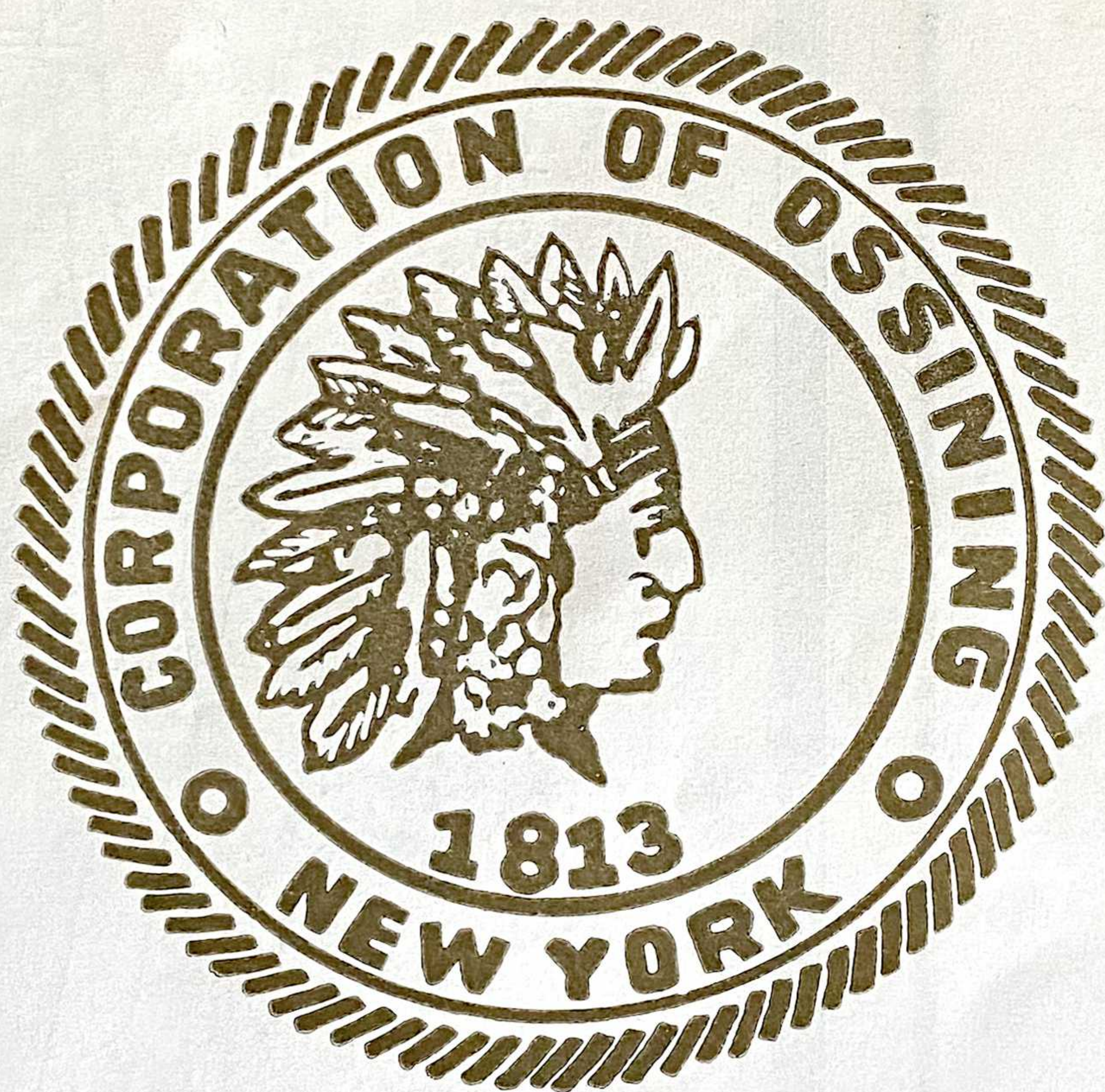


HISTORIC OSSINING



THE OLDEST INCORPORATED VILLAGE
IN THE
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER
STATE OF NEW YORK

The Village of Ossining is located on the east bank of the Hudson River, in the Town of Ossining, County of Westchester State of New York. It is 3.03 square miles in area and is thirty-one miles from New York City. It is served by the New York Central Railroad Main Line and is 3 miles south of Harmon Station, where trains connect for the North, West and South. Its main automobile traffic artery is the Albany Post Road (U.S. Route 9), which parallels the railroad and the river. Via Route 9A, the Saw Mill River, Taconic, Bronx River and Hutchinson River Parkways are within short driving distance. The Tappan Zee Bridge and the New York Thruway are 7 miles to the south. The beauty and convenience of its location are unparalleled.

This pamphlet issued by the Mayor's Committee for the Preservation of Historic Sites is sponsored by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Ossining, in cooperation with the Ossining Historical Society. Authorized in 1958 and published in the year 1959 in conjunction with New York State's Year of History - the 350th Hudson - Champlain Anniversary Celebration.

The historical material was prepared by Greta A. Cornell, Village Historian. Pictures supplied by Ossining Historical Society, and Map drawn by Robert Globerman.

THE VILLAGE OF OSSINING July, 1959

JESSE A. COLLYER, JR., MAYOR

1958

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chester Evans

Douglas A. Pape

Eugene W. Potter

William S. Taylor

1959

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

John Donzella

Chester Evans

John R. Harrison

Douglas A. Pape

OSSINING HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1958 PRESIDENT

Mrs. Chester A. Rogers

1959 PRESIDENT

Mrs. Laurance D. Redway

OSSINING is an Indian word meaning "stone upon stone." The Sint Sinck Indians who lived in this section were one of the Wappinger tribes, according to Dr. Clark Wissler.

In 1609 Henry Hudson discovered this section of the new world and sailed up the river later to be known by his name.

In 1680 the tract of land between Spuyten Duyvil Creek and the Croton River on the east bank of the Hudson River was patented by the English crown to Frederick Philipse, first Lord of the Manor. On August 24, 1685 he confirmed this patent by purchasing from the Indians the land now included in our village thus making it part of the Manor of Philipsburg.

All the land in this part of Westchester County remained in possession of the Philipse family as Lords of the Manor of Philipsburg until the Revolutionary War. In 1779 these lands were forfeited to the State of New York by the last Lord of the Manor, Colonel Frederick Philipse, because of his loyalty to England. In 1785 they were sold by the State of New York. The purchasers were, for the most part, tenant farmers of the Manor who had been loyal to the American cause.

The first white settlement, known as Sparta, was located to the south of the present village. It was partly settled before the Revolutionary War but was augmented by English colonists after the war.

The Village of Ossining (then called Sing Sing - a corruption of the Indian Sin Sing) grew rapidly after the Revolutionary War due to the building and use of a dock variously known as Mount Pleasant or Hunter's Landing. This dock attracted farmers because of cheaper rates of rental for wharfage, so that, by 1800, it was a close rival to the

settlement at Sparta. It became a boat-building center from which farmers shipped much produce to New York. One of the most famous boat builders was Thomas Collyer, who designed and built a large number of sloops, clippers and steamboats including the famous Hudson River steamboat, the "Daniel Drew."

Book-printing, paper making and publishing shops flourished here. The first newspaper, *The Mount Pleasant Register*, was mentioned in the minutes of the Westchester County Medical Society in 1797. The earliest newspaper of which a copy exists is *The Mount Pleasant Courier*, Vol. 1, No. 1 dated June 19, 1799.

The Old Dutch Church situated at North Tarrytown served this section until the First Presbyterian Church was founded in Sparta in 1763. Others established before 1800 were the Baptist Church in 1786 and the Methodist Church in 1787. The Sing Sing Camp Meeting, started by the Methodists in 1831, still attracts many at the annual session. The first Episcopal church building, St. Paul's, now the Calvary Baptist Church, was erected in 1834 - 1836, and St. Augustine's Roman Catholic Church was begun in 1856.

Sparta Cemetery, the burying ground of the old Presbyterian Church, located on the Albany Post Road south of the village, is Ossining's most historic spot, for in it are buried many of the original settlers, some veterans of the Revolutionary War and several well known persons. These include Arnold Hunt, donor of the land, Dr. Mordecai Hale, surgeon to General George Washington, Edmund Marsh Blunt, nautical writer, and the eccentric Leather Man.

The village had many taverns in the early days. Among the most noted were the Union Hotel owned at one time by Enoch Crosby, Jr.,

Ward's Tavern, Jug Tavern, Washington Inn, the American Hotel and the St. Cloud Hotel.

The Sing Sing Fire Department was inaugurated May 4, 1812 by the formation of Washington Engine Co. No. 1.

On April 2, 1813 the Village of Sing Sing was incorporated by Act of the Legislature of the State of New York. It was the first community in Westchester County to do so. The name of the village was changed from Sing Sing to Ossining in 1901.

Sing Sing Prison known the world over was established here in 1824 "owing to its exhaustless bodies of marble, its healthy situation, and its accessibility by water," according to Robert Bolton. On May 14, 1825 Captain Elam Lynds, former agent of the Auburn Prison, with one hundred convicts came to Sing Sing and commenced the erection of the State Prison.

The silver mine in the vicinity of the prison in operation prior to the Revolutionary War was reorganized in 1824. That same year saw formation of a company to work a vein of copper discovered four years before. Neither venture met with much success.

Several structures built of Sing Sing marble from the prison quarries are still standing. These include Calvary Baptist Church, Highland Court Apartments, Printex Corporation, the Mrs. Florence Madden Hamilton house and the old cell block of Sing Sing Prison.

The bridge enclosing the Old Croton Aqueduct high above Kil Brook, which is now a part of the famous Double Arch, was finished in 1839. Many workers on this aqueduct, which brought water from the Croton River to New York City, established homes in the village.

Sing Sing was a part of the Town of Mount Pleasant until 1845 when the Town of Ossining was formed from the northern part of the Town of Mount Pleasant.

Ossining's public school system dates from the establishment of the Ossining School District in 1854 although several small schools existed before that time. With the growth of the village its educational requirements have been met by the present system which comprises five elementary schools, one Junior - Senior High School and one administration building.

One of the many famous people who made Ossining their home was Robert Havell, the engraver of the plates for John James Audubon's *Birds of America*. Born in Reading, England in 1793 he moved to America and finally settled in Ossining in 1841. After sixteen years he removed to Tarrytown where he died in 1878 and is buried there in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery.

In 1886 a dispensary was organized which later became the Ossining Hospital. The Hospital Building erected by the Frederick Potter family was used from 1906 to 1956 when the present Phelps Memorial Hospital in North Tarrytown replaced the Ossining and Tarrytown Hospitals.

In 1887, due to an epidemic of typhoid fever which swept the village, the Ossining Board of Water Commissioners was organized.

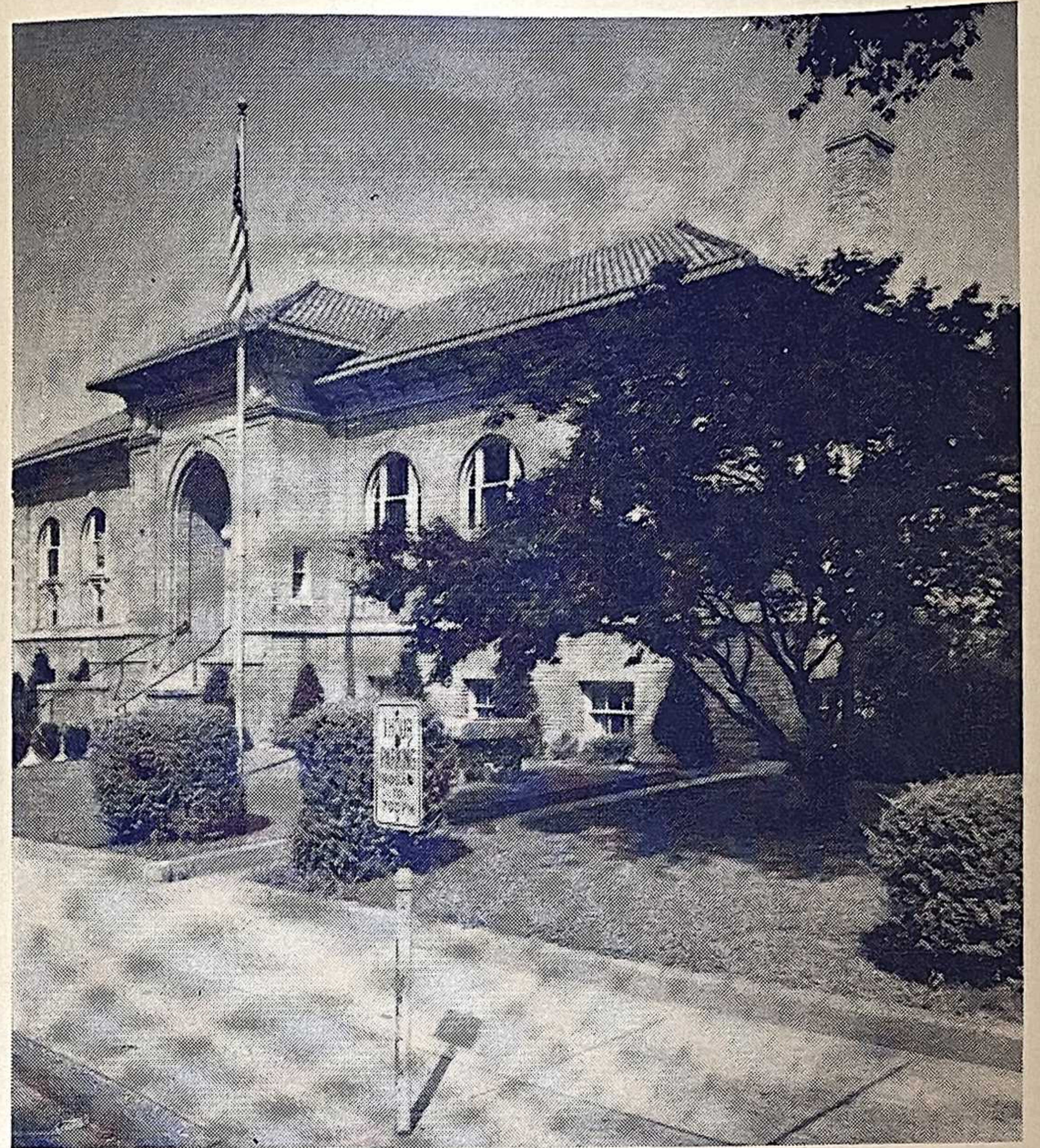
The Ossining Public Library was established as part of the public school system in 1889. Miss Helena M. Foster, teacher and historian, was the first Acting Librarian. The present building, dedicated in 1914, was erected through the generosity of Andrew Carnegie.

The Municipal Building was built in 1913 - 1916 largely through the efforts of the Village President in 1913, Dr. Albert W. Twigg.

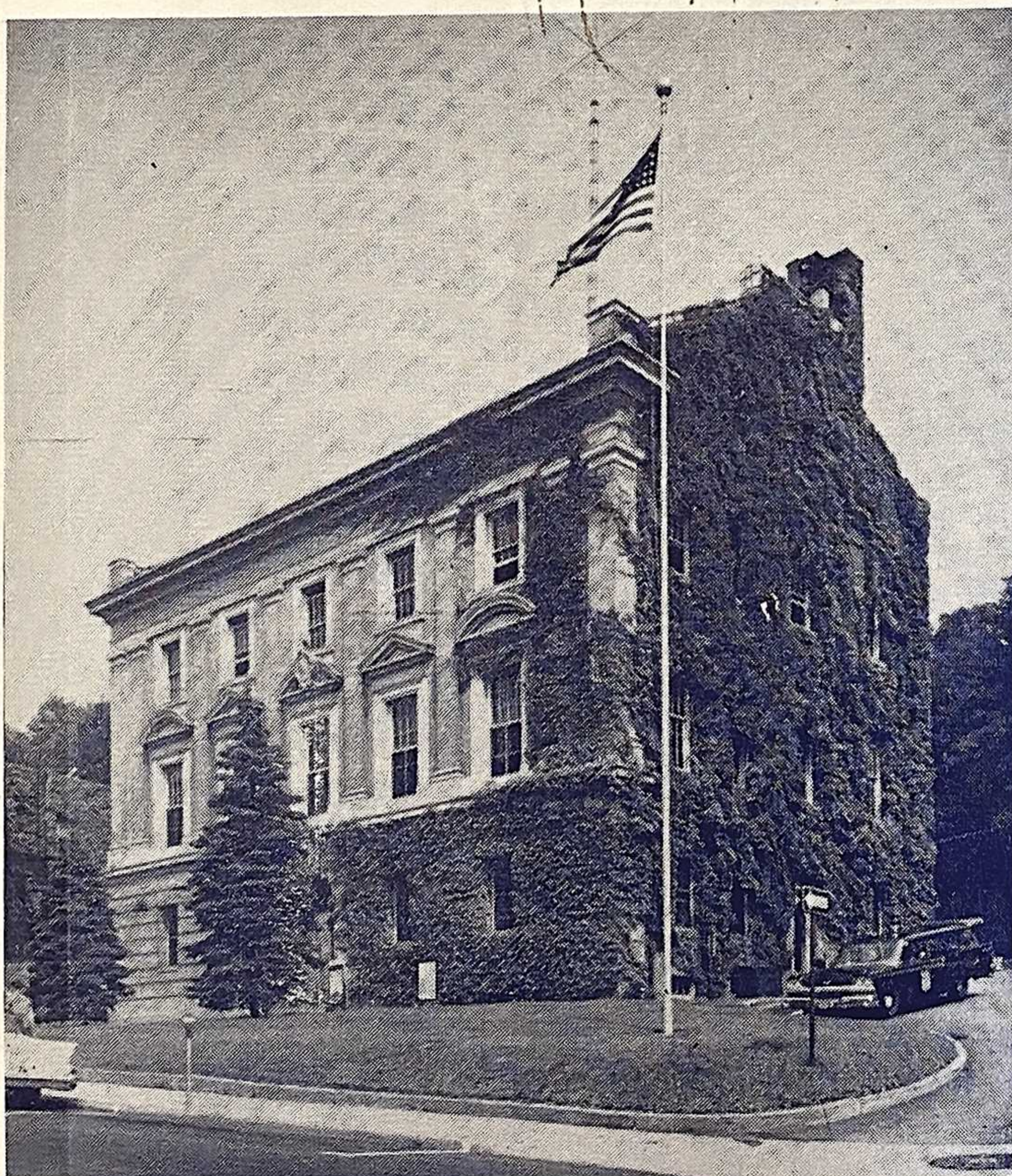
The Village Of Ossining Has



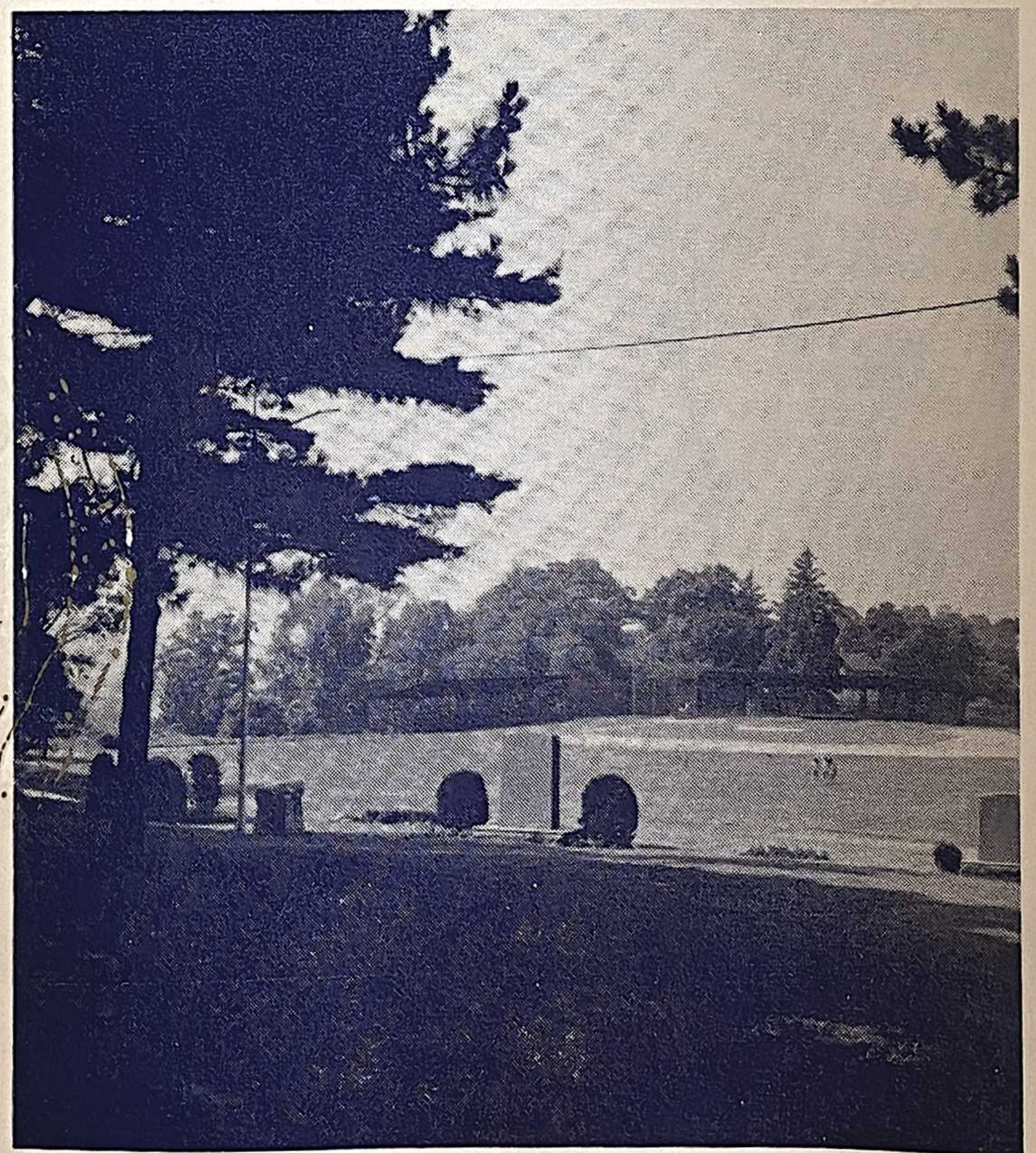
THE DOUBLE ARCH
Famous Historical Sites.



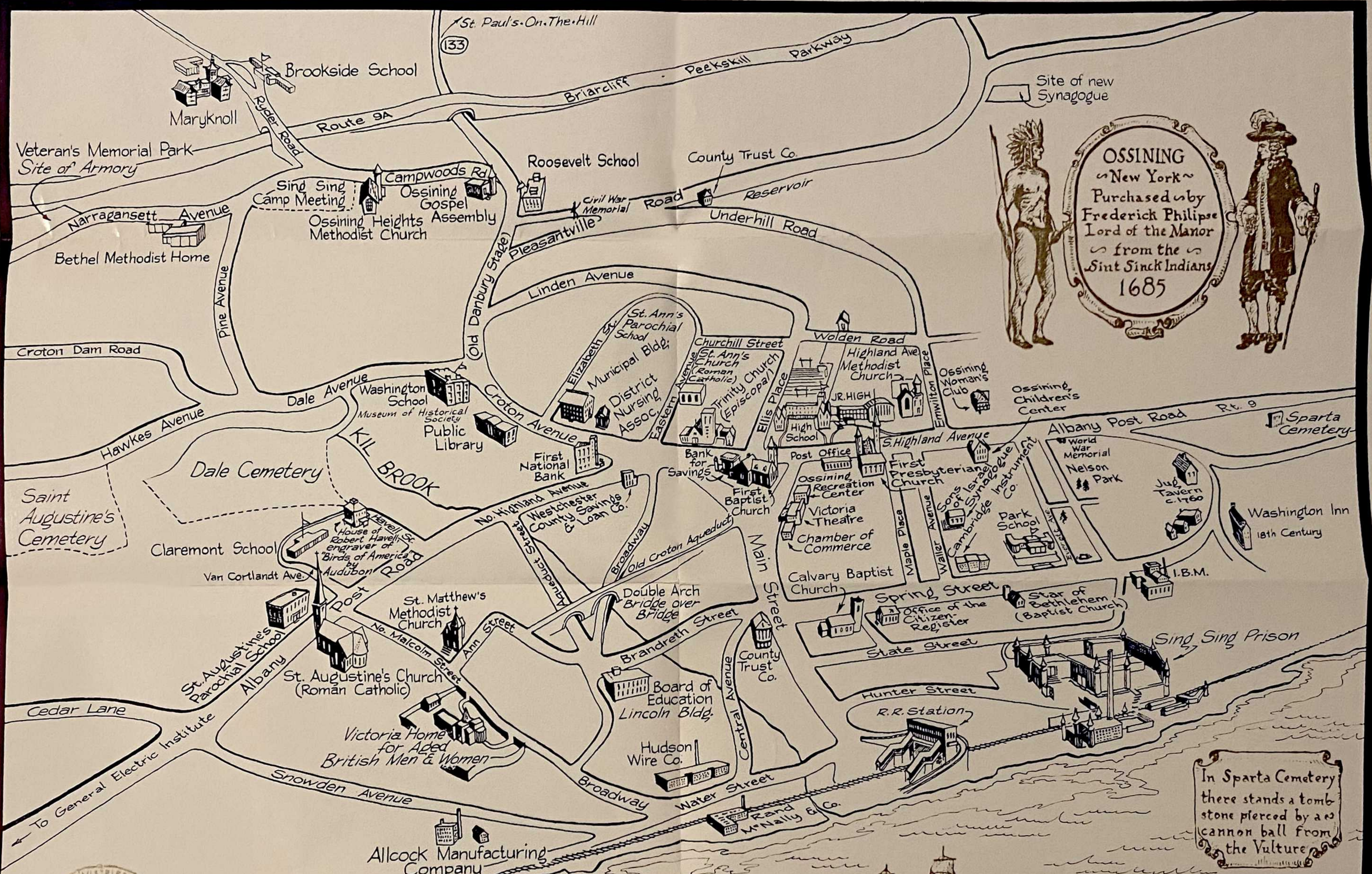
THE LIBRARY
Educational and Cultural Centers.



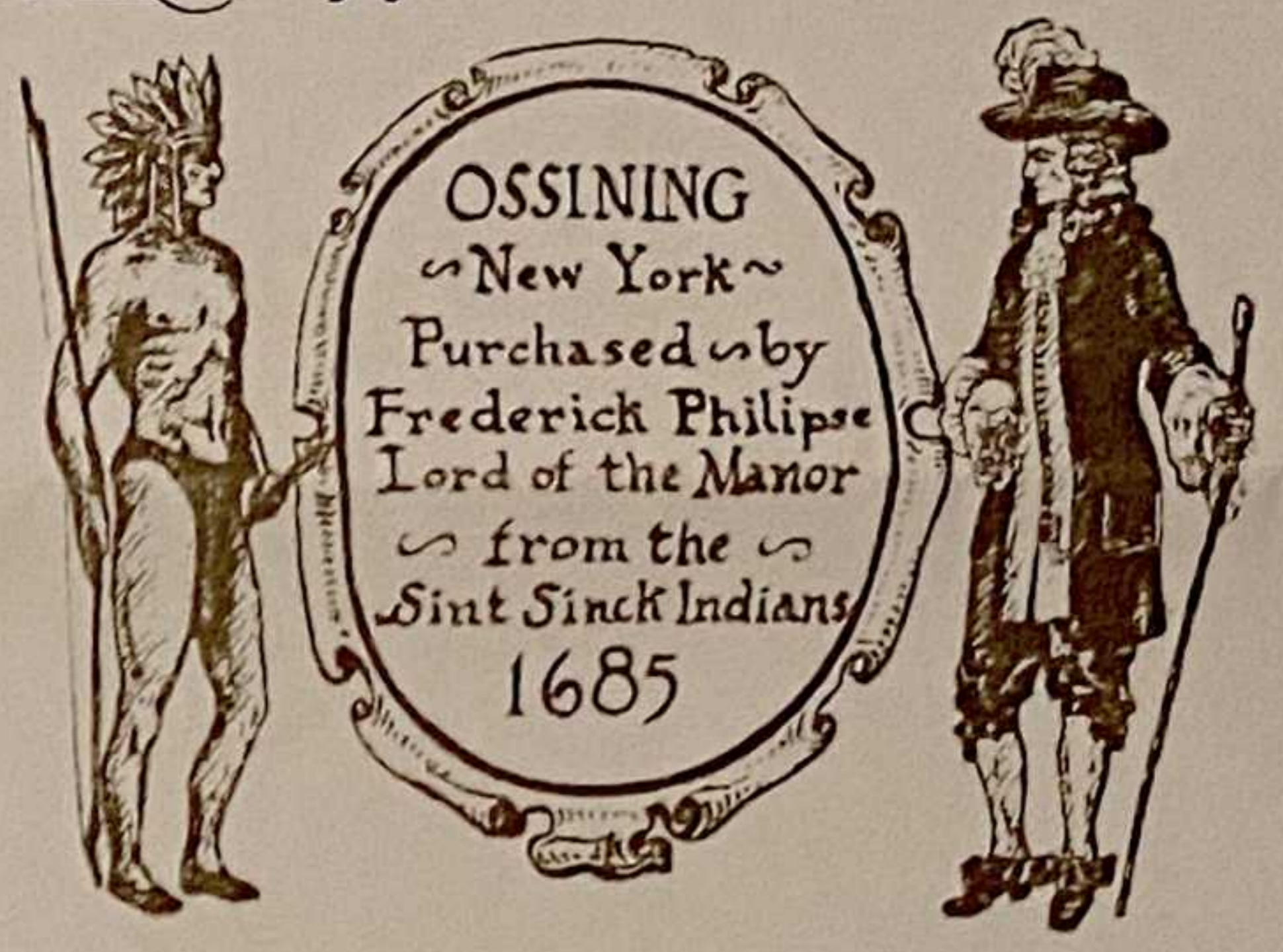
THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING
Government by Mayor and Board of Trustees.



NELSON PARK
Excellent Recreational Facilities.



OSSINING
 ~New York~
 Purchased by
 Frederick Philipse
 Lord of the Manor
 from the
 Sint Sinck Indians
 1685



In Sparta Cemetery
 there stands a tomb-
 stone pierced by a
 cannon ball from
 the Vulture

HUDSON RIVER



Arms of Philipse



H.M.S. Vulture
 Unsuccessful Attack
 September 22, 1780

