

“George Washington Slept Here”*

Sparta, a small hamlet of a dozen or so acres, is the oldest surviving settlement in the Town of Ossining, which includes the Village of Ossining (formerly Sing Sing) and part of the Village of Briarcliff Manor.

1685 The story starts in 1685, when Frederick Philipse, of Dutch descent, acquired land from the Sint Sinck tribe on August 24, completing his acquisition of all the land along the eastern bank of the Hudson River from Spuyten Duyvil Creek in the Bronx to the Croton River.

1698 Charles Davis settled with his brother David and sister Angelique on a section of Philipsburg Manor near White Point, later to be called, Sparta Dock. They had been born in Canada of Huguenot refugees from France, who had lived in the West Indies before moving to Montreal.

1758 Charles Davis's sixth son Peter married in 1758 and built his home, now known as The Jug Tavern. Peter was a tenant farmer who rented 200 acres on Philipsburg Manor, including the land that later became Sparta.

* True, or not, stories abound about George Washington stopping at The Jug Tavern, using 1 Rockledge Avenue as a headquarters and sleeping at the hotel that was once at 12 Liberty Street.

1784 The Commissioners of Forfeitures confiscated Philipsburg Manor after the Revolutionary War because the Lord of the Manor, Frederick Philipse III, had been a loyalist to the British Crown during the American Revolution. The Commissioners divided Philipsburg Manor among 287 new owners, including 11 whose land was located near Kemeys Cove and Sparta Brook.

1785 Davis bought his farm from the Commissioners for 600 pounds sterling, but defaulted on a mortgage on 70 acres of land in 1794. He owed money to Charles Williams of New York City since 1772 and gave the mortgage to Williams to cover the debt. Williams signed the mortgage over to James Drowley, an English hardware and dry-goods importer. Drowley, wanted to lay out a plan for a housing development but died before he could fulfill his dream.

1795 More than 200 years ago, Sparta was transformed from a piece of farmland into a residential community. The neighborhood was first mapped out in November 1795 at the southern end of the Village of Ossining. It was incorporated into the Village of Ossining in 1906. The first known recording of the name Sparta, was on April 22, 1795, in the record book of the Town of Mount Pleasant. A license was issued to William Hall to operate a tavern. (The Town of Ossining was part of The Town of Mount Pleasant in 1845.) Sparta prospered because the dock at White Point, where sloops could load farm products bound for New York City, and unload manufactured goods ordered from the city. Local deposits of marble and silver would later provide jobs in quarries, a mine and a limekiln.

1813 The Village of Sing Sing, now Ossining, became the first incorporated village in Westchester County. The name reflects the original residents of the Sint Sinck tribe.

1820 marked the beginning of the economic decline of Sparta with competition from the cheaper docking fees at the Sing Sing dock and the rerouting of the Albany Post Road from Revolutionary Road to its present location along Route 9, which made Sing Sing's dock easier to reach than Sparta Dock.

1849 The Hudson River Rail Road extended its service to Sing Sing and Peekskill. In 1901 The Village of Sing Sing changed its name to Ossining to distinguish itself from Sing Sing Prison (opened in 1826).

1906 Sparta was incorporated into the Village of Ossining to benefit from the services from the village.

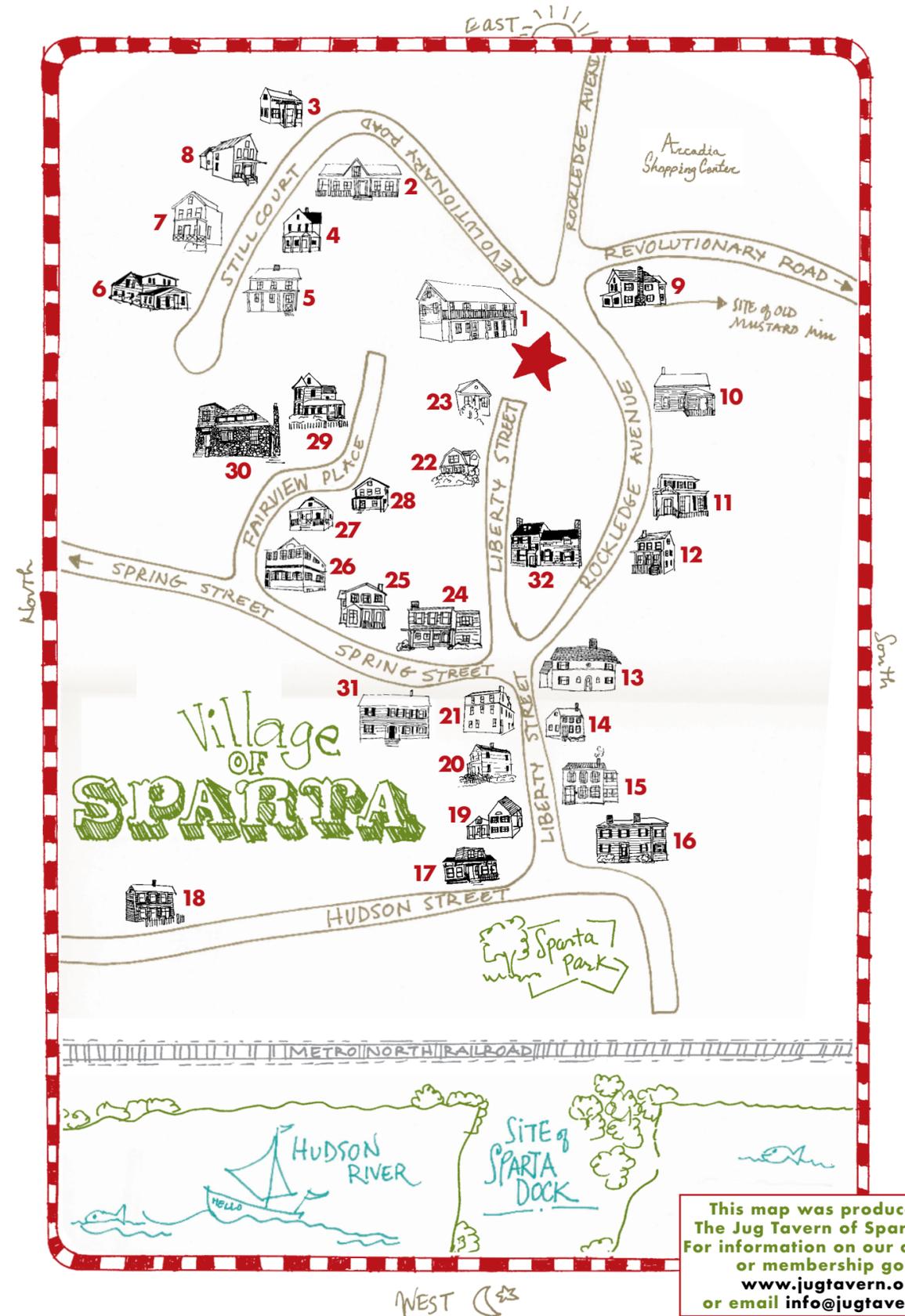
1919 Frank A. Vanderlip, President of National City Bank in New York, and his wife Narcissa Cox lived in Beechwood (near Scarborough), and personally undertook the redevelopment of Sparta in 1919. Sparta had become the reputed center of drug and liquor smuggling into Sing Sing Prison. Prostitution and murder occurred. The Vanderlips formed a corporation, purchased many of the decaying houses, hired architects and contractors to redesign and restore the houses worth saving. Some houses were torn down; others moved to relieve the crowding. The houses were rented to teachers and others of modest income. The Vanderlip Corporation retained title to many of the houses for more than 50 years, as the houses were gradually sold to private owners over the period from 1930's to the 1970's.

1974 The Town of Ossining and The Ossining Restoration Committee purchased The Jug Tavern jointly. In 1986 title to The Jug Tavern was passed to The Jug Tavern of Sparta, Inc., a tax-exempt not-for-profit corporation, whose sole purpose is to preserve the historic building.

1975 The Village of Ossining designated Sparta as the Sparta Historic Architectural and Design District.

A Self-Guided Walking Tour of Sparta's Historic Houses

Use Sparta's houses as a roadmap to its legacy. The tour starts at the Jug Tavern where Rockledge Avenue meets Revolutionary Road. Enjoy your tour and welcome to a taste of our local history!



This map was produced by The Jug Tavern of Sparta, Inc. For information on our activities or membership go to www.jugtavern.org or email info@jugtavern.org



1
74 Revolutionary Road. The foundation of The Jug Tavern is one of Ossining's oldest. Rebuilt in 1883, it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.



2
60 Revolutionary Road. This shingle house was originally clapboard and was one of the earliest houses in Sparta. The porch and peaked dormer were probably added in about 1850.



3
58 Revolutionary Road. This house was built in 1840 by Peter Fowler for his daughter, Almyra, who married Isaac Still.



4
3 Still Court. Built in 1896.



5
5 Still Court. This farmhouse was built after the Civil War and has a small center chimney that was designed for a stovepipe, not a fireplace.



6
12 Still Court. Built in 1900, this much added-onto cottage is set back from the road and almost hidden by the surrounding woods.



7
10 Still Court. This Greek-revival farmhouse was built in about 1870 by Isaac Still.



8
8 Still Court. Built in 1880 by Isaac Still.



9
76 Revolutionary Road. This 1870 house along Sparta Brook is still owned by the builder's descendants. Further downstream is the site of the mustard mill owned by Rhodes and Keme, which operated from 1796 to 1820.



10
14 Rockledge Avenue. Also known as the "Captain's Cottage," this brown shingled farmhouse was built before 1820. It was owned by a Captain Lewis Brady, an African-American fisherman, born in the late 18th century.



11
6 Rockledge Avenue. This house built about 1840 became a restaurant in the 1930s as the Pine Tree Inn. Later it was Dudley's and then Goldfish. The house is believed to have been a speak-easy during Prohibition.



12
4 Rockledge Avenue. This clapboard house is believed to have been built in 1848. It was apparently a rental house until 1869. A Mrs. Bouton or Boughton lived in the house before 1864.



13
12 Liberty Street. Known for its Georgian-style curved front, this home was once the Union Hotel (1860s) and the Washington Inn (1895). The local lore is that George Washington once slept there.



14
8 Liberty Street. This gray-shingled, pegged-frame house was built in 1795 by Captain Delanoy, master of one of the packet vessels sailing between Sparta and New York City.



15
4 Liberty Street. This gray-shingled house of classic revival style was built around 1830, probably of clapboard construction. The sun porch was added later. The house was owned by William Jones in 1862.



16
2 Liberty Street. Thomas Agate built this white clapboard house of Federal design before 1821. The wrought-iron fence came from the New York Custom House at 55 Wall Street before it became the National City Bank Building (Frank Vanderlip, president).



17
2 Hudson Street. The original house on this lot was built in 1820. It was later remodeled in the Second Empire style.



18
32 Hudson Street.



19
7 Liberty Street. This white clapboard house was built before 1820, and the chimneys are original. The front door and porch were moved to the side of the house for privacy.



20
9 Liberty Street. This house, built in 1855, was moved from across the street and turned sideways during the Vanderlip renovation project in 1920.



21
11 Liberty Street. This stucco house was built before 1800. Once a hotel called the "Branch House," it was also the grocery and general store at the turn of the century.



22
23 Liberty Street. Built in 1910.



23
29 Liberty Street. Built in 1920.



24
329 Spring Street. This farmhouse was built in 1834, probably of clapboard. The porch and a wing were added later.



25
325 Spring Street. This white clapboard farmhouse is typical of the "Carpenter Gothic" style of the Victorian period.



26
321 Spring Street. Built in 1840 this stucco building was once the Sparta School. Across the street was the entrance to the quarry that provided marble to build Sing Sing Prison in 1825.



27
6 Fairview Place. This house, ordered from Sears, Roebuck and Co., was built in 1900.



28
14 Fairview Place. Built in 1900.



29
15 Fairview Place. Built in the early 1900s, this house is believed to have been owned by a minister.



30
11 Fairview Place. This stone house was built in 1888 as the Sparta or Calvary Chapel, a mission house of the Sing-Sing Presbyterian Church. The chapel closed in 1918 and became a private home in 1923.



31
338 Spring Street. Bray Prince, an African-American, built this white-shingled Federal house in the 1830s. The south end of the house was added later.



32
1 Rockledge Avenue. The original center portion of this brick house, built in 1784, is of Flemish bond construction. The owner, Josiah Rhodes, operated a mustard mill in partnership with William Keme.