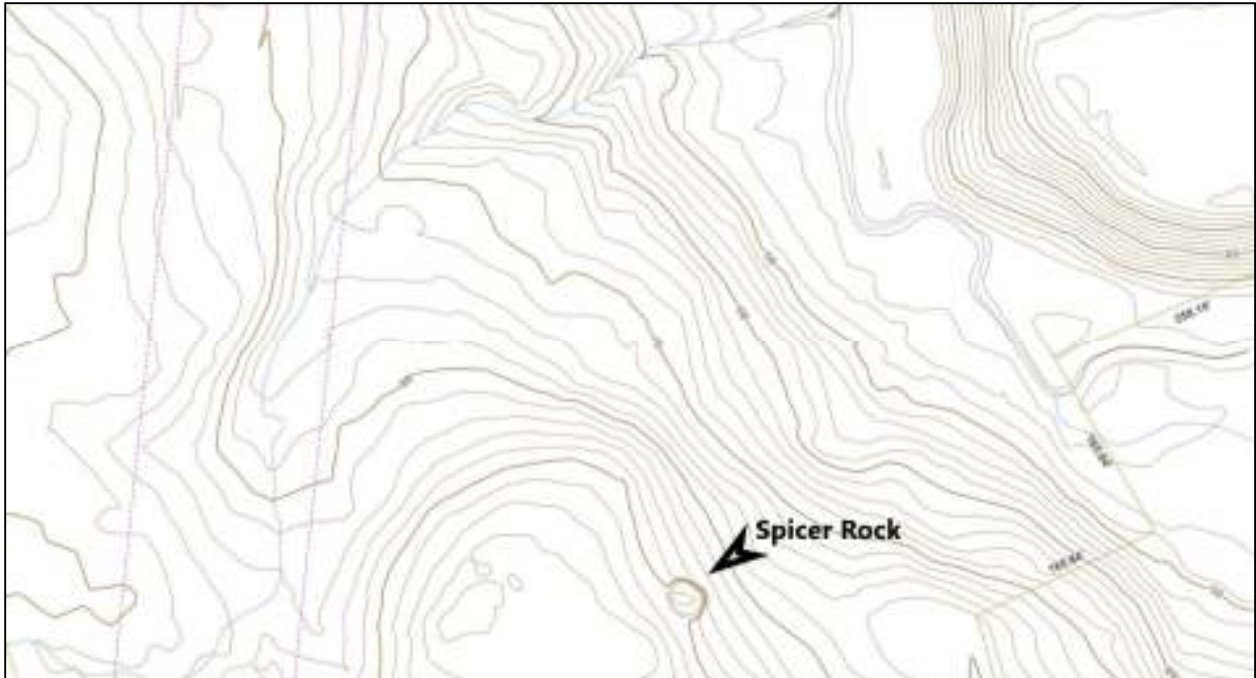


Fig. 4 TTT map marks location of “Spicer Rock”. Note wall east of the rock that zigs and zags with approximately a 10 rod sections of wall, possibly the location of John Spicer’s orchard.

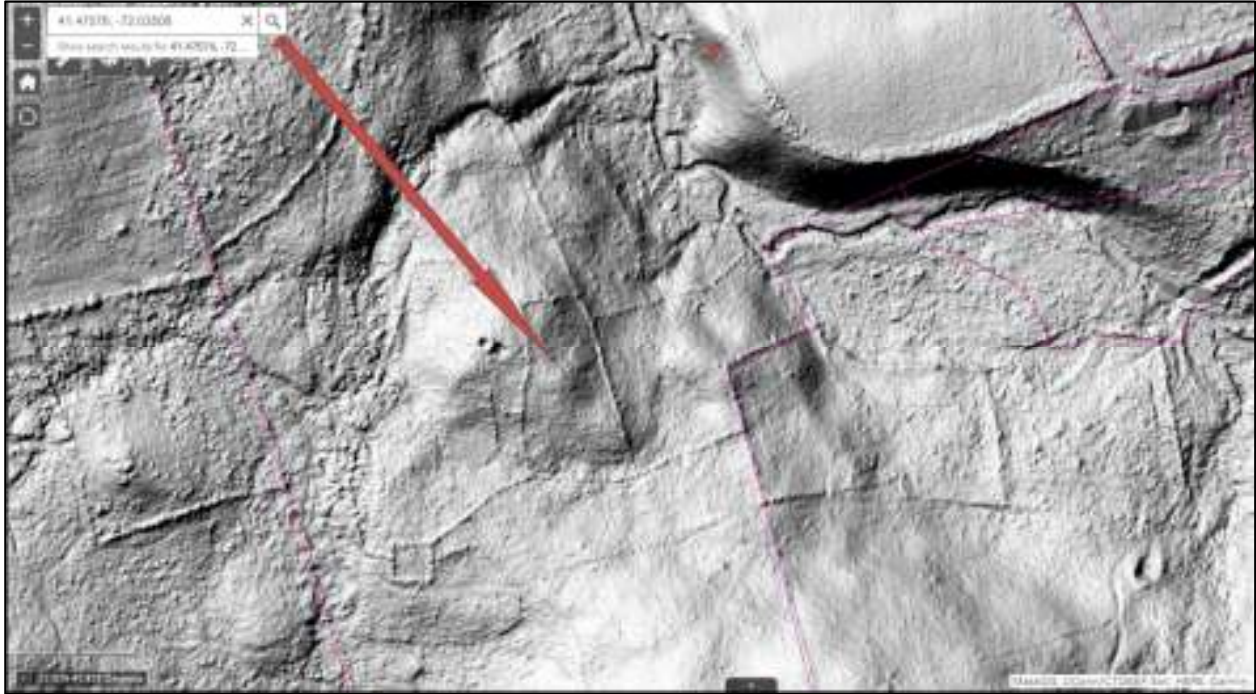


Fig. 5 TTT LIDAR image mark-up of location of “Spicer Rock”, with visible section of zig zagging wall to the east and identifies extensive walled in field system.