Quakers, Warriors, and Capitalists
Riverview Cemetery and Trenton’s Dead
A FINE FINAL RESTING PLACE

Cemeteries are places of reflection. In the silence, time slows down, stops, then runs backward. In the silence at Riverview Cemetery is the full scope of Trenton’s history, as far back as the 17th century. Familiar names are everywhere: Stacy, Lambert, Scudder, Lalor, Roebling, Taylor, Mott, McClellan, Maddock, Kuser, Lenox, Donnelly, Switlik, Antheil.

But Riverview Cemetery is more than just a burial roster. Before it grew into an emerald oasis on the banks of the Delaware, it was a small Quaker burial ground perched on the edge of the river bluff. Nearby was the estate where one of Joseph Bonaparte’s paramours raised their children. On the eve of the Civil War, a group of prominent citizens fulfilled its vision of creating a landscaped rural cemetery, the final resting place of the city’s leaders and predecessor of today’s urban parks. This is the story of Riverview Cemetery.
THE QUAKER BURYING GROUND

The bluffs that rise to the east of the falls of the Delaware and north of the Crosswicks Creek marshes appealed to the Quaker settlers who came upriver in the late 1670s. They were close to the bountiful fish, fowl, and pasture in and near the marsh below, and they were easily accessible to the river, the region’s primary transportation artery. They also provided a fine prospect downriver. Where the bluffs turned east, the high ground faced south, the favored orientation for a house site.

John Lambert (a bachelor) and one servant arrived in Burlington aboard the Shield in 1678, along with his brother Thomas, who was accompanied by his wife, five children, and several servants. In 1683 he formally took up his share of a 2,000-acre tract surveyed to John and Thomas Lambert, Mahlon Stacy, William Emley, and Joshua Wright. John Lambert’s parcel included some of the most desirable real estate in the area, including the high ground where the bluffs turn east, where Riverview Cemetery exists today.

John Lambert built a house on the bluff in approximately 1683. Archaeological studies conducted in connection with the reconstruction of Route 29 suggest it was near the bluff edge within the present-day cemetery. John Lambert married in 1687 and died a widower in 1696, leaving three daughters. Thomas Lambert’s property lay immediately to the east of John’s. Thomas’s branch of the family rose to considerable prominence in the new colony and assembled a large landed estate. The family name lives on in Lamberton, the original port of Trenton (see the companion booklet Fish and Ships).

Map showing the Quaker burying ground and the colonial landscape at the falls of the Delaware around 1710. [Hunter Research, Inc.]

In 1685 John Lambert deeded two prime acres atop the bluff to the Chesterfield Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends for use as a burying ground. This plot, which was to become the nucleus of Riverview Cemetery, served the burial needs of the Society of Friends until well into the 19th century. The first recorded interment was that of John Brown who died in 1685. In keeping with Quaker custom at the time, the early burials were either very simply marked or not marked at all; deaths were recorded in the minutes of the monthly meeting. Thomas Lambert is buried here, as is Mahlon Stacy, one of the original settlers at the falls. Stacy died in 1704, and a commemorative stone was “Erected by a Descendant” in 1929.

A stone commemorating the burial of Trenton’s founding settler Mahlon Stacy in the Quaker burying ground. [Hunter Research, Inc.]
In the early 19th century, adjacent to the Quaker burial ground on land that is now part of Riverview Cemetery, stood a house known as Pine Grove. Its history is steeped in foreign intrigue, illicit romance, callous heartbreak, and a tragically early death.

Napoleon Bonaparte’s brother Joseph was the King of Naples (1806–08) and Spain (1808–13) before arriving in America after the Battle of Waterloo (1815). He established Point Breeze, his estate in Bordentown, even as his wife remained in Europe. He fathered sons by two of his housemaids at Point Breeze. Then he met Ann Savage.

One version of their relationship tells of young Ann falling in love with Joseph while she was working in her mother’s dry goods store in Philadelphia. Soon the couple was scandalously living together in a villa outside the city but, unwilling to bear the condemnation of their Quaker neighbors, Joseph decided to return to New Jersey, renting a house for Ann near Point Breeze.

Deeds show that Ann Savage and her mother bought the house later known as Pine Grove in 1819 and sold it to Joseph Bonaparte in 1832. These two transactions framed a series of events that would shape the remainder of Ann Savage’s life.

In 1824 Ann Holton—a name not previously encountered—buried her four-year-old daughter in the churchyard of St. Michael’s Episcopal Church in Trenton. The headstone, topped by a marble dove, reads: “Erected by a bereft Mother In the Memory of a beloved Child.” The child’s full name was Pauline Josephann Holton. Born the year after Ann Savage moved to Lamberton, she was the daughter of Ann Savage (Ann Holton’s real name) and Joseph Bonaparte, a fact that, not surprisingly, does not appear in any official document. Only her middle name indicates her parentage.

Pauline was not Joseph and Ann’s only child. Pauline had a younger sister, Caroline Charlotte. Ann and her daughters sat for a portrait in 1823. Pine Grove, too, appears in a contemporary painting. In a landscape looking upriver from Bordentown in which Point Breeze commands the scene, Pine Grove can be seen in the distance atop the bluff.

By the time his daughter Pauline died, Bonaparte had already moved on to other conquests, and in 1826 Ann and her surviving daughter went to France. There she met and married Alexis de la Folie, and the family ultimately moved to upstate New York. Ann died in New York City in 1865.

Connecting the dots, it would appear that Ann and her mother moved to Lamberton in 1819, where she was known as “Mrs. Holton,” after she became aware of her condition. There she could deliver and raise her baby out of the sight and judgment of the whispering Philadelphia elite. Bonaparte’s purchase of the property in 1832, at the vastly inflated price of $14,000, may have been a buyout and child support payment as much as it was a real estate transaction.

---

Charles H. Lawrence’s View from Bordentown Hill on the Delaware (Point Breeze), painted in the 1820s. [New Jersey Historical Society]
In later post-Bonaparte years, Pine Grove was successively a school, the home of a prominent local physician, a military academy, and the New Jersey Home for Girls. In 1887 it was sold to Riverview Cemetery.

Pine Grove is shown, but not named, on a map made in 1844. A map of 1856 labels this building “Mrs. White formerly the Mrs. Savage place,” identifying it conclusively. In 1924 a view was published showing the house as it appeared around 1880.

After the property was sold to Riverview Cemetery the house was removed, but it might not have been torn down. There is tantalizing evidence that the front and rear sections survive separately nearby as row houses on Centre Street and Second Street.

In 1857 Jacob M. Taylor acquired a half-interest in a 26-acre parcel bordering the Quaker burying ground. He and a group of investors began buying other property nearby with the intention of creating a large, modern, non-denominational cemetery, envisioning a grand final resting place for Trenton’s most eminent citizens.

The Riverview Cemetery Company was formally incorporated by an act of the State Legislature in 1858. The grounds were laid out by John K. Smith, one of the investors and an officer of the corporation. The first plot was sold in February of 1859 to Captain William E. Hunt, a seaman who lived at Lalor and Third streets. The same year the massive receiving vault was constructed for the temporary holding of caskets until burial.

At the time of its founding, Riverview Cemetery was much smaller than at present. It was generally L-shaped. At its lower end it surrounded the Quaker burying ground, and the northern limit was about where the cemetery roads Valley Avenue and Ivy Avenue meet. Extending eastward to the Delaware and Raritan Canal, it was about as wide as at present, and it continued northward to Lalor Street, behind the properties on Second Street.
Riverview Cemetery was an immediate success. It lived up to Jacob Taylor's expectations, becoming a veritable who's who of recent Trenton history. Taylor was the first president of the cemetery corporation, serving until his death in 1870. He is buried in the Taylor family plot.

As the city grew through the industrial expansion of the second half of the 19th century, the cemetery grew with it. The cemetery was enlarged late in the 19th century, with major land acquisitions occurring in the late 1880s, at which time the Pine Grove property was purchased. To design the layout of the additional space, the cemetery directors turned to Calvert Vaux, who, with Frederick Law Olmsted, had designed New York's Central Park in 1858 and Prospect Park in Brooklyn in 1865. Vaux was one of America's leading landscape architects. Born in London, England, in 1824, he was lured to America in 1850 by an offer of employment from noted landscape designer and architect A.J. Downing and worked with him until his death two years later. Reflecting the democratic spirit of the young republic, Vaux believed that art should be outdoors for the enjoyment of all.

The Vaux design of 1887 built on Smith's plan of 1858. Both are characterized by tree-lined curving avenues, with very few right-angle intersections. Vaux also kept the main entrance aligned with the axis of Centre Street, and took maximum advantage of the site's topography by running Chestnut Avenue—sometimes called Millionaires' Row—along the river-facing edge of the property for nearly its full length.

Calvert Vaux (1824–95), English-born American landscape architect who designed the expanded Riverview Cemetery in the late 1880s. (Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities)

Johnson's map of Riverview Cemetery in 1933. (Courtesy of Riverview Cemetery)

A plot map drawn in 1933 shows the juxtaposition of the Vaux plan with the Smith layout of 1858. The old northern boundary can be discerned as a line running across the bluff marked by a change in the orientation of the plots, parallel to Main Avenue. The Quaker burying ground, or Lambert's burying ground as it was sometimes known,
Riverview Cemetery was not only for the dead; it attracted the living as well. With its original layout of 1858 and enlargement in 1887, Riverview joined the national trend in cemetery design, the so-called "rural" cemetery movement. The name derives not from having a location in the country, but rather the opposite: rural cemeteries were intended to be oases of open space in or near cities.

Public cemeteries in the 19th century were different from traditional churchyards and family cemeteries. Before there were large city parks such as Trenton's Cadwalader Park or Central Park in New York, cemeteries were designed landscapes intended to be used by all, not just the bereaved. Following the example set by Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1831, others soon followed in cities such as Philadelphia (Laurel Hill, 1836), Baltimore (Green Mount, 1838) and Brooklyn (Green-Wood, 1839). All incorporated Romantic or Picturesque design principles, and included such features as gently rolling topography, curving paths, irregularly shaped open spaces, uneven clumps of trees, water courses, and ponds or lakes. Typically a hilly site was selected, and extensive grading and excavating augmented the topography.
Employing these design features to control the scope of the vista, the landscape architect was able to orchestrate a visitor's view, in the manner of the designer of a stage set. Statuary or urns at focal points created by the designer would draw the eye. As a result, the whole—not just individual monuments—would be an example of Vaux's "outdoor art." An impressive gate usually served to separate the cemetery from the world of daily life, and typically the main drive would slope up to slow the visitor's pace, adding to the contrast with the urban surroundings. These cemeteries soon became popular destinations for peaceful strolling and reflection, quiet places where nature could be appreciated even in the midst of the city. They were the inspiration for municipal parks later in the 19th century, as designed urban landscapes with no funerary component.
Riverview Cemetery succeeded in fulfilling Jacob Taylor's vision of attracting Trenton's elite to his dramatic bluff-top site. A comparison of the family names on the larger monuments with the index of any standard history of the city reveals that many civic leaders in fields such as industry, politics, law, and religion are here. The thousands of monuments represent members of familiar Trenton family names: Bowman, Cook, Kuser, Lalor, Moses, Rusling, and Yard.

Military officers and enlisted troops are here as well. In 1862, with the Civil War in full force, a section of the cemetery was set aside for veterans of that war. Uncommon for that time, the Civil War veterans' section has always been racially integrated, and contains graves of both men and women. Close to 1,000 veterans of that conflict are buried at Riverview, mostly in this section of the cemetery.

The early Quaker burial ground in the southwest corner stands out in its simplicity. The monuments here are, in general, not as elaborate as those in the post-1858 sections, and there are also an unknown number of burials having no stone markers at all.

---

No history of Riverview Cemetery would be complete without introducing some of its better-known occupants. Here, in alphabetical order, is a selection.

**Charles Conrad Abbott (1843–1919)**
archaeologist and naturalist

Charles Conrad Abbott, a lifelong Trenton-area resident, was a central figure in the late 19th-century debate that raged over human antiquity in the Americas. Living in a farmhouse on the bluff near Riverview Cemetery, Abbott was an avid naturalist and collector of local Indian artifacts.

Between 1872 and 1912 he published widely, theorizing that the so-called “Trenton gravels” contained archaeological evidence of a human presence in the Americas during the Ice Age. Abbott’s controversial claims fueled a scholarly debate that climaxed in the 1890s, but gradually the weight of archaeological and geological evidence proved him wrong. Although Native American activity in the eastern United States is now generally accepted as beginning roughly 15,000 years ago, Abbott’s artifacts are mostly judged to be no more than 4,000 years old. The numerous archaeological sites around the mouth of Crosswicks Creek that were first studied by Abbott, and subsequently excavated in the 1930s and 1980s, are today designated as the Abbott Farm National Historic Landmark.

**George Antheil (1900–59)**
composer, writer, and inventor

A Trenton native and son of a shoe salesman, George Antheil left for Berlin in 1922. He moved to Paris in 1923 where he mingled with noted writers, composers, and artists. By 1925 he had completed his signature composition, *Ballet Mécanique* featuring 16 player pianos, electric bells, airplane propellers, an alarm clock, and a siren. It was meant to evoke the cacophony of the industrial age, and was influenced by his youth across the street from a noisy Trenton machine shop. His talents extended far beyond this one composition. He returned to America in the 1930s and wrote film scores, operas, a murder mystery, and articles for *Esquire* magazine. He even held a patent based on the technology that controls a player piano.
William Lewis Dayton (1807–64)
lawyer, judge, politician, and ambassador

William L. Dayton was born in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, and graduated from the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) in 1825. He practiced law in Freehold, was appointed to the state Supreme Court, and was chosen to fill a vacancy in the United States Senate where he served from 1842 to 1851.

He is best remembered as the first (and unsuccessful) vice-presidential candidate of the fledgling Republican Party in 1856. He and his running mate John C. Frémont lost the election to Democrats James Buchanan and John C. Breckinridge. Dayton was New Jersey's Attorney General from 1857 until 1861, when he was appointed Minister to France. He died in Paris on December 1, 1864. In 1866 Cross Roads, a village in Middlesex County, was renamed Dayton in his honor.

Frederick W. Donnelly (1866–1935)
merchant and mayor

Frederick W. Donnelly, a native Trentonian, took over his father's downtown clothing store in 1903 and soon began to figure prominently in city politics. He served as Mayor of Trenton from 1911 until 1932, and on his watch the face of the city changed for the better in countless ways.

Early in his administration he established the Trenton Municipal Colony, a hospital facility that catered to those afflicted with contagious diseases. He was a tireless promoter of the city as a commercial center and river port, and he focused his attention in particular on improving the Delaware River waterfront. He was the political force behind both the municipal wharf at Bloomsbury Landing and the marine terminal at Duck Island. He also implemented riverfront beautification projects, most notably the Sixth Ward Park in Lambertson, and had a major hand in the creation of the Trenton War Memorial and Mahlon Stacy Park.

Edmund C. Hill (1855–1936)
baker and Cadwalader Park maker

Edmund Hill graduated from Trenton Academy in 1873, planning to attend Yale University. However, his father's ill health forced him to abandon these plans, and instead he spent much of his early career working in the family restaurant and bakery.

In 1887 as a city councilman and proponent of the idea of a city park, he was made chairman of a council committee appointed to realize this goal. The location selected was Ellarslie, an 80-acre estate with an Italianate villa built in 1848 serving as its centerpiece. The city acquired the property in 1888 and immediately opened it as a park (with Hill as Park Commissioner). Hill then hired Frederick Law Olmsted, designer of Central Park, to create a park plan. The result—Cadwalader Park—Hill's enduring legacy—was completed in 1892.

Walter Scott Lenox (1859–1920)
pottery designer and founder of Lenox China

Born in Trenton, Walter Lenox worked as a decorator and designer for several city potteries. At the age of 22 he was design director for Ott & Brewer before moving on to the Willets Manufacturing Company. Both firms produced Belleek, a type of fine porcelain. In 1889 Lenox cofounded the Ceramic Art Company, a studio (rather than a factory) producing unique art pottery. By 1897 Lenox's work was in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution.

In 1906 Lenox, Inc. was organized, adopting Belleek as its trade name. With fine dining at home becoming popular, Lenox was positioned to capitalize on this expanding market, producing sets of tableware rather than one-of-a-kind pieces. President Wilson reinforced this trend by ordering a set of china for the White House from Lenox in 1918. Lenox died two years later, blind and crippled, but the firm continues to produce high-quality china to this day.
THOMAS MADDOCK (1818-99)
Pioneer of sanitary earthenware and pottery manufacture

Thomas Maddock, son of an English pottery decorator, came to New York City in 1847, and soon achieved fame as a decorator of a set of tableware for Franklin Pierce’s White House in 1853. He moved to Trenton in 1873, where he emerged as one of the icons of the Trenton pottery industry. He pioneered the mass production of sanitary earthenware and also engaged in the manufacture of “hotel china.”

By 1878 he was sole owner of the Carroll Street Pottery, where he oversaw the making of items like bathtubs, toilets, and basins, realizing that the introduction of indoor plumbing was opening up a huge market for sanitary wares. In 1882 he took his four sons into the business as Thomas Maddock & Sons, and by the time of his death in 1899 the Maddock dynasty was operating three separate pottery-making complexes in the city, including the well-known Lamberton Works where vast quantities of transfer-printed ironstone china were made for hotels, restaurants, and institutions all across the country.

GEORGE BRIGHTON McCLELLAN (1826-85)
Civil War general and Governor of New Jersey

A native of Philadelphia, George McClellan entered West Point from the University of Pennsylvania and graduated second in his class in 1846. An outstanding organizer, he served in the Army until 1857, when he resigned as a captain to pursue a career in railroad engineering. When the Civil War came, McClellan was appointed Major General in the Ohio Volunteers in 1861, and then rapidly rose to General in Chief of the U.S. Army. He ran unsuccessfully for President in 1864.

He was elected Governor of New Jersey in 1877 and served until 1881. In 1903 his remains were moved to the focal point of the cemetery and the impressive monument now standing there was erected.

GERSHOM MOTT (1822-84)
Civil War general and Lambertown merchant

Born in Lambertown, Gershom Mott was the grandson of a veteran of the Battle of Trenton and was related to the Scudder family on his mother’s side. After completing his education at Trenton Academy, he worked in a dry goods store in New York City. He joined the Army during the Mexican War (1846-49). Returning to civilian life, he worked for the Port of Lambertown, the Delaware and Raritan Canal, and the Bordentown Bank.

In 1861 he joined the Army again and was commissioned Lieutenant Colonel of the 5th New Jersey Volunteers. He was severely wounded in three separate battles, the last just days before the war ended. By the time he left the Army in 1866 to become paymaster of the Camden & Amboy Railroad he had attained the rank of Major General. In later life he was State Treasurer and keeper of the state prison, and lived nearby on Second Street.

JOHN A. ROEBLING (1806-69)
Engineer, wire rope manufacturer, and bridge designer

Born in Germany, Roebling earned a civil engineering degree in Berlin in 1826. In 1831 he came to the United States, intending to be a farmer, but soon took an engineering job with the Portage Railroad, devising ways to haul canal boats up inclines. In 1840 he hit upon the idea of using ropes made of iron instead of hemp, and the wire rope industry was born.

Working with wire rope, Roebling soon designed and built an aqueduct in 1844 and then several suspension bridges, including spans across the Monongahela River at Pittsburgh (1847) and the Niagara River (1850). In 1848 he moved his business to Trenton, where it grew and flourished into the 20th century as a family-owned concern, eventually expanding to include the factory town of Roebling a few miles south of the city. John A. Roebling is best remembered as the designer of the Brooklyn Bridge, a project begun in 1867. On the job in 1869, as construction was getting underway, his foot was crushed between a boat and a pier. He developed tetanus and died within days.
STANLEY SWITLIK (1890–1981)
parachute manufacturer and industrialist

Stanley Switlik arrived at Ellis Island as a 16-year-old steerage passenger from Poland in 1907. Thirteen years later, after stints as a house painter and real estate sales- man, he purchased the Canvas-Leather Specialty Company, maker of items such as golf bags, pork roll casings, and leather mail bags.

As the age of flight matured in the 1920s and 1930s, the company began manufacturing pilots’ belts and clothing, and experimented with parachutes. In 1934 Switlik and George Palmer Putnam erected a 115-foot-tall tower on Switlik’s farm in Jackson, New Jersey, to train parachutists, the first of its kind in the country. The inaugural jump was made by Putnam’s wife, Amelia Earhart. By the end of the decade the firm, now known as the Switlik Parachute and Equipment Company, was the largest parachute manufacturer in the country, outfitting such aviation pioneers as Wiley Post and Admiral Richard Byrd in addition to Ms. Earhart.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

Places to Visit

- **Riverview Cemetery**, Centre Street, Trenton, New Jersey
- **Trenton’s Other Cemeteries and Graveyards**: numerous other final resting places may be found within the city, ranging from the well-known Mercer and Greenwood Cemeteries and churchyards like those of the First Presbyterian Church and St. Michael’s Episcopal Church to the unheralded, virtually forgotten Locust Hill Cemetery.
- **Trentoniana Local History and Genealogy Collection**, Trenton Public Library, Academy Street, Trenton, New Jersey: the first port of call for more information on Trenton history and genealogy.

Reading Suggestions

- **Trenton Historical Society, A History of Trenton, 1679-1929: Two Hundred and Fifty Years of a Notable Town with Links in Four Centuries**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey [1929].

CREDITS

This booklet series is the product of historical and archaeological investigations undertaken for the New Jersey Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration in mitigation of the effects of the reconstruction of Route 29 in the City of Trenton. The preparation of these booklets and other related research activities were conducted in compliance with Federal and State historic preservation, laws and regulations. For more detailed technical reporting of the topics addressed in these booklets, readers are referred to the five-volume *Archaeological Data Recovery Excavations and Monitoring, New Jersey Route 29, City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey*, available at selected local libraries, the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

This booklet was conceived and authored by Charles Ashton and Richard Hunter of Hunter Research, Inc. Janice Wilson Stridick of Wilson Creative provided design and editorial services.

We gratefully acknowledge: David Zmoda, Nicholas Caianza, Robert Davies and Kathy Diringer of the New Jersey Department of Transportation (project administration); Damon Tsaryanas, Nadine Sergejeff, James Cox, Richard Hunter, Ian Burrow, Patricia Madrigal, William Liebke niecht, Charles Ashton and Rebecca White (research assistance) and Michael Murphy, James Lee, Frank Dunsmore, Douglas Scott and Dawn Turner (graphics assistance) of Hunter Research, Inc.; Lisa Smith (graphic design) of Wilson Creative; Wendy Nardi of the Trentoniana Local History and Genealogy, Trenton Public Library; Sally Lane, Trenton Convention and Visitors Bureau; and Charles Webster of the Trentonian newspaper.

OTHER TITLES IN THE

**History Traced by Route 29**

**Booklet Series**

- **Ancient Ways**: Native Americans in South Trenton, 10,000 B.C. to A.D. 1700
- **A Tale of Two Houses**: The Lambert/Douglas House and the Rosey Hill Mansion, 1700–1850
- **Fish and Ships**: Lambert, the Port of Trenton
- **Power to the City**: The Trenton Water Power
- **Rolling Rails by the River**: Iron and Steel Fabrication in South Trenton