

The Benjamin Tallmadge



Historic Trail

Suffolk County Council, BSA
Town of Brookhaven, NY



The starting point of this Trail is the Town of Brookhaven parking lot at Cedar Beach just off Harbor Beach Road in Mount Sinai, NY. Hikers can be safely dropped off at this location. Ninety percent of this trail follows Town roadways which closely approximate the original route that Benjamin Tallmadge and his contingent of Light Dragons took from Mount Sinai to the Manor of St. George in Mastic.

Extreme CAUTION needs to be observed on certain heavily travelled roads. Some Town roads have little or no shoulders at all. Most roads do not have sidewalks. Scouts should hike in a single line fashion facing the oncoming traffic. They should be dressed in their Field Uniforms or brightly colored Class "B" shirts. This Trail should only be hiked in the daytime hours.

Since this 21-mile long Trail is designed to be hiked over a two-day period, certain pre-arrangements must be made. The overnight camping stay can be done at Cathedral Pines County Park in Middle Island. Applications must be obtained and submitted to the Suffolk County Parks Department. On Day 2, the Trail veers off Smith Road in Shirley onto a service access road inside the Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge for about a mile before returning to the neighborhood roads. As a courtesy, the Wertheim Refuge would like a letter three weeks in advance informing them that you will be hiking on their property.

There are no water sources along this hike so make sure you pack enough. Please DO NOT LITTER. It is the policy of the Historic Trails Committee that any groups or individuals taking this Trail are responsible for their actions and conduct. The Boy Scouts of America is not responsible for any person or individual undertaking this Trail.

Suffolk County Council
Boy Scouts of America
7 Scouting Boulevard
Medford, New York 11763

About Benjamin Tallmadge

Major Benjamin Tallmadge was born on February 25, 1754 at the Presbyterian parsonage in Setauket, Long Island. He was the son of Rev. Benjamin Tallmadge and Susannah Smith. He spent his boyhood days in Setauket and later attended Yale where he graduated in 1773. Tallmadge was employed as a teacher in Weathersfield, Connecticut until shortly after the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill when he entered the Continental Army. He was commissioned as a Lieutenant in 1776 and was engaged in the Battle of Long Island on August 27, 1776. The following December, he was promoted to Captain of the 1st Troop of the Second Continental Light Dragoons and, shortly after, he was promoted to the rank of Major. Following this promotion, he was engaged in the battles of White Plains, Brandywine, Monmouth, Germantown and White Marsh. In 1777, he was instrumental in organizing a spy ring to relay information to George Washington, the Commander-in-Chief, and keep him informed of the British activities around New York City and Long Island. In this operation, Tallmadge assumed the name of “John Bolton.”

For the rest of the Revolutionary War, Tallmadge recruited other spies, or temporary agents, who were willing to pass information and live for brief periods on Long Island. He believed that these agents were less likely to be caught than permanent agents-in-place. Although Tallmadge later participated in some other minor commando raids in Lloyd’s Neck and Huntington, his prime concern was “to insure the safety” of his agents through the end of the war. When the Treaty of Paris was signed on September 3, 1783, ending the Revolutionary War, Tallmadge was able to enter New York and ride down Broadway in his American uniform escorted by a few of his Dragoons.

Major Tallmadge retired from the Army at the rank of Colonel. On March 16, 1784, he married Mary Floyd, daughter of William Floyd, a Signer of the Declaration of Independence. Tallmadge’s father officiated at the ceremony.

Colonel Benjamin Tallmadge settled in Litchfield, Connecticut and became a wealthy man through several investments. In 1801, he was elected to Congress on the Federalist ticket where he challenged Presidents Jefferson and Madison on many occasions. He retired in 1817 and devoted himself to establishing a training school for Native American and Asian missionaries. He died, at age 81, on March 7, 1835. To the end, he praised the efforts of those “untrumpeted and unknown” members of his spy ring who helped secure victory against the British.

The History of This Trail

British troops had occupied Benjamin Tallmadge’s native Long Island since the Battle of Long Island. Consequently, he had a great desire to make raids on the Island and harass the British. Another patriot named William Booth had sent information that a small garrison of Loyalist refugees from Rhode Island had taken possession of, and built a fort at, the home of Judge William Smith at the Manor of St. George in Mastic. The Judge and his family had been forced to flee from their home after the occupation. Booth had also sent a diagram of the fort which the British were calling “Fort St. George.” After receiving this information, Tallmadge made a secret mission to survey the situation. Upon confirming the report, Tallmadge requested permission from General Washington to attempt an attack on the fort. The request was denied as being too hazardous. Shortly after, Washington received a communication from another spy in the ring, Abraham Woodhull, that the British had a very large amount of forage in Coram. Washington finally gave Tallmadge permission for the raid on the fort providing it included the destruction of the hay and forage in Coram which was the primary target.

On Tuesday, November 21, 1780, Tallmadge’s force of 80 men left Fairfield, Connecticut in eight open whaleboats and rowed across Long Island Sound, landing at Old Mans Harbor (now known as Mount Sinai). Upon arriving at Old Mans Harbor, a storm developed and the men sheltered themselves under their overturned boats. After the storm passed, twenty men were left in charge of the boats and, at 7:00 p.m., the others began their trek across Long Island to the fort in Mastic.

In his memoir, Tallmadge wrote that two miles from the Manor House at the fort, his raiding party stopped for some “refreshment.” It was now 3:00 a.m. on November 23rd. Tallmadge sent out scouting parties to review the structural layout of the triangular-shaped fort and confirm that there was a British garrison of about 50 men. An hour later, Tallmadge launched a three-pronged surprise attack. After a ten minute battle, the raiders captured the fort. Informed that a British ship was in sight of the fort, loaded with rum, wine, sugar and glass, Tallmadge detached a party to board and take the ship, removing her cargo and setting her afire.

After destroying the garrison buildings, supplies and ammunition at the fort, Tallmadge’s company marched away at 8:00 a.m. The Major selected ten men and together they took horses from the fort. He ordered his subordinate, Captain Edgar, to march the rest of the men and the prisoners to a spot “at the middle of the island.” Tallmadge and his now-mounted Dragoons rode to Coram and set fire to a storage area consisting of over 300 tons of hay and forage held for the enemy cavalry. Tallmadge’s group then rejoined the marching unit and continued on to Old Mans Harbor, where they arrived by 4:00 p.m. There, the entire party of Patriots pulled their boats from their hiding places and embarked across Long Island Sound, arriving back in Connecticut at 11:00 p.m.

During this daring mission, Tallmadge’s men traveled 20 miles by water and 40 miles on land, destroying enemy buildings, supplies, and a ship before their victorious return to home base. The Patriot forces suffered no casualties in the entire attack. The Loyalists lost seven men and the remaining 54 were taken prisoner and brought back to Fairfield. For these efforts, Tallmadge received the thanks of Congress and a personal congratulatory letter from George Washington.

Hiking The Benjamin Tallmadge Trail

Scouts can now retrace the steps that Tallmadge and his men took in this 21-mile, two-day hike. Beginning at Mount Sinai Harbor, the Trail, for the most part, follows roadways which closely approximate the original route of Tallmadge’s men. Many historic points and buildings are passed along the Trail. After an overnight stay at Cathedral Pines County Park, the second day’s hike will lead south through Yaphank and Shirley to The Manor of St. George in Mastic. A visit to the Manor’s museum is highly recommended. The Manor is open Thursdays through Sundays seasonally from May 1 through October 30.

Reservations for overnight camping at Cathedral Pines can be made by requesting an application from the Suffolk County Parks Department at 631-854-4949 or by writing to:

Suffolk County Dept. of Parks
P.O. Box 144
West Sayville, NY 11796

All applications submitted by mail must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Requests for a “Special Permit” to hike on the old Smith Road section of the Wertheim National Refuge can be made 3 - 4 weeks in advance by writing to:

Long Island National Refuge Complex
ATT: Michele Williams, Director
360 Smith Road
Shirley, NY 11967

Please inform the Director which Sunday you will be hiking through the property so the Conservation Officers on duty that day will know that you are passing through.

Other Trail Regulations

1. The B.T. Trail will be “open” on Saturdays and Sundays from April 1 through October 30 .
2. All registered Scouts, Explorers, Venturers, and Scouters are eligible to hike the Trail and earn the Trail Patch.
3. All Scouts must be in Field Uniforms (Class “A”) or brightly colored Class “B” shirts and travel as a group during the entire B.T. Trail hike.
4. Trail Groups may not exceed 25 persons. There must be an Adult (over 21) for every 10 hikers,

with a minimum of “2-Deep” leadership for smaller groups.

5. Hikers must start the Trail at Mount Sinai Harbor (Cedar Beach) on Saturday at 8:00 a.m., camp at Cathedral Pines County Park, and arrive at the Manor of St. George (open seasonally) on Sunday, no later than 3:00 p.m.
6. Each hiker should carry his own water supply, personal first aid kit, and a bag lunch to eat along the B.T.Trail. Do not litter. Carry all of your refuse to the campsite and dispose of it in the containers provided.
7. Fires are not permitted along the B.T. Trail.
8. Instruction and training should be given in hiking procedures and highway safety. The B.T. Trail is completely marked with yellow and black markers on every fourth or fifth telephone pole. Turns, signified with arrows, are also indicated.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Police / Ambulance : 911
(Non-Emergency Number is 852-2677)

Mather Memorial Hospital
75 North Country Road
Port Jefferson, NY
631-473-1320

St. Charles Hospital
200 Belle Terre Road
Port Jefferson, NY
631-474-6000

Brookhaven Memorial Hospital Medical Center
101 Hospital Road
Patchogue, NY
631-654-7100

Cathedral Pines County Park
Park Office Phone: 631-852-5500
Campground: 631-852-5502

Poison Control Center
1-800-222-1222

Religious Services

St. Frances Cabrini Roman Catholic Church

134 Middle Country Road
Coram, NY

Sunday Masses - 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

93 Middle Island - Yaphank Road
Middle Island, NY

(North of Longwood Road next to Prosser Pines Park)

Sunday Services - 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Yaphank Presbyterian Church

65 Main Street
Yaphank, NY

(North side of Main Street between Yaphank-Middle Island Road and Yaphank Avenue)

Sunday Service - 10:00 a.m.

St. Andrews Episcopal Church

East Main Street
Yaphank, NY

(South side of East Main Street between Yaphank Avenue and River Road)

Sunday Services - 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

Mastic Beach Hebrew Center

218 Neighborhood Road
Mastic Beach, NY

Friday Service at 8:00 p.m.

St. Jude Roman Catholic Church

89 Overlook Drive
Mastic Beach, NY

Sunday Masses - 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

As with any Trail Guide, items may change over time. There may never be a "final" version. It's important that you provide us with any inaccuracies, comments and suggestions. Please contact:

Frank Bailey
P.O. Box 516
Middle Island, NY 11953
email: delmarcomp@aol.com

Revised August 2011

The Major Benjamin Tallmadge Historic Trail

1. Begin your hike at the eastern end of the Brookhaven Town parking lot at Cedar Beach in Mount Sinai.

Take note of where the playground is located. This was the original location of the mouth to the harbor, not the present day inlet much further to the west. Tallmadge's men would have entered the harbor here and rowed up to Pipe Stave Creek which flowed in between the large farm properties of Samuel Hopkins to the east and Joseph Davis to the west. There was always at least two feet of water in the harbor, even at low tide. Once Tallmadge moved up the creek into the hills, his boats would be hidden from view.

2. Proceed .4 miles east to Pipe Stave Hollow Road.

The name of this road is said to be derived from the many wooden staves which were cut in this area and used in the construction of wooden pipes. There is a good chance that when Tallmadge hid his boats in this area, most of the trees on both sides of the creek were clear cut. Even though this road was originally laid out in 1712, most roads of the time did not have formal names. By 1838, it was known as Hopkins Road, or Hopkins Landing, before Pipe Stave Hollow.

3. Turn right onto Pipe Stave Hollow Road.

Before this area was named Mount Sinai in 1841, it was known as "Old Man's." Legend has it that John Scott, a notorious wheeler dealer of the 1600s met Major John Gotherson, an elderly Englishman looking to buy land in the new world. John Scott assured Major Gotherson that he could obtain property for him. Scott, however, never closed on the deal with the Native Americans even though Gotherson had given him the money to do so. When "old" Major Gotherson sent over a representative to claim the land he thought he owned, the swindle was uncovered. By then, the locals had started to refer to the land as "the Old Man's."

4. Follow Pipe Stave Hollow Road through a SHARP turn to the left.

! This is a dangerous turn for car traffic.

Extreme Caution must be followed here because of the "blind" spots for both drivers and hikers.

5. The Hopkins Homestead at 415 Pipe Stave Hollow Road - Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Hopkins Homestead was the principal structure of an 1100-acre manorial farm owned by the descendants of William Hopkins who emigrated from England in 1680. Also known as "The Point Place", the two-story structure is located on a bluff overlooking Mount Sinai

Harbor. Usually, you can see it from the sands of Cedar Beach. Samuel Hopkins purchased the property from the son of a Captain Robinson in 1758. The house and one remaining barn are the only two known structures that survive from the original farm in their exact original locations. Its ownership by the Hopkins Family for 180 years spans many generations who lived and contributed to life in the Town of Brookhaven. Operations on the farm included selling dairy products and running a livery business. The entrance to the harbor gave schooners the ability to load and unload cargo virtually in the farm's front yard. In addition, Pipe Stave Hollow Road, then just a path on the Hopkins property, gave the family a direct route to the main east-west road of the time, North Country Road. Currently, the Hopkins Homestead is privately owned and not available for public viewing.

6. Continue south on Pipe Stave Hollow Road to North Country Road.

None of the houses you are passing were present in 1780. This was all part of the working Hopkins farm, which made Old Mans Harbor the perfect landing place for Benjamin Tallmadge and his men. The other options along the north shore were too busy. Landing in Setauket would not have been considered: there were too many houses -- and troops, either British or Loyalist, were often stationed there. Port Jefferson, then known as "Drowned Meadow", was too exposed with too much tidal meadow from the open Long Island Sound to dry ground. Crystal Brook Hollow Road had too many houses on it, plus an old mill dam blocked the Crystal Brook so that boats could not be hidden. The Pipe Stave Creek was the best place to use as the jumping off point for a cross-island expedition.

7. Cross over North Country Road to continue on Pipe Stave Hollow Road.

! This is a dangerous intersection for car traffic.

Extreme Caution must be followed here because this is an "off-center" 4-way intersection with no traffic lights. Cars traveling from the west (your right side) are coming down a hill on North Country Road. Wait for a break in the traffic; there will be one!

This section of Pipe Stave Hollow Road will have some wide shoulders for hiking on. It is a posted 30 mph road, but traffic tends to move faster on it. All of the land south of North Country Road was owned by various residents of Miller Place and Old Mans (Mount Sinai) but no one lived on these properties during the Revolutionary War. They were used for animal grazing, farming and wood cutting.

8. Cross directly over Route 25A.

! This is a dangerous intersection for car traffic.

Extreme Caution must be followed here. Even though there IS a traffic light at this location, there is no "left hand" turn signal for traffic moving south or north. It is another "off center" 4-way intersection.

Farming was the main occupation for the local residents from the 1660s to the 1960s. Occupations related to the harbor and shipping also kept varying numbers of residents busy. Beginning in the 1800s, vacationers from New York City and Connecticut stayed at private homes and small hotels. Many took a liking to the area and purchased land and built summer homes. As the population in Mount Sinai grew, new businesses were established to serve the community and surrounding areas. Many of these were located on Route 25A.

9. Follow the last of Pipe Stave Hollow Road to the back entrance of the Hamlet Willow Creek Golf Course.

Until the Hamlet Willow Creek Golf and Country Club opened in the spring of 2005, access to the Benjamin Tallmadge Trail was impossible because of the construction on this property. However, when it was finished, Willow Creek dedicated a 20 foot right-of-way along the border of the golf course so that the Benjamin Tallmadge Trail could be restored. This is the first "back country" part of the Trail. You are totally off the asphalt. Hike the grassy route and be courteous to the golfers that you may encounter playing on their course.

10. Exit the grassy trail and make a left onto Mount Sinai - Coram Road.

11. Proceed .5 mile to Miller Place Road and cross over.

! This is a moderately busy intersection for car traffic.

Caution must be followed here. It is a 4-way STOP intersection and fairly wide.

12. At this point, the name of the road changes to Miller Place - Middle Island Road. As you hike south, it will merge into Canal Road. Continue south on Canal Road to Whiskey Road.

! There are virtually no asphalt shoulders on this section of road.

Caution must be followed here. This is primarily a residential neighborhood where you will need to get on the grass shoulders to avoid oncoming traffic.

As you approach the Washington Memorial Park on your left, Canal Road will angle in from your right. As traffic heads northbound, drivers may be forking to the left or right. Stay alert!

The Washington Memorial Park did not exist during the Revolutionary War. It opened in the early 1950s as a non-sectarian cemetery. Among those buried here is actress Geraldine Brooks, known for supporting roles in television and films from the 1940s to the 1970s. Also buried here is Lieutenant Timothy Higgins, a New York City Fireman killed at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

13. Cross Whiskey Road at the intersection. The road changes its name again, this time to Coram-Swezeytown Road. Follow the road to Mill Lot Road.

Legend has it that Whiskey Road got its name because of a pair of sweethearts. Jeffrey Randall, a son of one of the first settlers in Ridge, had a girlfriend who lived in Swezeytown, about three miles in a direct line. Back in the 1770s, that direct route did not exist. Jeffrey would have to visit his girlfriend by way of Middle Country Road, a distance of six miles. So, it was decided that farm workers would clear a horse trail through the woods directly west from Ridge to Swezeytown. A jug of whiskey was placed a short distance ahead of the men, who were told that they could stop and have a drink when they had cleared the trail to where the jug was placed. The jug was then placed further ahead and the process repeated. Unfortunately, each time the jug was changed, a different course was made and the trail became very crooked. In later years, when the road was paved on this trail, it became one of the most crooked roads in Brookhaven Town.

SWEZEYTOWN

In 1745, Stephen Swezey of Southold bought 150 acres in this wilderness area of Brookhaven. Within twenty years, Stephen had increased his holdings to 1000 acres, which covered much of the West Middle Island area. His homestead was located just north of the upper Swezeytown pond. The land was divided among his five sons, Stephen, Christopher, James, Daniel and Abel. As years went by, James' descendents moved to Huntington. Daniel's property became the Wellington Farms. After Abel's death, his family moved to East Patchogue. The last owner of this land was Elbert J. Swezey, who sold it in 1923.

As you walk down Coram-Swezeytown Road from Whiskey Road, the site of the original Swezey home will be on your right side, where a present day barn now stands.

14. Turn left on Mill Lot Road and hike .3 miles to Evergreen Avenue.

15. Turn left onto Evergreen Avenue and make an immediate right turn onto Oakcrest Avenue.

About 100 yards down Oakcrest Avenue, look for the "lopped" tree on your right side. Before wire fences and rail fences came into use, these lopped trees were formed by cutting a sapling part way through about two feet off the ground. They were then bent down, which caused the branches to grow up from the horizontal trunk. A line of these trees along a ditch and a bank provided a fairly good fence for enclosing a field for cattle to graze. George Washington mentioned them in his diary during his trip over Long Island in 1790, but he did not consider them very efficient as they were not "hog tight."

At this point you have hiked about six and one-half miles from Cedar Beach.

16. At the end of Oakcrest Avenue, make a left turn onto Church Lane.

You will be passing Half-Mile Road on your right. Records of the Town of Brookhaven show that Half Mile Road was built at the request of Stephen Swezey who lived north of the lake. Across the road is Pine Lake. This pond on Half-Mile Road has had many names. It has been called the Lower Swezey Pond, Davis Pond, Half-Mile Pond and now Pine Lake. The name Pine Lake was given by Pine Lake Farms, a realty concern, which developed a tract of property in the vicinity of the pond in the 1920s.

17. Follow Church Lane south for about .8 mile to Middle Country Road.

! There are very narrow asphalt shoulders on this section of road.

Caution must be followed here. This is primarily a residential neighborhood where you will need to get on the grass shoulders to avoid oncoming traffic. Please be careful at the blind turn by Lakeside Drive.

18. Turn left on Middle Country Road and hike .2 miles to East Bartlett Road.

Before the 20th century, Middle Country Road was a dirt road through Middle Island. A traveller entering from Coram by horse and wagon would have seen only a few houses, most of which were on the north side of the road.

At this corner was the Middle Island Presbyterian Church. The original church was erected here in 1766 under the leadership of Rev. David Rose. In 1836, it was decided to build a second church, the present one, in the lot behind the original church. The steeple was added to the church in 1863, and the bell was given as a memorial offering by the congregation in 1870.

Across the street from the church, a public burying ground was opened in 1766. In 1867 the Union Cemetery Association was incorporated with the addition of five acres of ground, and opened to the public. This cemetery has no connection with the church organization, and is open to everyone, regardless of race, creed or color. Among the prominent men who have been buried in this historic cemetery are Alonzo Chappel, the famous artist, known primarily for his portraits of eminent Americans; Mordecai Homan, a Brookhaven Town Clerk for 42 years; Lester H. Davis, treasurer of the Presbyterian Church for over 50 years; and Captain William Phillips, Jr., an officer of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

About 500 feet to the east, where Reliable Fence is located, was the site of a pre-Revolutionary War house built by John Howell in 1737. His son, Reeve Howell, sold the house to Joshua Swezey, Sr. in 1802. It remained in the Swezey family until 1930. The last owner of the house was Emil Lengyal in the 1960s. He operated a small museum next to the house. Town historical surveys say the Swezey House was painted white with red shutters, had a gabled roof, two fireplaces, and five small windows under the front and rear eaves, an indication of the Dutch influence in home construction in central Suffolk before the American Revolution. Tragically, the Swezey - Lengyal House was the victim of a suspicious fire in 1989 and had to be razed. It had just been given a landmark status by the Brookhaven Town Board because it was a structure that had remained in

its original location since it was built.

Across the street from this location is Bartlett Pond Park, the new home of the historic East Middle Island Schoolhouse. It was originally located, further east, on the corner of Middle Country Road and Middle Island - Yaphank Road. This one-room schoolhouse was built in 1835 and in use until a two-room schoolhouse opened in 1928 across the street. The property was then purchased by a private resident and additions were made to the historic structure. When the Longwood Public Library acquired the building in the 1990s, Library Director David Clemens made district officials aware that the original one-room schoolhouse comprised the building's structure. As a result, during the demolition of the home, the one-room schoolhouse was preserved and only the additions were destroyed. The building was then moved to Bartlett Park by the Longwood Central School District, where the Longwood Historical Society began restoration. Five Eagle Scout Projects have been done on this structure so far.

19. Cross Middle Country Road at the traffic light and head down East Bartlett Road.

There is now a pedestrian signal at this crossing which will help you safely get over the heavily travelled Middle Country Road.

! **There are no shoulders on this section of road.**

Caution must be followed here. This is primarily a residential neighborhood where you will need to get on the grass shoulders to avoid oncoming traffic.

At the site now occupied by the Spring Lake Golf Course was the Howell- Buckingham -Bartlett House. John Howell, who came from Southold, originally owned this property. The lake on the property now called Spring Lake was known as Howell's Pond as early as 1739.

After John Howell's death, the property was passed on to his son Reeve Howell who was a patriot during the American Revolution. Reeve Howell married Bathsheba Clark and here they had seven children. Reeve Howell died in 1802 and left the property to his son Daniel. Daniel and his wife had one child, a daughter named Abigail.

Abigail married John Buckingham. Later they had a son, Daniel Buckingham. When Daniel's father died in 1852, he was left to take charge of the farm. In 1857 Daniel and his mother leased the home and farm to William Bartlett, a famous New York City lawyer. Bartlett increased the size of the farm to 1000 acres by buying additional land. Bartlett became legendary for building a spur from the railroad, which extended onto the southern part of his estate. He kept his workers busy by having them build several stone walls on his estate. His son Willard, a noted lawyer and Judge on the New York Court of Appeals, became the next owner of the land. The pond near the house now became known as Bartlett Pond. His daughters, Maude and Agnes, became the last owners of the estate. All three houses including the barn burned mysteriously in 1965.

20. Just past the Golf Course entrance, bear left onto East Bartlett Road and continue for 1.5 miles to the intersection with Ashton Road.

! **There are no shoulders on this section of road.**

Caution must be followed here. This is primarily a residential neighborhood where you will need to get on the grass shoulders to avoid oncoming traffic.

As you approach the intersection with Ashton Road, on your left at # 63 is the former site of the Leek-Monsell-Ashton House. This home on Bartlett Road was built prior to 1750. At the time of the Revolution, the Leek family occupied the house. Captain Leek was an officer serving with the Burlington rangers in New Jersey. State archives in New Jersey show him twice escorting prisoners to Trenton.

Tradition states that while Leek was away during the war, some British soldiers stopped at the Leek home. Knowing the Leeks to be Patriots, they demanded that Mrs. Leek prepare them dinner. While waiting, one of the British officers began to strike the handle of his sword against panels on the wall, listening for a hollow sound where valuables might be stored. An anxious Mrs. Leek watched this knowing that a secret panel did exist next to the fireplace. In this panel were silver pieces and other valuables. The soldiers did not find anything and left after dinner.

Shortly after the war, Leek sold the house to another Revolutionary War veteran, Alexander Monsell, and moved back to New Jersey. Alexander and his wife Mary (Moger) had seven children. At the time of his death in 1807, Alexander Monsell's will left the farm to his son, Nathaniel. During this time a Methodist minister, Reverend Dickerson, spent the night with the Monsells. It was then discovered that he was a descendent of Captain Leek. It was Dickerson who told the Revolutionary tale of the secret cupboard. Upon examination the secret panel was found and in the cupboard behind it was the hiding place built into the solid brickwork of the chimney.

Nathaniel and his wife Mary (Smith) had eleven children. One of their daughters, Isabel, married James Ashton and took ownership of the house when Nathaniel died. The Ashtons had four daughters: Minnie, Alice, Julia and Frances. Minnie took possession of the house and was the last family member to own it. The house was sold a number of times after that and fell into disrepair. It was moved to Mount Sinai where it was renovated and stands proudly on Little Harbor Road.

21. Turn left at the corner to continue on East Bartlett Road. About .5 mile down this road, you will come to the back entrance of Cathedral Pines County Park. Enter the park and hike up to your pre-assigned campsite.

Before becoming part of the Suffolk County Parks system in 1968, this area was owned by the Suffolk County Council, BSA and operated as Camp Wilderness. It is said that on some weekends over 2000 Scouts camped throughout these several hundred acres.

22. On Day 2, exit Cathedral Pines County Park at the point where you entered. Make a left onto East Bartlett Road and walk .2 mile to Yaphank - Middle Island Road, cross over and turn right so you are facing traffic. Hike south 1.5 miles to Main Street in Yaphank.

! This is a dangerous roadway for car traffic.

Extreme Caution must be followed here. This is also known as County Road 21, a posted 40 mile per hour road, which means traffic is moving faster than that. The side shoulders are wide enough to walk on in single file. Stay alert.

On the right side of the road will be the Dayton-Szuster Farm. The Szuster farm is on the west side of the Middle Island Yaphank Road just south of Bartlett Road. The farm was built before 1858 and it was first owned by a family named Brown. By 1870, the farm was bought by Charles Dayton who was a carpenter. He lived in the house with his wife Fanny and their three daughters, Ann, Amelia and Fanny.

The house was eventually owned by Albert Randall, whose name appears on the 1909 map. The farm was bought by the Szusters in 1914 and is still in their possession today.

Also on the right side, at # 326, is the Phillips House. Dating from about 1850, this house is of the basic Federalist design and is the second house to have stood on this site. The first house stood during the Revolutionary War. It has been said that the Troops of Major Benjamin Tallmadge stopped here to drink from the Carmans stream that runs behind the house. It remained in the Phillips family until 1945.

Capt. William Phillips, Jr. a Revolutionary War veteran, was the first Phillips to occupy the house. Before the Revolution, he worked as an overseer at the William Floyd estate. Phillips was the son of William and Sibyl (Smith) Phillips. Sibyl was the daughter of Richard "Bull" Smith of Smithtown. Capt. Phillips died in 1799 and his wife Urania in 1803; both are buried in the Union Cemetery at Middle Island. The last of the Phillips to own the house was Sarah (Sadie), who sold the home and 70 acre farm to Frank and Ella Bianca in 1945.

A sign will indicate that you are entering the Yaphank Historic District. Just south of Raimond Street, on the right side, will be the Robert F. Hawkins House built around 1845. He was the fifth generation of the Hawkins family to reside in Yaphank. He was quite successful in his agricultural pursuits. This house was the focal point of his 151-acre estate.

Quickly approaching on the left side will be the Hawkins Cemetery and Historic Site Marker. This family cemetery has grave markers dating back to 1774.

Across from the next corner, Walters Street, is the small Joseph Davis House, a one-half Cape Cod designed home dating back to 1800. It was probably originally owned by Daniel Davis and Van Ransaeller Swezey. Joseph Davis was an occupant after the Civil War.

Lastly on the right side, is the Swezey-Avey House, dating from 1873. This was Van Ransaeller Swezey's home. He and his older brother, Daniel Downs Swezey, operated the mill owned by their Father, Christopher Swezey, on the Upper Lake near this house. It was in the Swezey family until it was sold in 1965 to Brookhaven Town.

23. Turn left onto Main Street and walk east. As you walk the next 1.7 miles, you will notice that the road changes its name to Moriches - Middle Island Road. Follow this road over the Long Island Expressway.

Main Street in Yaphank has sidewalks until you reach Yaphank Avenue.

Yaphank is located in the southeastern part of what was once known as the "Parish of Middletown" (Middle Island), and was locally known as Millville. The name Yaphank is taken from an old Indian name "Yamphank," meaning the bank of a river, which was given to a small stream at Brookhaven that flows into the Connecticut or Carmans River.

Most of the historic homes on this street were built in the 1800s, after the Revolutionary War. The Yaphank Presbyterian Church and Cemetery, on the north side, was Yaphank's first church. The property for the church was given by James H. Weeks and his wife in 1851. It was erected during this year and dedicated on Christmas Day. Until 1871, it was officially a chapel governed by the Middle Island Presbytery. Then, it was recognized as a Church. Its tower was erected in 1870.

The Yaphank Garage, on the corner of Main Street and Yaphank Avenue, is a more modern signature spot in town. This Art Deco designed station was built and operated by Sheridan & Ehrenwirth. It dates back to 1936. Today, it is run by the Suffolk County Police Historical Society and open by appointment.

Just off the official trail, a short side trip:

If you look south to Yaphank Avenue, you will see the Robert Hewlett Hawkins House, built in 1850. Its Italianate style was very elegant for the area. Unfortunately, Mr. Hawkins died in 1855 at the age of 38, leaving behind his wife, Isabelle (Swezey) Hawkins, and their four children. The house remained in the Hawkins family until 1887. It is now owned by Suffolk County and is part of the Suffolk County Historic Trust. It is under restoration by the County in conjunction with the Yaphank Historical Society. The Hawkins House is usually open for tours on Sunday afternoons in July & August and also hosts seasonal events. The site is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Across the street from Robert Hewlett Hawkins House is the Homan-Gerard House built around 1790. This was probably the home of John Homan and his son, Daniel, after the adjacent mill became operational. This site is also on the National Register of Historic Places.

Returning to the trail:

! **There are now no asphalt shoulders on this section of East Main Street.**

Caution must be followed here. This is primarily a residential neighborhood where you will need to get on the grass shoulders to avoid oncoming traffic.

On the south side of East Main Street, is the Mary Louise Booth House, built in 1829 in a one-half Cape Cod design. Ms. Booth was a writer, a translator, and a leader in the Women's Suffrage movement. She began to translate French works at a young age while assisting her father, the village miller and schoolteacher. Booth was also an outspoken opponent of slavery. When the Civil War started, she began a series of translations of French writers of that day who favored the Union cause. For this work, she won praise from Abraham Lincoln. Among her other achievements, Ms. Booth published *Louisa May Alcott* and was the first editor of *Harper's Bazaar*, a magazine which is still published today.

As you continue to hike east on Main Street, you will pass St. Andrews Episcopal Church on the south side. The church and rear cemetery date back to 1853. It is also listed on the National register of Historic Places. After you pass the church, you will be leaving the Yaphank Historic District.

Fortunately, there was no Long Island Expressway during the Revolutionary War! Although the construction of the Long Island Expressway was approved by then-Governor Thomas E. Dewey in 1954, the section of the L.I.E. that you are crossing over was not completed until 1970. It was part of a 20 mile-long section from Exit 61 in Holbrook to Exit 71 in Calverton completed that year.

24. Turn right, off Moriches - Middle Island Road, onto River Road. Cross over to the other side so you are facing traffic as you hike. Take River Road 2.7 miles to Victory Avenue.

Walk through the unique one-lane L.I.R.R. overpass. Be alert for oncoming traffic! This route of the Long Island Railroad constitutes part of the original "Main Line" constructed in the 1840s. The section of track running from the Medford Station to the Greenport Station was opened in 1844. A timetable from that year actually shows a stop at Carmans River.

Most likely, Benjamin Tallmadge and his men followed the east side of Carmans River as they headed toward Mastic in the middle of the night. It was an easy landmark for them to use.

The Carmans River begins as a small stream in Cathedral Pines County Park in Middle Island and flows southward to the eastern end of the Great South Bay. Once known as the Connecticut River, this river winds its way through the Pitch Pine - Oak woodlands on your right side. In the 1700s, dams were built and lumber mills were constructed which used the power of the river. These dams created barriers in the river which created the lakes in the river system.

SOUTHAVEN PARK

In 1740, Samuel Terrell built a mill at a South Haven location where the Sunrise Highway is today and created a large pond. Subsequently, the mill was purchased by Samuel Carman, and his family operated the mill from 1780 until 1875. He developed a tavern and a post office that formed the center of commercial activity.

The large trout in the Carmans River were a draw for some notable fishermen. In 1827, Daniel Webster rented land above the South Haven mill pond with fishing rights for him and a few friends, including Martin Van Buren, the future 8th President of the United States. This was the forerunner of the Suffolk Club organized by August Belmont, a wealthy industrialist. In 1875, the Suffolk Club bought 1,200 acres from Henry Carman on the west side of the river stretching from Yaphank down to the Great South Bay. They used the land as a shooting and fishing preserve and raised trout to stock the river. Theodore Roosevelt was one of the Club's most famous members.

In 1923, Anson Hard bought out the Suffolk Club and used the area as his own private hunting preserve called the "Suffolk Lodge" with a private residence which he called "Fireplace." His son, Ken, raised trout, pheasants, ducks and turkeys. Hard built a "mid-river dam" so he could place trout in the upper section of the lake and place bass and perch in the lower section. Today, that structure is called the C-gate dam because it is located inside the C-gate entrance on River Road, which you will hike by.

The Hard family eventually sold the river property and surrounding lands to Suffolk County in 1962. In 1964, all the remaining properties of the Suffolk Lodge were sold to the County to create Suffolk County's first park. Southaven Park now encompasses 1356 acres and includes much of the river. The lake that was created is now referred to as Hard's Lake. Carman's Mill was destroyed by New York State when it was constructing the Sunrise Highway.

25. At the end of River Road, turn left onto Victory Avenue. Hike .5 miles to the William Floyd Parkway.

Once again, Benjamin Tallmadge did not have to deal with another major highway -- but you do! Hikers need to take a detour to get over the Sunrise Highway because, currently, there is no direct access heading south from River Road to Smith Road on the opposite side.

Victory Avenue is also Suffolk Country Road 56 (CR 56).

Sidewalks, a rarity on this Trail, appear on Victory Avenue.

The Sunrise Highway (NY 27), is a 120.58 mile road from Queens to Montauk Point. The section that you are detouring over was built in 1958.

26. Turn right at the William Floyd Parkway, walk over the overpass, and proceed .3 miles to Montauk Highway.

! This is a dangerous intersection for car traffic.

Extreme Caution must be followed here, not just because the William Floyd Parkway has a high volume of traffic, but because there is a “cloverleaf” pattern which allows traffic to enter and exit the Sunrise Highway. The intersections DO have traffic lights for crossing the William Floyd Parkway at Victory Avenue and Montauk Highway but, the Enter and Exit ramps to the Sunrise Highway DO NOT. Stay on any dirt paths and sidewalks adjacent to the Parkway.

William Floyd was the first delegate from New York to sign the Declaration of Independence. He was born on Long Island, December 17, 1734. His parents died when he was 20, making him heir to their large estate and leaving him to care for his brothers and sisters. After he married his wife, Hannah, Floyd devoted a lot of time to the Brookhaven Church and served as a Town Trustee from 1769-1791. He joined the Suffolk County militia where he reached the rank of Colonel by 1775.

In 1774, Suffolk County sent William Floyd to the Continental Congress where he served until 1777 and later from 1797 to 1783. When the British occupied Long Island, his family fled to Connecticut. In 1776, he signed the Declaration of Independence as a New York delegate while the redcoats used his home in Mastic as a barracks and plundered his lands and belongings. When he returned with his family in 1783, he found his house damaged, fields stripped and fences destroyed.

After the war, Floyd spent several terms in the New York State Senate, supported the Federal Constitution, and, in 1789, was elected a Representative in the First Congress. He entertained future Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison at his home. Later in life, he purchased lands in central New York and built a home at the present site of Westernville, NY. He died in 1821 at the age of 86. Today, his homestead is managed by the National Park Service.

His eldest daughter, Mary Floyd, married Benjamin Tallamadge in 1784.

27. Turn right onto Montauk Highway (CR 80) and proceed .7 miles to Smith Road.

This highly commercialized section of Montauk Highway has sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. It completes your detour getting over the Sunrise Highway. Cross over at any convenient intersection so that you are, once again, facing the traffic as you hike. Montauk Highway is one of the original roads on Long Island, reaching from Jamaica in Queens to Montauk Point.

28. Turn left onto Smith Road. Take this for 3.0 miles. The Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge will be on your right side.

! There are no shoulders on this section of road.

Caution must be followed here. This is primarily a residential neighborhood where you will need to get on the grass shoulders to avoid oncoming traffic. There is also an “at grade” L.I.R.R. crossing. If the gates should come down, DO NOT go around them.

You are now back on the original Trail.

In 1690 Brookhaven Town was a wilderness. The only settlement of note was in the Setauket area. One of the early settlers in Setauket was William “Tangier” Smith, who had a homestead at Strongs Neck. In 1693, in recognition of his service as Mayor of the city of Tangier in Africa, he was allowed to purchase a large tract of land on the south side of Long Island. It was called Manor of St. George. The grant included all the lands extending from the ocean north to the Middle Country Road, bounded on the west by the Connecticut (Carmans) River and on the east by the Southampton town line, an enormous amount of land by any standard. Smith Road represents a lengthy road through this original tract of land down to the entrance of the Manor property.

The Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge began as a private preserve for waterfowl hunting maintained by Cecile and Maurice Wertheim. The 2,550-acre Refuge was established in 1947 by a donation from the Wertheim family, with an additional donated parcel added in 1974. These lands were acquired under the Migratory Bird Conservation Act and the Refuge Recreation Act. A 128-acre parcel referred to as the South Haven property was added in 1998. This property consists of one of the last remaining duck farms on Long Island. Additionally, a portion of the 19-acre Elias property was added in 1999 to further protect the Carmans River from commercial development. The Refuge is one of the last undeveloped estuary systems remaining on Long Island. Approximately half of the refuge consists of aquatic habitats including intertidal saltmarsh, high saltmarsh, freshwater marsh, shrub swamp, and red maple swamp. The refuge’s saltmarshes, combined with the adjacent New York State-owned saltmarsh, form the largest continuous saltmarsh on Long Island. About 300 species of birds have been documented at Wertheim.

Take time to explore the new \$10 million Visitor Center that you’ll pass on Smith Road. It is scheduled to open in the Fall of 2011 and will include interactive exhibits, a multi-purpose room for programs and meetings, and other visitor services.

29. At the end of Smith Road, veer to the right and take the dirt work road on the Wertheim Refuge Property for about .7 miles.

! **Permission from the Wertheim Refuge should be obtained.**

This is the eastern border of the Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge and “Old Smith Road.” As a courtesy to the Refuge, a letter to the Director of the Refuge requesting permission to use this road is required. The Conservation Officers will then be aware that you will be hiking through on the date you indicate.

This is the second and final time that the Benjamin Tallmadge Historic Trail leaves the paved roadway for a back-country path. Private residences will appear on your left side and the Refuge, along with its wildlife, will be on your right. It is important to keep the noise level down in this area.

30. When you exit the Old Smith Road, you will once again be on the paved portion of Smith Road in Mastic. Go another .5 miles to Neighborhood Road.

This is a secluded, almost isolated, residential section of Smith Road with the Wildlife Refuge still running along your right side.

The last block before the entrance to the Manor of St. George is an unpaved dirt road.

31. Turn right to enter the Manor of St. George. Follow this long driveway for the final .6 mile to the Manor House, the 1812 relic cannon overlooking the Great South Bay, and the Smith Family Cemetery.

When Colonel William “Tangier” Smith came to America in 1686, the Governor of the Province of New York was Thomas Dongan. The two men developed a warm relationship and Dongan helped Smith purchase lands from their Native American owners at relatively low rates. At one point, nearly 40% of today’s Town of Brookhaven was part of Colonel Smith’s holdings.

Although Colonel Smith was the first Lord of the Manor of St. George, his title only denoted an ownership of land “invested with ancient and extensive privileges.” It was common in the early days of New York’s rural districts for great manorial estates to come into being that were measured in miles. Many tenants, usually farmers and some Indians, would reside and work on parcels in these manorial estates. They would come to the Manor House and pay their “rents” with coin or produce. This was usually followed by a celebratory feast and merrymaking.

In 1693, King William and Queen Mary granted the patent officially establishing the Manor of St. George. But in 1698, Lord Bellomont became Governor of the Province of New York and prepared a bill to Parliament prohibiting any one person from owning more than 1,000 acres. When the measure was passed by the Governor’s Council, the Manor appeared

doomed. However, the London Lords of Trade were so bombarded with angry petitions that they shelved Bellomont’s proposal preventing the destruction of the manors.

Colonel Smith served as a justice in the Province’s Supreme Court beginning in 1691. As part of this political tug-of-war, Lord Bellomont removed Colonel Smith from the new Supreme Court. When Bellomont died in 1701, Colonel Smith was reinstated to the office.

Colonel Smith died at the Manor of St. George on February 18, 1705, but was buried near his original home in Setauket. Upon his death, his property holdings were revealed to include lots “near the road to Old Man’s Farms” (Port Jefferson as well as lands in Southampton and Southold). His extensive property, a family coat of arms and a distinguished life has made the Smith family name an important one in the history of Long Island.

When the British captured Long Island in 1776, the descendents of Tangier Smith either fled the area or were imprisoned by the British. The Manor of St. George became Fort St. George and a supply base for land and sea forces. It was an ideal location because of its proximity to the inlet that then existed in the barrier beach opposite Mastic and for the wood in the surrounding area.

The three-sided fort stood approximately where the military cannons, relics from the War of 1812, now stand. And here, on the early morning of November 23, 1780, Major Benjamin Tallmadge and his regiment of Light Dragoons captured the fort following a ten minute battle. A British ship was in the harbor, in sight of the fort. It contained rum, wine, sugar and glass. Tallmadge’s men boarded the ship, took some of the supplies and burned the ship until it sank.

Once again, not a single man from the raiding Patriot forces lost his life. The British Loyalists lost seven men. The remaining 54 were taken prisoner and brought back to Connecticut.

During the return trip, Tallmadge mounted ten men on horses taken at the fort and rode off to Coram where they set fire to a magazine containing 300 tons of forage for the enemy’s cavalry. Meanwhile, one of Tallmadge’s officers, Captain Edgar, marched the detachment and the prisoners back north. They later met up with Tallmadge and his mounted Dragoons in “the middle of the Island.” They all returned to Old Mans (Mount Sinai), uncovered their whaleboats and rowed safely across the Long Island Sound back to Connecticut, arriving in Fairfield at 11 p.m. the same day.

During World War I, the Manor of St. George served as a center of recreational activities for the military men stationed at nearby Camp Upton (where Brookhaven National Laboratory now exists). An Army Air Field was once situated south of the Manor House.

Throughout the years, the Tangier Smith family sold off the bulk of the original Manor property

as settlements to many legal battles involving property rights. One of these cases involved the “Suffolk Club,” mentioned earlier in this guide. Daniel Webster gave testimony in that case.

The last member of the long family line to occupy The Manor, Miss Eugenie Annie Tangier Smith, died in 1954, leaving George C. Furman and Hugh S. Furman as trustees of the Smith Estate. The house and the grounds were then given to the people of the Town of Brookhaven as a Museum and a Park.

Take the time to walk through the Manor House, which is open to the public each Thursday through Sunday, from May 1 to October 30. You will see many valuable papers and artifacts of the Tangier Smith family and with them, many historical elements of Suffolk County, Long Island.

THE BENJAMIN TALLMADGE HISTORIC TRAIL ENDS HERE.

We hope you had a good time. Our intent was not to fill you with facts, but to acquaint you with the historical importance of this area of Brookhaven.

The return route followed by Benjamin Tallmadge to Coram, where he burned the 300 tons of British hay, is best travelled by car. Yaphank Avenue south of the Long Island Expressway and Mill Road leading north to Coram are high-traffic roads with little or no shoulders. Mill Road is currently undergoing major renovations. In addition, the return route is not yet marked with Trail signs.

The Tallmadge Trail - Mileage Covered

Day 1 -	Cumulative Distance
Cedar Beach Parking Lot to Pipe Stave Hollow Road	.4 mile
Pipe Stave Hollow Road to North Country Road	1.30
Cross North Country Road & Continue to Echo Avenue	2.30
Cross Echo Avenue and Route 25A	2.50
Continue on Pipe Stave Hollow Road to end of paved road and then on path behind Willow Creek Golf Course.	4.30
Mount Sinai - Coram Road to Miller Place Road	4.80
Miller Place - Middle Island Road to Canal Road	5.50
Canal Road, Across Whiskey Road to Mill Lot Road	6.30
Mill Lot Road to left onto Evergreen Avenue to right onto Oakcrest Road	6.70
Oakcrest Road to left onto Half Mile Road (Pine Lake)	7.20
Church Lane to Middle Country Road (Route 25)	8.00
Middle Country Road onto East Bartlett Road	8.20
East Bartlett Road, bearing left at Spring Lake and Ashton Road to back entrance of Cathedral Pines County Park	10.20
 Day 2 -	
Cathedral Pines County Park to Middle Island - Yaphank Road	10.40
Middle Island - Yaphank Road to Main Street	11.90
Main Street, Across L.I. Expressway to River Road	13.60
River Road to Victory Avenue	16.30
Left onto Victory Avenue, Right onto William Floyd Pkwy., Cross over Sunrise Highway, Right onto Montauk Highway	17.10
Montauk Highway onto Smith Road	17.80
Smith Road, through Wertheim section, down to Neighborhood Road and entrance to Manor St. George	20.80
Follow Entrance Roadway to The Manor House	21.40

**Benjamin Tallmadge Historic Trail
Application For Trail Award**

Please complete and forward after your Unit has completed the Trail hike.

Unit Number _____ Town/State _____

Date of Hike _____ Leader In Charge _____

Hike Roster

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 20. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 21. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 22. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 23. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 24. _____ |
| 12. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 13. _____ | |

Number of patches required _____ x \$5.00 per patch = Total Enclosed: _____

Tour Leader _____ Telephone _____

Address/Town/State/Zip _____

Make Check Payable to “ Suffolk County Council, BSA”

Mail this roster and payment to: Frank Bailey
P.O. Box 516
Middle Island, NY 11953-0516

Credits

This guide was produced with the casual hiker in mind - a combination of hiking directions, safety considerations and historical facts. These facts were meant to peak your interest and prompt you to learn more about the people and places that were mentioned. Volumes of information, found online, in libraries and from local historians, have been reduced to short paragraphs.

We are grateful for the contributions made by the following individuals and sources used in this guide:

- Barbara M. Russell, Historian for the Town of Brookhaven
Bob Winowitch of The Brigade of the American Revolution
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Suffolk County Department of Parks
General William Floyd House Website
Long Island Genealogy Website
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