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Bergen County in ^{six} ~~Five~~ Objects

A Special Project by the Genealogical Society of Bergen County, NJ



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**THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF
BERGEN COUNTY, NJ**

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The Genealogical Society of Bergen County, NJ, is an organization of people interested in educating others in family and local history preservation. The various ancestral trails of its Members span much of the US, Canada, Eastern and Western European countries, as well as other parts of the world. Some Members trace back to this country's first settlers, while others are the children of recent immigrants.

Our purpose is to: bring together family researchers for mutual assistance and sharing of research experiences; and to encourage the preservation of family history by the public through educational programs and classes.

Membership in the Genealogical Society of Bergen County is open to all those interested in genealogy. Annual dues are \$20 (Individual); \$25 (Family); and \$10 (Junior, ages 13-18).

The Genealogical Society of Bergen County is a tax-exempt organization as described in sections 501 (c) (3) and 509 (a) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers or gifts to the Society are deductible for federal income, estate, and gift tax purposes as provided by the IRS.

Bergen County in Five Six Objects

Welcome to a special issue of *The Archivist* devoted to a GSBC 2016 Special Project titled “Bergen County in Five Six Objects.” (We originally planned on five for this first installment, but one more popped up and we couldn't refuse it.)

A few years ago, the BBC and the British Museum began a series of radio reports called “A History of the World in 100 Objects” which used objects in the museum's collections to tell a story about what was happening at the time the object was used. I love this series and felt that it is similar to how genealogists often discover history—in that when you research an ancestor, the times and places in which they lived come alive.

Additionally, I've had a lot of discussions lately with friends and fellow genealogists about the popularity of online research, the value of local societies in an increasingly digital world, and those hidden genealogical treasures lurking in attics and on eBay.

Local societies excel at discovering, preserving, and propagating local history—which is part of the founding mission of GSBC. Genealogical and historical societies collect information and artifacts about local families and neighborhoods and preserve them for future generations to discover and enjoy. When you've hit a brick wall with your research, are confused by a place name, or need to find local newspapers, you can reach out to local societies.

So with this project, the GSBC aims to rediscover some local artifacts, connect them to history, and capture new resources that other researchers can benefit from.

So, what makes an object eligible for this project?

- 1) The artifact should be directly related to the history of Bergen County;
- 2) The artifact should be largely unknown, unpublished, or otherwise have been generally overlooked by researchers or in need of revision; and
- 3) The artifact should tell its own story—and inspire the telling of a larger story about Bergen County, its history, and the individuals and families who lived here.

In this issue we present the first six objects in this series. We hope that you enjoy this issue and that it inspires you to bring forward your own nominations of artifacts for inclusion in future installments.

What's next for the “Objects” series?

In response to a call for nominations to this project, GSBC Trustees and members brought forward a wonderful array of ideas—so many in fact that I am planning on continuing to cover additional “Objects” in future issues of *The Archivist*. Some are slated for future publication while others are at the earliest stages of development.

Upcoming “Objects” may include (more details to come after securing agreements from artifact owners):

- Transcription of a Bergen County Spanish-American War soldier's journal
- Bergen County slave manumission records
- Bergen County Native American histories and genealogies
- Bergen County African Methodist Episcopal Churches
- Processing and indexing miscellaneous Bergen County deeds and tax lists
- Indexing an early Bergen County newspaper
- Transcribing Bergen County nineteenth century journals
- Research into miscellaneous Bergen County court documents
- ...and if you know of an artifact that should be included in this series, let us know!

If you would like to assist with any of the objects you've read about in this issue or contribute research, images, or writing for any of the artifacts to come, drop me a line at GSBCArchivist@icloud.com.

—Michelle D. Novak, Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Margaret Kaiser, GSBC President

Dear GSBC Members, friends, and guests,

Fall is always a busy season for the GSBC. Our September program was an interesting and educational presentation from GSBC Trustee Fred Voss called, "More Tales of Ellis Island," and in October Phil Hayes presented "Evernote for Genealogists." Our popular October Lock-In event was attended by an impressive 60 members and guests, many of whom were new to genealogy and potential members. This year, more session talks were added, such as one on DNA, which drew the greatest number of attendees. (These will be covered in detail in the next issue of *The Archivist*.)

The year wraps up with a presentation called "Bergen County in Six Objects"—the culmination of a special project by the GSBC. This project, and the special issue you now hold in your hands, was funded in part by the Bergen County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs, Department of Parks, through a General Operating Support grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State. The GSBC is thankful for this grant which allowed us to document six objects and share them with researchers.

It is also time to extend heartfelt thanks to Nancy Groo and Maria (Ree) Hopper, CG, who are retiring from the GSBC board and who have provided distinguished service for many years. Nancy has been a key force for our library collection as Library Chairperson and also in many other capacities. Ree has been invaluable as a previous GSBC President and our first Certified Genealogist (CG). She steps down to focus on completing her upcoming book about the Hopper family.

To fill these vacancies, our hardworking Nominating Committee, consisting of co-chairs Geri Mola and Barbara Ellman; Steve Gabai; and Fred Voss, present the following slate for the fiscal two-year term (November 2016–October 2018):

- 2nd VP, Library Chair—Lucille Bertram
- 3rd VP, Membership Chair—Mary Beth Craven
- Corresponding Secretary—Nancy Klujber
- Recording Secretary—Lauren Maehrlein (one-year term¹)
- Webmaster—Afina Broekman
- Trustee—Donald Casey²
- Trustee—Geri Mola
- Trustee—Michelle Novak

The election will be held by voice vote at our November General Meeting, which is also our Annual Meeting.

As we approach the busy Holiday season, we would like to remind you that the annual GSBC membership payment is due for all members—make sure to renew promptly, and consider giving a membership as a gift! We recently launched a new web store where you can renew your membership, make a donation (and receive thank-you gifts such as a copy of the Ackerson/Eckerson book in turn), and order tribute cards. If you prefer paper and a checkbook, you will find a membership envelope in this issue of *The Archivist*. The GSBC membership year runs from 1 November 1 to 31 October. Those who paid for the 2016 year in September or October 2016 have their membership extended for 2016–17. We thank you in advance

1 Maehrlein's term is a one-year term as she volunteered to fill the position of Recording Secretary, which was vacated when Craven agreed to be Membership Chair.

2 Subsequent to the 24 October General Meeting announcement for an additional candidate for Trustee, Donald Casey offered to be a candidate.

for your prompt payment so that we may plan an exciting 2017. As always, we are interested in hearing your thoughts and suggestions at meetings or by email at contact@njgsbc.org.

The GSBC's February 2017 speaker will be Bill Griffith, CNBC host, avid genealogist, and author of *The Stranger in My Genes*. This book is a personal account of DNA tests which proved that the man Griffith knew as his father was not actually his biological father. (The book is not technical and is an easy read.) You may want to read this book prior to Griffith's talk at the February meeting. Copies are available through the Bergen County Library loan services, other local libraries, and booksellers (in print and as an e-book).

Genealogists collect names and dates, and many focus on the person's life, sometimes referred to as the dash between the person's birth year and death year as engraved on a gravestone. Griffith thoughtfully writes about his mother, "What gave her pleasure, I wondered? The stories she told about her life usually involved hardships. She was a child of the Depression. Life on the farm involved hard work and lean times, and less than a year after she graduated from high school she was a wife and mother, which brought new responsibilities."

When you spend time with family this holiday season, please pause and consider interviewing relatives (and yourself, too) with the purpose of writing your family story "between the dashes." Too often we focus on the past and forget to document the here and now. Memories fade. People leave our lives. And future generations will spend endless time trying to discover something about you. Leave them a present by telling them about yourself and those you know and love.

Recently, Aarnav Tendulka, a sixth grade student and Boy Scout with Mahwah Troop 50, contacted the GSBC to obtain information about the services, records, and activities that the Society provides. (A genealogy society interview is one suggested requirement necessary to earn the genealogy badge.) He brought with him a family chart that he mainly developed by interviewing his grandfather, who was visiting from India, and his supportive mother provided transportation for the Bolger visit. It was a pleasure to meet this enterprising young lad. The GSBC wishes him success with earning his genealogy badge and with his other endeavors.

Thank you for your continued support. The GSBC extends to you best wishes for a wonderful holiday season and a new year complete with prosperity, good health and, hopefully, genealogical success in your research.

—Margaret

Petition of 107 Bergen County Citizens to the New Jersey General Assembly, 1781



Nominated, researched, and narrative by Michelle D. Novak. Read the full transcript of the letter and names and view other images of the documents and signatures at www.njgsbc.org. Images courtesy of the New Jersey State Archives, Trenton, NJ, and the author.

Many researchers first think of Federal records when researching those in the military or civilians during times of war. What they often overlook are records held by states—records which may provide new insights and resources, as well as some surprises, for family historians.

This artifact—as well as Colonial and Revolutionary War era letters, manuscripts, maps, censuses, tax books, muster rolls, claims of damage, licenses, deeds, wills, quitclaims, and miscellaneous documents—are located in the collection of the New Jersey State Archives (NJSA).

The NJSA holds state military records through WWI. In the 1890s, an order was dispatched to all State Adjutant Generals to inventory the military records in their collections. The quality of these indexes varies from state to state—with New Jersey having a particularly comprehensive collection compiled under the direction of General William S. Stryker. Stryker was renowned for his skill as an archivist, and many of his genealogical indexes and publications may be found online (as tribute, his portrait overlooks the reading room at the NJSA today).

For those conducting colonial-era research this record group is a must-use resource as, by New Jersey law, every free male from 16 to 50, and regardless of race, was automatically enrolled into each county's militia. Those Loyalists who did not support the revolutionary cause often had their properties confiscated or fled to the protection of British-held New York City, causing deep divides in families which lasted generations. Many of these Loyalists would re-settle after the war in what is now Canada. Some New Jerseyans served in their county's militia, while others served in the state troops (generally militia embodied for terms of three, six, nine or twelve consecutive months). The most active joined one of the state's four Continental Army regiments, the original US Army, although

in Bergen County few chose to do so. Many Loyalists chose to join one of the Provincial regiments raised by the British, those from Bergen County entering primarily into the 4th Battalion, New Jersey Volunteers, (for which the NJSA holds some records as well). But, no matter where the New Jersey soldier served for the United States, the records began with an accounting at the County level—for those who served in uniform as well as in civilian capacities.

The Revolutionary War index cards and slips reference materials in the collections of the New Jersey State Archives (such as muster rolls, claims of damage, civil service, Loyalists, desertions, pay and quartermaster rolls, etc.) as well as records held by the National Archives in Washington, DC (such as pension applications).

WHY IS THIS DOCUMENT IMPORTANT?

This manuscript is one of two nearly identically-worded petitions from the residents of Bergen County in the spring of 1781 to the New Jersey General Assembly.

Apart from the contents of these petitions, which detail the hardships suffered by those in Bergen County during the war of interest to genealogists may be the signatures affixed to the documents. Together, the two petitions contain 107 signatures of those living in Bergen County in the spring of 1781.

The petitions contain signatures of fathers and sons, cousins and uncles, and friends and neighbors in Bergen County. Many of the names appear again and again in different

hands—a testament to the traditional naming patterns which saw many first cousins named after the same common relative and a very common problem for those researching early New Jersey, especially Dutch, families. Some individuals and families anglicized their names, whereas Jan became John, but still held to the traditional naming patterns.

But the signatures appear in an order that suggests that they were affixed in family groups or, possibly, collected as the petition organizer traveled the lanes of Hackensack and New Bridge—visiting each homestead in an orderly fashion. It may even be possible to use the order of the names, cross-referenced with deeds, tax ratables, censuses, marriage records, and other Colonial-era documents to reconstruct a map.

Some signatures are bold, steady, and clear. Others are shakier, possibly suggesting the signature of an elder member of the family. A few are in the form of a crudely-made “X” with the adjacent “his mark” and printed name written by another.

From the nature of the documents, it can be assumed that all the signatories were patriots. Those who signed the petition almost certainly witnessed Washington’s retreat through New Bridge at the start of the war in November 1776—240 years ago. They suffered hardships as skirmishes and troops washed

across Bergen County. They watched as families split between patriots and loyalists, the latter retreating to New York City or Canada. They guarded and defended the strategically important bridge across the Hackensack River—an important waterway which linked the interior of Bergen County to New York Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. They may have helped supply the troops with food, shelter, and arms. They almost certainly felt that they were bearing the brunt of the hardships and that their lives, and families, would never be the same.

For genealogists, these two petitions are evidence of those in Bergen County in the spring of 1781, and, with some sleuthing, matching the signatures to known individuals is entirely possible. But unlike censuses and tax ratables, which were written by officials and clerks, these are certainly the marks of those who witnessed history in the making.

WHAT’S NEXT?

See more images of this document, the signatures, and the full transcription of text and names at www.njgsbc.org.

Michelle D. Novak is a brand and web designer (www.mnd.nyc), a graduate of RISD, and a Trustee of the Genealogical Society of New Jersey, the GSBC, and is Editor of the GSBC’s *The Archivist*.

ARTIFACT TITLE **MSS #10381**—Petition of 25 Bergen Co. Citizens to their Representatives in the General Assembly Concerning the Needs for Laws to Punish Loyalists [No date; Same as #10940]
MSS #10949—Petition of 82 Bergen Co. Citizens to their Representatives in the General Assembly Concerning the Needs for Laws to Punish Loyalists, 21 May 1781 [Same as #10381]

REPOSITORY New Jersey State Archives, 225 West State Street, 2nd Floor, Trenton, New Jersey 08625

DATE Manuscript #10949 dated 21 May 1781; Manuscript #10381 does not have a date but is assumed to be from the same time

DESCRIPTION Two letters on rag paper. MSS #10381 is a single sheet, front and back, approximately 7.75” wide 13” high. MSS #10949 is folded into four pages, approximately 8” wide x 13” high, when folded. Petition and signatures in black ink. Most signatures clearly legible. Both letters are identically worded, except for spelling differences, in two different hands. MSS #10318 is contains a rough, possibly phonetic, spelling in an uneven hand. MSS #10949 is written in an elegant, steady hand and contains very few misspellings or slips of the pen.

The Cost of Bergen’s War

By Todd W. Braisted

Taxes, security, shared burden. The words and sentiments could come from almost any election today in the United States. The document presented here, however, dates from the American Revolution, and the locale is Bergen County, New Jersey.

Bergen in 1776 was as diverse politically, culturally, racially, and religiously as it is today. Dutch, Scottish, Danes, French Huguenots, Germans, Poles, English, Irish, Swedes, and a significant African population created a unique blend that often gets lumped together today as simply “Jersey Dutch.” That so many backgrounds produced a view of American independence that was less than unanimous should come as no surprise; what perhaps takes people unawares today (and possibly then as well) was the degree to which so many wished to retain their allegiance to Britain’s King George III.

This was brought home to the residents and leaders of the county when, on November 20th 1776, five-thousand

British, Hessian, and Provincial troops under Lord Cornwallis scaled the towering Palisades above the Hudson River, forcing an immediate and precipitate evacuation of Washington’s Army from its one real outpost in the county, Fort Lee. Aside from three companies serving with the main army in New Jersey’s state troops, however, Bergen’s patriot citizens stayed home or, in the view of their leaders, much worse, joined Cornwallis’ invading army and offered it every service in their power.

Bergen’s civil and military leaders stood down in those darkest days of the Revolution, while watching their previously silent Loyalist neighbors ascend to high military rank

in Britain's Provincial forces. Hundreds of these Loyalists were formed into the 4th Battalion, New Jersey Volunteers, a Provincial unit commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Abraham Van Buskirk of New Bridge, seconded by nearby school master Major Robert Timpany, and the county clerk, Hackensack's Major Daniel Isaac Browne. Soon after formation, the corps would join other battalions of the same regiment on Staten Island, only occasionally stationed at such places as Paulus Hook, Hobuck, and Bergen Point (all in modern Hudson County).

Each side thereafter made forays into the county, the purposes varying but the resulting capture of combatants and civilians alike was commonplace. Throughout 1777 and much of the next year, the county's militia was forced to act on the defensive, serving only in small detachments, often with hired substitutes, men privately hired by those unable or unwilling to serve in the field. It was dangerous work, not simply from the risk of British or Loyalist raids, but from those Loyalists who had stayed behind at their residences, typically those too old or infirm for service in the field, or whose station in life was above that of a common soldier. More than once did a militia orderly sergeant on his errand of warning men for duty find himself ducking from the occasional potshot fired his way by an irate Loyalist neighbor.

By 1779, the situation was starting to change. Continental troops, those of Washington's standing army, were more and more often stationed in the county, garrisoning such areas as Ramapo, Paramus, and even Little Ferry. The presence of regular soldiers, long absent from the county, strengthened the resolve of the militia and the authority of the local government.

The document presented here represents this period of time, the middle of the conflict, where patriot authorities finally felt themselves in a position to proceed against the hundreds of Loyalists still in their midst, those who were primarily the family members of those who had gone off and joined the British in 1776 and subsequent years. The state, starting in 1776, had provided remedies for the government to punish Loyalists; the trick in Bergen County was being in a position to use them.

At its heart, the request made by these twenty-five Bergen County leaders, militia officers, politicians, and others, was to compel Loyalists to either serve in the militia or face confiscation of their private property. The state had indeed already passed a confiscation law, provided the Loyalist so charged was convicted after receiving due process. This new request seems not take that sort of legal nicety into account. The county, for all intents and purposes, was giving an ultimatum to everyone within its borders: you are either with us, or against us. By the end of the war, the state had decided 134 properties in Bergen County were subject to lawful confiscation and were subsequently auctioned off to help support the war effort. This number was more than any other county, although Bergen's population was hardly the largest

in the state. Amongst the properties included was that of John Zabriskie, which is the modern home of the Bergen County Historical Society at Historic New Bridge Landing in River Edge. The names on the petition are a poignant reminder of the civil war nature of the conflict, with every family but Goetschius and Auryansen being represented on both sides of the conflict.

The second part of the request on the petition addressed two problems facing the state and county: a lack of provisions for its own soldiers and a prevailing black market economy with the British in New York. Known at the time as "London Trading" it involved residents, even those otherwise active in the patriot cause, to secretly sell or trade eggs, produce, meat, and other local goods with the British in exchange for hard currency (as opposed to highly inflated paper money) or hard to find imported items such as fabrics, tea, coffee, etc. Residents were taxed based upon their property, and that included how many cattle they owned. Hiding cattle from tax assessors not only diminished their taxable property, but it hid from view commodities that were planned for trading with the British. With these things in mind, the proposal for confiscating hidden assets, as it were, no doubt seemed a proper solution to hard-pressed government officials. That the need to provide for the local soldiers was real, whether serving in the militia or state troops, as expressed by Captain Thomas Blanch when he wrote from Closter to George Washington on August 24th 1780: "I am at present much Necessitated for provisions – knows not Where to apply." The peril of confiscating goods from the residents, or over-taxing them, was that it played into British propaganda that the residents lived under a new sort of tyranny that attacked prosperity and commerce. Indeed, on April 17th of the same year, the British published in one of the New York City newspapers a document captured a month before in a raid on Hackensack, which they entitled "List come in of the Inhabitants of Harrington Township, in Bergen County, with their various MONTHLY Assessments, under the Tyranny of the New-Jersey usurpers...for the Purpose of squeezing their Substances out of them." It then went on to list the residents and their taxes, which included Weirt Banta, Thomas Campbell, and Petrus Bogart, three of the signers of the petition.

The war that created the United States would officially end in September 1783, but the rifts between former neighbors, friends, and family members would take some time to mend. Some never did. For the residents of Bergen County during the eight years of the American Revolution it was truly, as Thomas Paine so aptly put it, "the times that try men's souls."

Todd W. Braisted is a historian, author, and past president of the Bergen County Historical Society. His most recent books are *Grand Forage 1778: The Battleground Around New York City* (Westholme Publishing: 2016) and *Bergen County Voices from the American Revolution: Soldiers and Residents in Their Own Words* (The History Press: 2012).

Paterson Workmen's Benefit Association Cemetery, Elmwood Park, NJ

Nominated by Geri Mola; researched by Barbara Ellman and Margaret Kaiser; narrative and images by Barbara Ellman

The cemetery of the Paterson Workmen's Benefit Association located in Elmwood Park was the burial site for members of the Workmen's Circle #13 of Paterson, NJ.

The Workmen's Circle or *Der Arbeter Ring* was formed in the 1890s by Yiddish-speaking Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. The Workmen's Circle at first acted as a mutual aid society, helping its members to adapt to their new life in America. It provided health care, unemployment relief, burial assistance, and general education. Soon, the organization was joined by more politically focused socialist Bundists who advocated the anti-assimilationist idea of Yiddish cultural self-sufficiency, led by education in Yiddish and socialist ideals. It became influential in the American labor movement and grew to serve more than 84,000 members through hundreds of branches around North America. It also became involved with the Yiddish-language theater; *The Forward* newspaper; and operated old-age homes, medical clinics, and other services. Politically, the Workmen's Circle moved away from socialism towards liberalism by the time of the New Deal.

Some of the headstones contain the image of the *Der Arbeter Ring* logo. Another has an image of a raised arm with the saying "*Tsum Arbeter Klas Balangt Di Velt*" (To the working class belongs the world).

Burials in this cemetery range from an early date of 1897 to one burial in 2016. There are in excess of 600 burials that have been documented by the effort of this project. As members of the society have dwindled, the cemetery's management has been turned over to the Cemetery Association of Jewish Federation of North Jersey.

Among the gravestones of the 1920s and 30s are a number of grave markers shaped as a chopped tree which symbolized a life cut short by death. Once the symbolism resonated, but while the stones still impress cemetery visitors, their meaning has largely been forgotten.

When visiting the older section of the cemetery, it is sad to see a number of

broken or unreadable limestone grave markers. The mild acid in rainwater can slowly dissolve limestone over time, which can make inscriptions unreadable and eventually it can obliterate the stone entirely. Based on the density of burials in the sections from the 1930s, one must wonder at the many apparently empty areas where it is likely that headstones had previously existed.

WHY IS THIS CEMETERY IMPORTANT?

The Jewish genealogical community has been making a great effort in documenting cemeteries around the world. This cemetery while existing on a list of Jewish cemeteries in the Metro New York area has not appeared in any documentation of burials. As in most interactions with cemetery management, the information is closely held and not shared with those seeking the information. Cemetery documentation projects such as this one are the means of making the family information available.



Detail from two headstones showing *Der Arbeter Ring* logo (left) and the raised arm with inscription "*Tsum Arbeter Klas Balangt Di Velt*" (To the working class belongs the world).

WHAT'S NEXT?

All existing grave markers have been photographed and the process of indexing and translating the information on the grave markers is nearing completion. The index is being compiled by Barbara Ellman with translation by GSBC Trustees, Barbara Ellman and Lea Schwarzwald. Once completed, a copy of the information will be available at the Bolger Center. In addition, the index and photographs will be posted to the JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Register www.jewishgen.org/databases/Cemetery/. Look for future announcements once the online index is live!



A heavily-damaged stone in the old part of the cemetery.

Barbara Ellman is a genealogist specializing in Jewish and New York research. She has served in a number of capacities on the GSBC Board and is

currently the GSBC's Program Chair. Currently, she is the JewishGen KehilaLinks Technical Coordinator, a member of many other Societies, as well as a frequent contributor to *The Archivist*.

Margaret Kaiser is President of GSBC and a Northvale resident. She received the *Silberne Medaille des Landes Burgenland* (Silver Medal of the State of Burgenland) from the Governor of the State of Burgenland, Austria, for her contributions to Burgenland research through her work with the Burgenland Bunch genealogy group. Kaiser is a long-time consultant at the Family History Center in Emerson, NJ, and a member of numerous genealogical societies.

Gerri Mola is a GSBC Trustee and past President, and serves as the Elmwood Park Historian. She is involved with numerous historical and genealogical organizations and was Chairperson for the Bergen 350 Gala in 2014, which celebrated Bergen County's 350 anniversary and raised funds for a Bergen County museum to be built on the grounds of the Bergen County Historical Society.

ARTIFACT TITLE	Paterson Workmen's Benefit Association Cemetery, Elmwood Park, NJ. There are three plaques mounted to the cemetery fence: "Owned by the Cemetery Association of Jewish Federation of New Jersey;" "Paterson Benefits Workmen's Association;" "Board of Directors of 1926."
LOCATION	Chobot Lane, Elmwood Park, NJ 07407
DATE	Interments span from 1867 to 2016
DESCRIPTION	More than 600 headstones arranged in rows over approximately 1.4 acres

Do They "Rest in Peace"?

By Peggy W. Norris

Cemeteries are places for the living as well as the dead. Cemeteries are filled with art that reflects our ancestors' times and their attitudes toward death (and life). They are quiet places of reflection about the lives and contributions of our families through time and where we humble ourselves before history and our foremothers and forefathers. Large cemeteries like Valleau in Ridgewood and George Washington in Paramus and churchyard cemeteries like that of the English Neighborhood Reformed Church in Ridgefield are well cared for and records are accessible in their offices.

However, in Bergen County we have many small cemeteries, whose families have moved away and churches have closed and for whom no one is responsible. The fact is these ancestors deserve our respect and we're all responsible for making sure their resting places are peaceful and protected. Many are on private property; some are now owned by the towns. These "caretakers" have varying philosophies of care, from active maintenance, to benign neglect, to efforts to hide or diminish the cemetery by intentionally burying markers and encroaching on the bounds of the burying ground. New Jersey's state laws do little to protect them.

Preservation of these cemeteries can take many forms. They need to be identified. We have a wonderful inventory

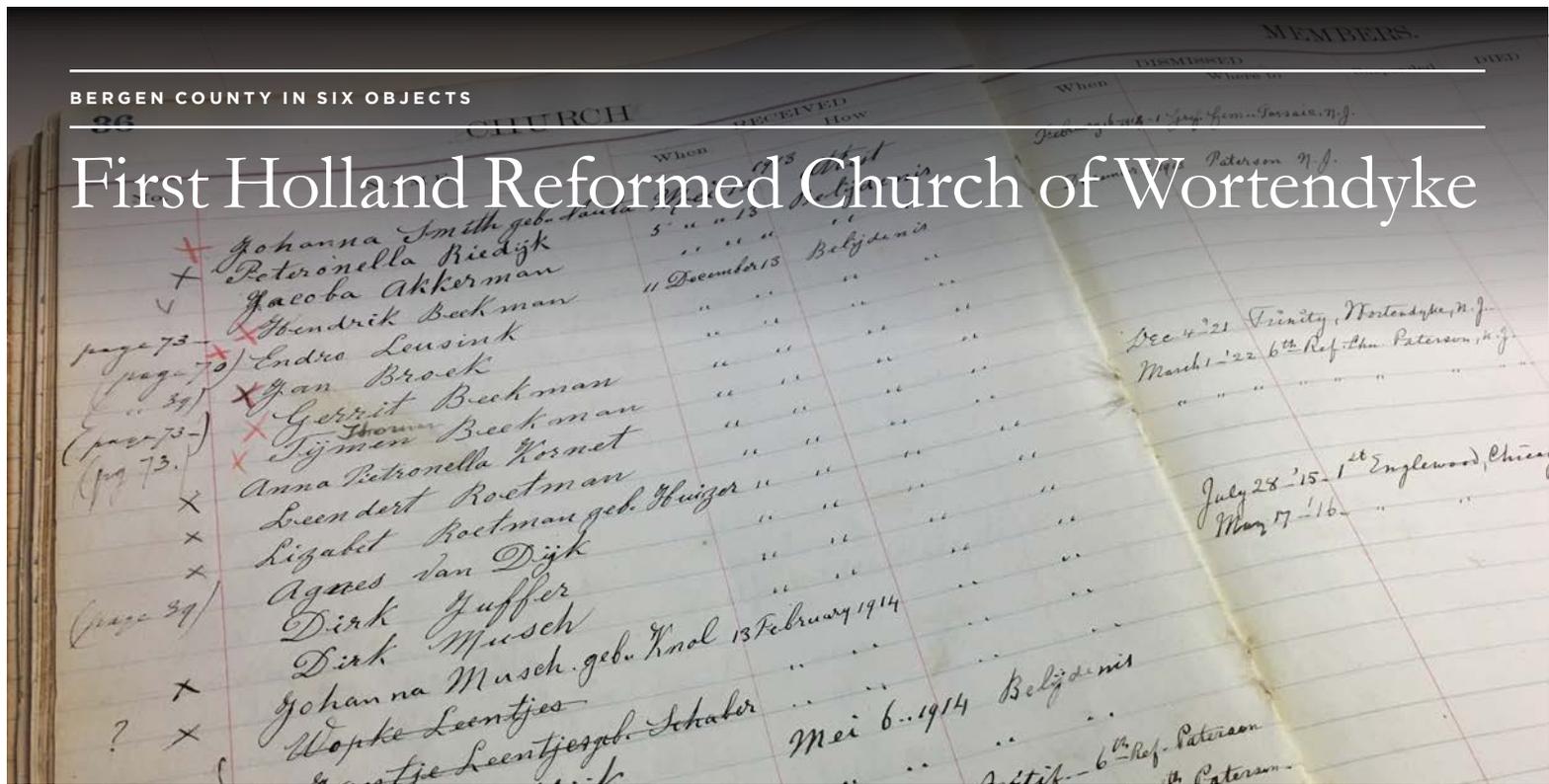
of cemeteries in Bergen County called "Bergen County Historic Sites Survey: cemetery inventory," which is available at many of our public libraries. This is an accounting of all the known cemeteries, churchyard burial grounds, family and private plots, mausoleums, and individual graves in the county. However, it is a guide and many of the burial places are waiting to be further explored and described.

In order to raise awareness we need to share cemeteries with the public however we can. Most people do not think about cemeteries, but when they are introduced to the markers and the people buried under them, they begin to care. We need to make sure that information about the monuments is available to historians and genealogists. These efforts have taken place for the last 100 years, but there is still work to be done and ways of making it accessible to as many people as possible.

Find a local cemetery in your town, learn about it, and take an interest in its preservation. You'll find it interesting and you'll be contributing to our community history.

Peggy W. Norris is the former Local History Librarian at the Bolger Heritage Center at the Ridgewood Public Library. She is a trustee of the Bergen County Historical Society, an historian, and author, and is active in Bergen County preservation issues.

First Holland Reformed Church of Wortendyke



Nominated by Carol DeWitte and Maria Hopper, CG; transcribed by Afina Broekman and Carol DeWitte; narrative by Michelle Novak

Many are aware that Bergen County has Dutch roots. But while many early immigrant families of Bergen were Dutch and French Huguenot (French Protestants who took refuge in the Netherlands), they also included English, Scotch-Irish, German, Scandinavian, and Polish, among others. Bergen County was, and is, a community of immigrants.

The membership books for the First Holland Reformed Church of Wortendyke, Midland Park, NJ, (now Faith Reformed Church) were an early inspiration for this series. Records such as these have deep genealogical value but, unfortunately, many end up in the trash, on eBay, or languish in storerooms or basements until they are damaged or illegible.

These books were uncovered by Church member, and long-time GSBC member and former Trustee, Carol DeWitte. In them she recognized information beyond just names and dates and details that may hold the key for some researchers. We thank Pastor Scott Nichols and the congregation of Faith Reformed Church for allowing the GSBC to document these records and preserve the information they hold for researchers.

WHY ARE THESE BOOKS IMPORTANT?

The story of the First Holland Reformed Church of Wortendyke is the story of immigrants who came from a specific place (the Netherlands), to a specific place (New Jersey), for a specific purpose (cotton and silk mill work).

Immigration from the Netherlands to the US, from the mid-1800s to WWI, is generally broken into three “waves.” Beginning in about 1835, the first wave of immigrants, called the “Flakkeers” and from the Goeree-Overflakkee in South Holland, found unskilled work in the cotton and silk mills in Paterson.¹ (According to author James de Waal Malefyt, who provided the details used in this narrative, many in this

first wave were so poor that they walked from Hoboken, where their ship docked, to Paterson.) After the Civil War, the second wave of Dutch immigrants, comprised of those primarily from the Gelderland Province of the central Netherlands, arrived and settled about six miles north of Paterson, in and around what is now Midland Park. The third wave of Dutch immigrants, which hit a peak in the 1890s, hailed from the Friesland region of the northern Netherlands. This wave also served as laborers and weavers in the mills of Paterson.

All three waves of immigrants left their homeland for the same reason—opportunity. In the 1800s, the Netherlands saw a spike in birth rates and economic opportunity dwindled with the rising population.

Upon arriving in the US, many immigrants, as immigrants still do today, joined families they knew from their homeland and drew strength from their ethnically-homogeneous enclaves. Dutch neighborhoods sprung up in and around Paterson in Passaic County and in Franklin Township, Ho-Ho-Kus, Midland Park, Orvil Township, and Wortendyke in Bergen County. (These locations are before the 1894 “Boroughitis” and today include a large portion of Bergen County.)

Immigrants spoke their native tongue in church, at school, and at home—and probably marveled at the odd “Jersey Dutch” spoken by the local New Jersey “Hollanders.”

They often settled in Dutch enclaves, comprised of a few families each, married within their community, and saw generations of their family raised within a few miles of where they first settled. By 1920, more than 90 percent of all Dutch

¹ Robert Swierenga, *Faith and Family: Dutch Immigration and Settlement in the United States, 1820–1920*

immigrants to the US had settled in New Jersey in Passaic, Bergen, or Hudson Counties.² According to Malefy, “the 1900 federal census of the new borough of Midland Park listed 302 heads of household, of which 38 percent (115) were immigrants born in Holland. Several families came in 1873, but over one-half of Midland Park’s Dutch immigrants (55 percent) came in the decades of the 1880s.”



The First Holland Reformed Church of Wortendyke

The founders of the First Church of Wortendyke primarily came from the second wave of Dutch immigrants, the Gelderlanders. According to the church history written (in Dutch) in membership book one, “After almost 4 years meeting every 14 days in the evening during the week, with services being held under the leadership of Rev. Huijssoon, Karse and van Leeuwen, and at the request of the Hollanders, who had in that time greatly increased in numbers...if an opportunity could be found to also hear regularly on Sunday the word of life.” After nearly four years of services held every two weeks, the congregation was growing and yearned for a more permanent status. A request to merge the congregation with another in Paterson went unanswered and the congregation applied to the Classis of Paramus.

The church was formed under the Classis of Paramus on 25 September 1872, and it held its first services at the Ho-Ho-Kus public school. Shortly after, a splinter faction formed a rival church in Spikertown (between modern-day Wyckoff and Ho-Ho-Kus) which caused deep divisions in the congregation. It then noted, “From the 15th February 1873, when Rev. L.G. Jongeneel left us, the consistory has until now made no effort to put out a new call, mainly because the times are unfavorable and there is a shortage of money and work in all America and we seem to be getting a hard winter and no earnings.”³

But after a inauspicious start, the congregation of First Church of Wortendyke took root. The congregation accepted new members into the church and transferred others out, many to nearby Paterson congregations, and in the early 1880s, the congregation built its first sanctuary. (The current building, the original structure enveloped in another, serves as the Bergen County Northwest Senior Activity Center in Midland Park.)

Members, marriages, births, and deaths fill hundreds of pages of entries in the church books. And, under the “Received

2 Gerald F. de Jong, historian and author. Many of the statistics in this article come from James J. de Waal Malefy’s *Christian Reformed Dutch Immigrants of Northern New Jersey* (2002), a copy of which is available at the Bolger Heritage Center at the Ridgewood Public Library. In addition to a narrative of Dutch Immigration, the book also contains hundreds of family worksheets of those of Dutch origin in NJ.

3 There is no date for this entry, but possibly written during the financial panic of 1873.

from” column, many entries contain the specific place of origin, down to the province and village in the Netherlands.

This is especially important to researchers as the 1885 and 1895 New Jersey State censuses did not ask for place of origin for Dutch immigrants (only those from Germany or Ireland*) and the 1890 Federal census was mostly lost to fire. State vital records may have asked for place of origin,* but it is possible that someone living in this time span will not show up on any official records. Place names on death records are provided by family or friends, who may not

know exactly where the person came from or be misinformed.

Records like these from the First Church of Wortendyke help researchers fill the gaps. Thanks to the church and the efforts of our volunteers, this information has been captured and preserved for future generations of researchers.

WHAT’S NEXT?

The GSBC photographed one of the original books and in the research process discovered a microfilm copy of both books at the Joint Archives of Holland, in Holland, MI. This microfilm was created in the 1970s and another copy has not yet been found. The GSBC was able to borrow the film from the archives and The Crowley Company generously donated the scanning.

Carol DeWitte transcribed Book 1 and GSBC Indexing Chair, Afina Broekman, translated the Dutch passages and proofed the transcription. The resulting name index will be posted on the GSBC website, and a copy of all materials will be placed at the Bolger Heritage Center. (The church requested that we not publish information on more recent members online, which we will respect.)

We delivered a copy of all photos and scans to the Archives of the Reformed Church in America, New Brunswick, NJ, and to the Joint Archives of Holland in Holland, MI.

Faith Reformed Church will receive a copy of all images and scans as well as printouts of all photos, scans, and transcripts—which the church office can use in place of the fragile books.

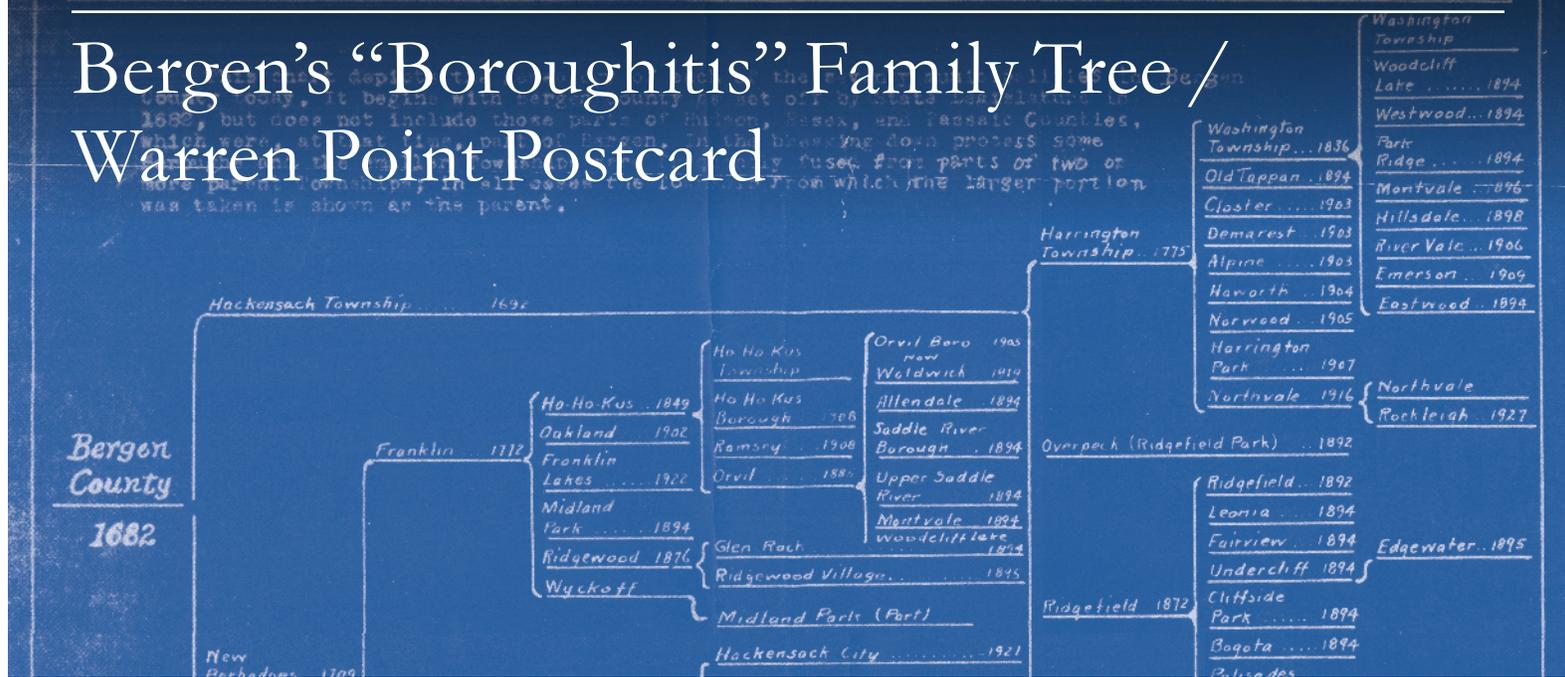
Carol DeWitte is a former GSBC Trustee, member of the Faith Reformed Church, and long-time member of the GSBC.

Maria “Ree” Jean Pratt Hopper, CG, is a professional genealogist, a GSBC Trustee and past President, and the GSBC’s current Trustee Emeritus. She is currently writing a book, *The Hopper Family Genealogy, Descendants of Andries Willemszen Hoppe(n) of New Amsterdam 1651–1658*.

* See this article on www.njgsbc.org for what was, and wasn’t, recorded in various New Jersey State census and vital records of the time. The 1885 and 1895 state censuses were primarily concerned with recording those who came from Germany or Ireland, and other nationalities went, mostly, unrecorded.

ARTIFACT TITLE	Membership Book of the First Holland Reformed Church of Wortendyke, Midland Park, NJ
LOCATION	Faith Reformed Church, 95 Prospect St, Midland Park, NJ 07432 (current congregation). The original church was located at 52 Center Street, Midland Park, NJ. The structure is now the Bergen County Northwest Senior Activity Center.
DATE	Book: 1872–1952. Film: W13-1382.10. New Jersey, Midland Park. First Holland Reformed Church. Microfilm, 1873–1952.
DESCRIPTION	Original membership books of the First Holland Reformed Church of Wortendyke.

Bergen's "Boroughitis" Family Tree / Warren Point Postcard



Nominated by Michelle Novak; researched by Afna Broekman and Michelle Novak; narrative by Michelle Novak

Greetings from Warren Point! From Coytesville! From Orvil Township! From Spikertown! From Peetzville! From Delford! Do you know where these places are? If you don't, you're not alone.

The evolution of place names in Bergen County is a long and complicated one, and the subject of about half a dozen books on the topic, but understanding the evolution is of utmost importance to those researching here. For many researchers (me included), you may have a family in a specific place that you need to trace back through censuses, tax records, and land records. But as soon as you hit one of these place name breakpoints, you will discover that where you thought they resided is an entirely new name. They didn't move—the town and county borders did.

Tracing the history of place names can be divided into two broad categories: 1) officially incorporated municipalities, and 2) unincorporated or colloquially named neighborhoods and districts. The first has long been a field of intrigue to researchers, with many excellent publications that break down the complex history into something more useful to researchers. But the second, unincorporated or informal neighborhood names, is wide-open for additional discovery. So in the interest of finding where your ancestors *really* lived—let's dive in.

BERGEN'S MUNICIPALITIES AND BERGEN "BOROUGHITIS"

The first of two documents chosen to represent this subject is in New York Genealogical & Biographical Society's collection now at the New York Public Library (NYGB Local Files Collection, Box 3). It is a blueprint, made in 1937, which attempts to diagram the municipal divisions, called "Bergen Boroughitis," that culminated in the modern map of the County.

Today, Bergen County consists of 70 incorporated municipalities—a huge number of boroughs, towns, villages, and cities for a county of Bergen's size. But between settlement and the modern map is a confusing set of twists and turns.

After the fall of New Netherland in 1664, New Jersey was divided along a diagonal into East and West Jersey. In 1675, the East Jersey legislature created judicial districts across the state. In 1683, four official counties, Bergen, Essex, Middlesex, and Monmouth, were formed—their borders each encompassing a much larger area than today. The original boundaries of Bergen County consisted of modern-day Bergen, Hudson,

and Passaic Counties as well as a small portion of Essex County (when Passaic was formed it took a piece of Essex also). On its northern border, Bergen County included a slice of Rockland County, NY, as far north as the area around Haverstraw! (The "Tripartite Deed" of 1719 set the boundary between New Jersey and the Colony of New York along this line. New Jersey lost this territory in 1769 when commissioners appointed by the Crown set the modern boundary where it is today. But disputes continued into the 1800s and those researching early records may find them on *both* sides of the New Jersey–New York border!)

In 1693 there were only two municipalities in Bergen County—Bergen and Hackensack Townships, which were both east of the Hackensack River. New Barbadoes Township (west of the Hackensack River) was added from Essex County in 1710. Continuing settlement and disputes over land rights slowly shaped Bergen County into nine, then dozens, and, finally 70 incorporated municipalities.

At the time of the American Revolution the five official municipalities were Hackensack, New Barbadoes, Bergen, Harrington, and Saddle River Townships. The pace of settlement and formation of municipalities continued at a rather leisurely pace throughout the early 1800s. In order to keep representation in state government balanced, Passaic County was formed from parts of Bergen County in 1837, and Hudson County was formed in 1840.

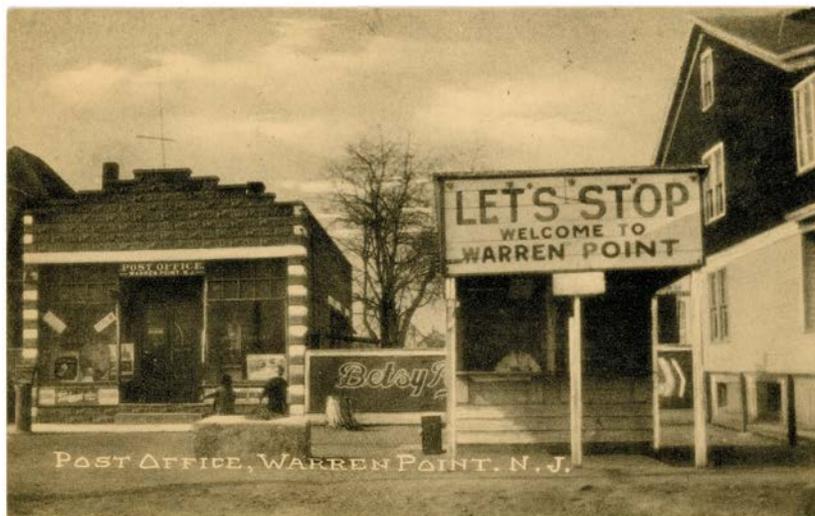
By the late 1800s the US experienced huge social upheaval—especially felt by those states with port cities. The Civil War, waves of new immigrant groups, financial panic of 1873, rise of steam-powered industry and railroads, and US population growth was a shock to many. It's not unfair to say that those who lived through these times saw more change in 30 years than their ancestors had in the 150 years prior. In the mid-19th century the “commuter class,” who traveled the rail lines daily to higher-paying jobs in the cities, further changed the landscape in Bergen County—beginning the suburbanization that eventually all but erased our rural past.

In the 1890s, a number of acts of the New Jersey legislature set in motion Bergen's “Boroughitis.” As past GSBC President and author, Arnold Lang, wrote in his series for *The Archivist*: “Early in 1894, the New Jersey legislature passed a school act which wiped out the former subsidiary school districts and made each township a separate school district. Taxpayers were obliged to pay, pro rata, existing debts of the old districts in addition to all future debts of the township for school purposes. Exempted from this provision were ‘boroughs, towns, villages, and cities.’

A rush was then made to form boroughs, and 26 boroughs were carved from those early townships between January 23 and December 18, 1894. The rush to form boroughs was slowed down (but not stopped) when the legislature quickly passed an amendment to the school act that stated that no borough could maintain a school separate from the township unless there were 400 children within its limits.

Before 1893, a number of laws had been passed by the New Jersey Legislature which enabled boroughs to be formed. The first was in 1878 when the Legislature provided for formation of a borough in a township or part of a township, not to exceed four square miles and a population of 5,000... Subsequently, in 1891, an act was passed providing for formation of villages whose population was greater than 300 people per square mile...”

Lang continued, “Then, in 1893, an act was passed which



brought about the sometimes bizarre borough boundaries that were eventually formed. That act provided that a borough could only have a chosen freeholder if the borough contained a portion of two or more townships. As a result, most of the boroughs that were formed contained small parts of different townships within their boundaries.

The break up of the townships continued after 1894. In addition to the school issue, discontent increased as regions with factories saw their heavy tax assessments being used to support large townships. These split-ups of the townships continued until 1924, when the number of municipalities reached 70. (However, municipal name changes and a few boundary changes still occurred through 1955.)”

BERGEN'S NEIGHBORHOODS

In addition to the ever-shifting official municipal boundaries an even greater number of colloquial names for places, intersections, and neighborhoods were, and are, in use. Some of these, such as the Wortendyke section of Midland Park or Campgaw in Mahwah, are preserved in historic buildings and facilities. Others, including the Coytesville section of Fort Lee, where movie-making was born, are familiar to some but unknown to our children and grandchildren. And others, such as Warren Point and Page's Corner have been all but forgotten. But these place names are important to researchers in many ways.

Some names can give clues to their former use or long-erased landmarks. According to the late Kevin Wright, historian and author, the common name for the place by the new mill where you could easily cross, or ford, the Hackensack River was called the new-mill-ford, which became “New Milford.”

Other names give clues to those who lived there before or were heroes of the era. These names show up again and again on early maps, congregational records, in diaries and journals, and even (but rarely) on official records. These names not only help researchers define areas within Bergen County's large early towns, but help us connect people with specific places—sometimes within a specific time period.

Our Warren Point postcard is testament to this. Warren Point was, an early part of what would become Fair Lawn in 1924. GSBC member, Patricia Wardell, writes in her publication, *A Dictionary of Place Names in Bergen County, New Jersey and Vicinity*: “The Warren Point Post Office (sometimes written as Warrenpoint Post Office) was established 26 February 1894 with Johan C. Muller as the first Postmaster...” and “...was discontinued 31 December 1941 and on 1 January 1942 it

became a Station of the Fair Lawn Post Office.” Also, Wardell adds that the Warren Point Post Office is noted on the 1900 Federal Census for Midland Township and shown on trolley maps of 1909.

According to the book, *Fair Lawn 50th Anniversary, 1924–1974: Fair Lawn, New Jersey, County of Bergen County*. (Fair Lawn, N.J. : Kimball Press, 1974.) “Warren Point was developed before most of the rest of Fair Lawn, and used to include parts of Elmwood Park. It had its own Fire Dept. in 1912. In 1924, when Fair Lawn became a borough, it was not densely populated, but did have a Church (St. Anne’s, started in 1909 with a chapel on what is now 13th Street, Elmwood Park¹), a Post Office, a stop on the Hudson River Trolley, running on Broadway between Paterson and Hackensack, and a stop on the Bergen County Rail Line, which was built for one wealthy commuter (unfortunately the *Fair Lawn 30th Anniversary* book does not tell who this commuter was). Circa 1924 an eight-room schoolhouse was built at 30th Street, replacing an earlier frame structure. *The Clarion*, an early local paper, was published by Clinton Kimball in Warren Point.”

So, far more than just a post office, this early neighborhood had its own church, fire department, trolley and train stop, newspaper, and school. Would you have known to check *The Clarion* for information about your family? (I wouldn’t.)

WHAT’S NEXT?

This article is the continuation of work into this subject by the GSBC, its members, and interested researchers.

(In this, we pause and reflect the recent loss of former Bergen County Historical Society President and author, Kevin Wright, who was an expert on early Bergen County land records and Bergen’s Boroughitis. When I spoke to him about this issue this summer, he had hoped to have been able to contribute to this article. He will be deeply missed.)

The original article for GSBC on this subject was written by Arnold Lang with the first installment published by the GSBC in Vol. 27, No. 1, February 2000 issue of *The Archivist*. This article included a diagram of the “Bergen Family Tree.”

Revisions and corrections to this article were submitted by Bob Holstrum in 2013. These changes are reflected in a new typesetting of this article which will be posted to the GSBC’s

¹ According to other histories, St. Anne was in East Paterson, now called Elmwood Park, when Fair Lawn became a borough in 1924—a great illustration on how complicated this subject can be. <http://www.angelfire.com/alt2/kevinjlong/history.htm>

website in early 2017.

In 2016, the GSBC set about revisiting and revising the original article, making additional corrections and additions to this very complex narrative and preparing a new, more detailed version of the “Bergen Family Tree.” This will be published online and will include a downloadable handout of the tree. (Additions and corrections will be made as needed to the online version only.)

Indispensable publications on this topic, many available online or at the Bolger Heritage Center, include:

- Alan J. Karcher, *New Jersey’s Multiple Municipal Madness* (New Brunswick: 1998)
- Donald A. Sinclair, *A Guide to the Literature of New Jersey Place Names* (New Brunswick: 1996)
- Joseph R. Klett, *The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey*, “Understanding New Jersey’s Geography in the Proprietary Period” (Trenton : 2014), www.njgenealogy.com
- John F. Snyder, *The Story of New Jersey’s Civil Boundaries 1606–1968*, published by the State of New Jersey (Trenton : 1968). A copy of this book is available at the Bolger Heritage Center or download a free PDF scan of the publication, made available by the State of New Jersey, at www.state.nj.us/dep/njgs/enviroed/oldpubs/bulletin67.pdf
- Patricia A. Wardell, *A Dictionary of Place Names in Bergen County, New Jersey and Vicinity*. To download a copy, see www.dutchdoorgenealogy.com.
- Kevin Wright, *Punkin Duster Finds the Woodchuck Borough, A Centennial Review of Bergen County Borough Fever 1894-95*, www.bergencountyhistory.org/Pages/part1.html

Future investigation into this subject will endeavor to re-inventory all municipal names and new colloquial place names.

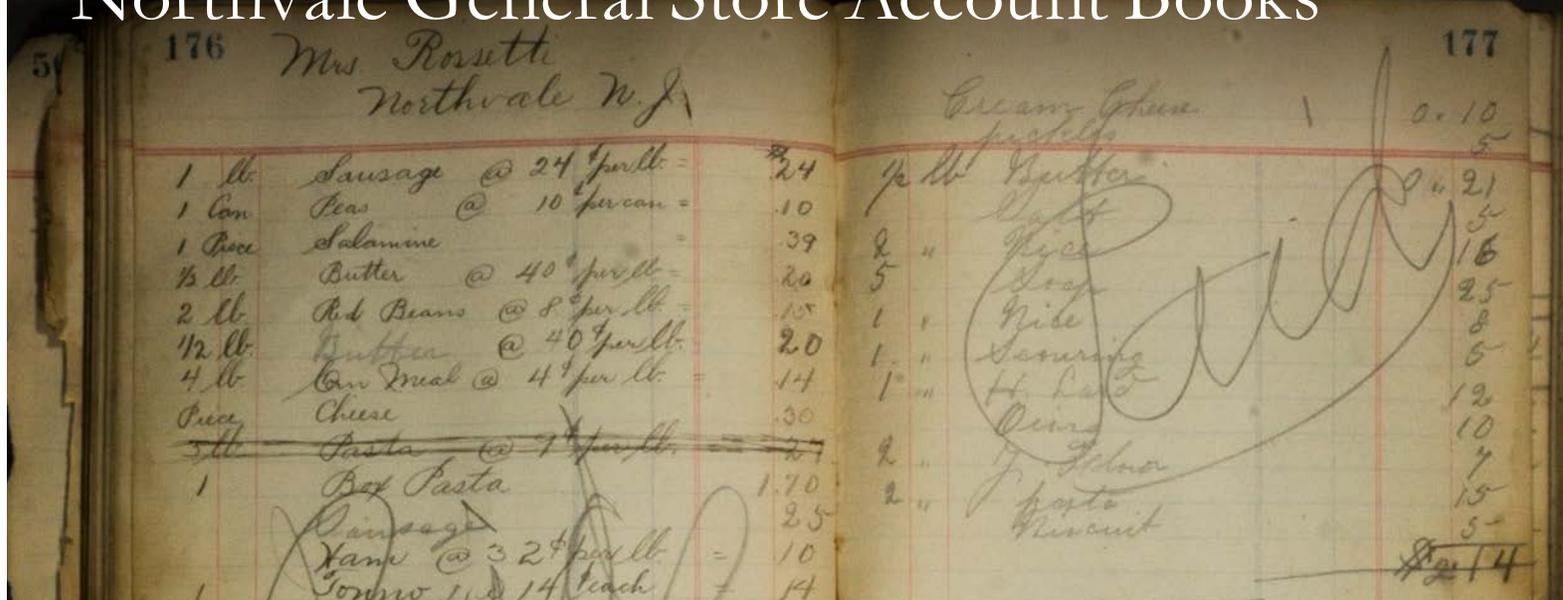
If you know of a place name that is not listed in our tree or on Wardell’s *A Dictionary of Place Names in Bergen County, New Jersey and Vicinity*, please let us know! We’ll be adding place names and revising our map frequently with the goal to make a one-stop list of all Bergen County municipal and place names on our website, www.njgsbc.org.

Afina Broekman is a genealogist, a GSBC Trustee, Webmaster, and Indexing Chair. A native of the Netherlands, she is a resident of Fair Lawn.

Michelle D. Novak is a brand and web designer (www.mnd.nyc), a graduate of RISD, and a Trustee of the Genealogical Society of New Jersey, the GSBC, and is Editor of the GSBC’s *The Archivist*.

ARTIFACT TITLE	“Bergen’s Family Tree Reveals Ravages Of ‘Boroughitis’ in the 1890’s”	“Post Office, Warren Point. N.J.”
LOCATION	New York Genealogical and Biographical Society collection, New York Public Library, Milstein Division for Local History and Genealogy, Manhattan, NY	Postcard in the collection of the Michelle D. Novak, Manhattan, NY
DATE	Thos V. Cameron and Edward Lohman, 1939	No date, but most likely published during years company was active, 1905–1933
DESCRIPTION	Hand-drawn diagram reproduced via diazo blueprint, 12.5” wide x 11.5” high, folded. Reproduction made from a colorized gray-scale scan of the original.	Commercially-printed postcard, tinted halftone artwork, 5.5” wide x 3.5” high. Verso, “Pub. by Photo & Art Postal; Card Co., New York, N.Y.

Northvale General Store Account Books



Nominated by Margaret Kaiser; researched by Mary Beth Craven and Margaret Kaiser; narrative by Margaret Kaiser

Before the advent of the shopping mall, mega-mart, or broadcast media, the hub of any neighborhood was its general store. Here, one could usually buy provisions of all kinds, meet neighbors, and catch up on news of the day—which, to immigrant communities, often served as a lifeline to news from “the old country” as well.

This object is comprised of two 100-year-old grocery store account books, which were recently uncovered in the files of the Borough of Northvale, where they had been kept for many years. With the borough’s centennial approaching in 2016, attempts were made to review them but, unfortunately, the deteriorated condition of the books made this difficult. They had become so delicate that the paper began to disintegrate whenever it was touched. This was not surprising, as paper produced in the mid-nineteenth century was most often made of wood fibers and treated with an acidic sizing to minimize ink bleed. This combination makes the paper increasingly brittle as it ages and the acidic content of the paper continues to deteriorate it. In lieu of a full conservation, the GSBC digitized the fragile pages, allowing the Society to capture the information and provide access for future generations of researchers.

WHY ARE THESE BOOKS IMPORTANT?

Northvale became an independent borough in 1916. Prior to that, it was part of the larger Harrington Township which had been established in 1775 and encompassed what became Oradell, Old Tappan, Dumont, Closter, Alpine, Demarest, Haworth, Harrington Park, and Norwood. Each of those towns had broken off on their own prior to 1916; Northvale was the last remaining remnant and Harrington Township dissolved with Northvale’s founding in 1916. At that time, the borders of Northvale included land that later became the Borough of Rockleigh.

Prior to settling on the name of Northvale, the area had been

known variously as Neuvy and Carrieville. Early twentieth Century residents in Northvale were mostly Italian or French, often new immigrants to the US in search of work. At the time of the ledger, there were only about 500 residents in Northvale; today there are 4,938 inhabitants.

In 1916, Northvale was a small, quiet town with farms, residences with large home gardens, and some stores. Residents could take the Northern Railroad to commute to work in NYC, to attend the local high school in Closter, or to view movies in Tenafly. Passenger service on this line, whose tracks remain in the downtown area, ran from 1859 to 1966. The Northern later became Conrail and was used for freight traffic until recently. Small manufacturers, such as the Anthony and Charles Contini dynasties made pips (centers of artificial flowers often destined to decorate ladies hats). Remnants of artificial flower making existed until quite recently. Northvale also had a pasta factory. This factory later became a shirt waist factory, then a manufacturer of quality ladies garments, which were sold in New York City’s finer stores. The building is now an auto parts store.

There were several grocery stores known to have been serving the town at that time and unfortunately there is no indication in the documents as to which one kept these account books. Work on transcribing the customer accounts continues, noting the items sold to patrons back in the day. Most of the book entries are dated with month and day; one entry in Book 1 is dated 1911 and an entry in Book 2 is dated 1913, which seems to encompass the time period in which these accounts books were kept. Research has found some of the grocers in

Northvale during this time were:

- Anthony and Sarina Contini (he died before 1900),
- Antonia Del Ben (on Livingston Street), where the Del Ben name was cut into the hedges in front of the store,
- John DeBello on Scharer Street/Avenue,
- Rosa Buonacore (on Association Street, later renamed Walnut Street),
- Mary DeMartini (Washington Street), and
- Anna Giannotti (Paris Avenue), among others.

In many cases, it appears that the wife kept the store while her husband worked at another job. Many of the men in the area worked as stone carvers, bringing these skills with them from Italy. The grocery stores were often located in the first floor or basement of the storekeepers' homes. Other stores at that time purveyed dry goods, or were bakeries (Anthony Damico on Livingston Street), or butchers (William Gordon on Tappan Road, Joseph Hanousek, James H. Wilton on Livingston Street, Guido Sterchele on Railroad Avenue), or seed stores (James W. Rau on Tappan Road). While this many stores seem like quite an excess for such a small community, they also served adjacent communities in Norwood, NJ, and Tappan and Sparkill, NY.

Prior to today's world of cash and credit card purchases, in the early 1900's, purchases were often "on the books" with accounts settled later or unpaid. Parents could send their children to the nearest store to pick up a grocery item or two. All purchases were entered by the storekeeper into an account book. When the family paid, the account was drawn down or paid off. Sometimes, those who had surplus eggs, chickens, goats, home grown vegetables or fruits, such as apples and grapes, or even wine made from home grown grapes, would sell these to the storekeeper for resale. Milk was one of the main items sold to the storekeeper as many people in town kept cows.

One descendant of a Northvale storekeeper remembers her Aunt sending a child to a store by bicycle to sell their family's surplus cucumbers. Upon his return, he was asked how much he was paid for the cucumbers. Her Aunt thought this amount was insufficient and sent the child back to the store to retrieve the cucumbers. It is assumed that the grocer would either sell these locally or send surplus vegetables, fruits, etc. to the cities where freshly grown produce was not as available.

One of the Northvale grocery stores had their own butcher who raised pigs nearby for slaughter and sale. More than one descendant of early Northvale residents remembers that these pork products were not popular as the butcher fed his pigs fish, and the meat smelled fishy.

Sometimes, instead of sending eggs, milk, or other items



A. Contini Groceries, corner of Railroad and Paris Avenues, Northvale. The building still stands but has been significantly altered. (Photo courtesy of the Northvale Historical Society.)

for sale, the shopkeeper might accept them as barter against the outstanding debt on an account.

Many households, in deference to what your *Nonna* may have told you, bought pre-made pasta from a local store—a fact which these account books support.

Some examples of typical Northvale customer accounts are:

In Book 1, Sarah Firenze, who was born March 1868 in

New York, and her husband, Dominic, a carpenter, born January 1878 in New Jersey, and their three children, Dominic Jr., Natalie, and Elmo, lived on Paris Avenue (per the US Federal census records). In 1911, she purchased a variety of items beginning with pasta at nine cents a pound, sardines at 14 cents each, ketchup at 15 cents, lard at six and ten cents, rice at 24 cents, as well as tomatoes and other items. Her orders on various days totaled \$0.82, \$1.51, \$3.49, etc. She paid her account on a regular schedule.

In Book 2, a Mrs. Charles Schuster, age 31, and her husband Charles, age 37, both born in New York, and their children, Charles Jr., Robert, and Ida lived on Pierron Street. Charles was a model maker (and later, Mayor of Northvale) and his parents were born in Germany. In December 1912, Mrs. Schuster purchased a selection of goods including cheese at ten cents, ham at ten cents, butter at 22 cents, conserves at seven cents, pasta at nine cents, bread at six cents, animal crackers at seven cents, scouring powder at five cents, as well as other items. Later purchases included corn flakes at ten cents. On one day, she paid \$5 on her \$9.05 balance. On another day, she paid \$3 toward her then \$9.10 account. She continued purchases and payments through 1913.

In addition to regular household purchases, researchers may also be able to divine patterns in household celebrations. Many families purchased chestnuts around Christmas and there are entries for extra flour and sugar, which might suggest a cake for a celebration—all clues into the day-to-day life of Northvale's families.

As seen in these photos, small stores typically occupied first floors of the shopkeepers' homes. Two general stores in Northvale were the Contini and DeBello Groceries.

Peter Perretti, grandson of grocer John DeBello, recalls that the DeBello store at 199 Scharer Avenue, formerly Scharer Street, was the first house on the property (which ran between Scharer and Norwood Street, now High Street) which his grandfather owned. Three houses were later added for his children. Peter's grandfather would take his horse and wagon to the train station to get goods to sell. John's wife, Rosa, was the general storekeeper. Previously he had owned a store in

New York City, but refused to pay tribute to “the Mafia or black hand as they were known” so “they” tried to run down his young son who was playing on the sidewalk. A street sweeper who lived in Norwood told John about a place for sale in the country and he bought it sight unseen, loaded his wife, parents, and four children on the train, and moved to Northvale.



General storekeeper Rosa DeBello (center) with children (left to right) Madeline, Louise, and Mary in front of the DeBello Groceries at 199 Scharer Street/Avenue, 1917–1918. The home still stands today. (Photo courtesy of Peter Perretti, grandson of John DeBello.)

A sampling of the family surnames, possibly misspelled by the clerk, found in the account books are: Arcello/Orcello/Archello (actually, Arcello), Augenti, Bodrato, Campora, Conti (Norwood), Contini, DeBello, DeMartini, Firenze, Giannotti, Gugger, Haring, Jannett (probably, Gannetti), Martini (Norwood), Nero, Schuster, Silvia, Toraggossa, and Trott.

There are also other accounts listed with only first names such as Francis and Dominick or descriptions such as “young man in barbers.”

WHAT'S NEXT?

Many descendants of these families from 100 years ago still reside in Northvale. The Northvale Historical Society and

GSBC will be transcribing family names from these books and will develop a surname index.

If you have family from the Northvale area from this time frame, you may be able to help us identify those named by first name only, know which general store these books are from, have memories of the stores, or would like to work on this project, please email contact@njgsbc.org.

Margaret Kaiser is President of GSBC and a Northvale resident. She received the *Silberne Medaille des Landes Burgenland* (Silver Medal of the State of Burgenland) from the Governor of the State of Burgenland, Austria, for her contributions to Burgenland research through her work with the Burgenland Bunch genealogy group. Kaiser is a long-time consultant at the Family History Center in Emerson, NJ, and a member of numerous genealogical societies.

Mary Beth Craven is Recording Secretary of GSBC and resides in Northvale where she is a member of the Northvale Historical Society. She has been researching her family’s history for more than 15 years. For several years, she taught an Introduction to Genealogy class for the Institute for Learning in Retirement at Bergen Community College.

Recollections and photographs provided by the Northvale Historical Society, particularly from Peter Perretti, Alberta Yannucci Rudolph, and Lorraine Moncalleri Maldonato.

ARTIFACT TITLE	Northvale General Store Account Books [Store Unknown], Books Numbered 1 and 2
LOCATION	Northvale Historical Society, https://www.facebook.com/Northvale-Historical-SocietyCentennial-1069968723034041/
DATE	Entries circa 1911–1913
DESCRIPTION	Two bound account books, approximately 6” wide x 12” high and 7” wide x 15” high, with various handwritten entries.



LEFT: Entries from Book 1, including the account for Guiseppi Cassini. RIGHT: Entries from Book 2, including accounts for Tony Bor (“Bordato” on page prior) and Mrs. Baherman.

Camp Merritt Memorial

IN MEMORIAM
 LUNCH • 1st LIEUTENANTS JAMES K BANNERMAN • JAMES J BEATON
 FRANK C BENSON • GAVEL • BOB HARRIS • JOHN W MARCH
 CHARLES BENSTROM • DAVID M RICHARDS • BENJAMIN P SPRAGUE 2ND LIEUTS
 A REID • FARWELL • JASON HATHAWAY • JOSEPH HARENZA • JAMES R REID • ASST
 ARMY NURSES CORPS • LAURA BAIRD
 ELEANOR CASSIDY • ELLA MOVING • EMILY TANQUIST • MASTER ENGINEER
 SENIOR GRADE • LOUIS BAILEY • SERGEANTS • E F BARNUM • CHARLES BELL
 HARLAN BLAKER • GARNET C BUTLER • AUGUST DE ROSE • BART FALLON
 ROBERT FELNAGLE • REDMON FREEMAN • CARL L HAGEN • STEPHEN L HOUGH
 JOHN T KELLY J • ARTHUR J MAGNUM • EMIL A MEYER • FRED P MCCOY
 GORDON R MCGEE • TIMOTHY MURPHY • WILLIAM REITHERS • WALTER ROCHE
 GEORGE SASSAMAN • ERNEST SIMMONS • FRED SMITH • EDWIN S TAYLOR
 CLIFFORD L WILCOS • CORPORALS • EARL AUSTIN • FRANK BOND • WILLIAM
 C BURNS • EWEN B CAMPBELL • LUTHER E CLARK • JOHN M COSTELLO
 CLAYCOMB CROW • ARTHUR B EAGAN • HOLMAN HAMMOND • FRED HATHAWAY
 HENRY HILL • JOHN HILL • MATTHEW HORGAN • BENJAMIN F MOORE
 ARLRICH MOSHER • ARTHUR MUNGE • ROY A STEVENS • SIDNEY A TAYLOR
 JOHN Q WHEELER • JOSEPH J YUND • PRIVATES • MANSON ABEL • JAMES T ACUFF
 CHARLES M ADAMS • URBAN S AKERS • WALTER ALEXANDER • ERCKINE ALLEN
 GUY ALLEN • HUGH S ALLEN • JOHN ALLEN • CHARLES ALLISON • JOSEPH A
 AMES • RAYMOND AMOS • CHRISTIAN ANDERSON • EARNEST F ANDERSON
 GEORGE W ANDERSON • JOSEPH ANTCLIFF • ANTONIO ARCHEBAQUE • CHARLES
 ARMISTEAD • EDWARD ARNDT • PRATT ARVING • RUBY BAGVILLE • JOE BAILEY
 EDWARD BALGEMAN • JAMES BALL • ELMER BANDY • EDWARD BANKEN
 DONALD M BANNISTER • JAMES BARNETT • PETER BARSAGLINE • ISAAC
 BEARFIELD • CLYDE BEATS • JAMES BEATTY • ROY T BEDFORD • GEORGE
 BEEMY • ERNEST BEER • THOMAS BELL • JOHN A BENNETT • LEWIS D BENNETT
 RALPH BENNETT • FOGLETTA BERNERDINO • MILTON BERRY • THOMAS L BIRT
 GEORGE W BISS • ROSE H BLACKBURN • HERBERT E BLAIR • PAUL BONAVEST
 M E BOUTWELL • HENRY BOUTWELL • CARLO BOVE • ESTER BOWEN
 CHARLES BROWN • WELLS BOYD • CONNOR BOYNTON • ROSSER

Nominated by Fred Voss; research and images by Marjorie Hayes Keeler and Fred Voss; narrative by Marjorie Hayes Keeler

To many in Cresskill and Dumont, the obelisk at the center of the traffic circle is somewhat of a curiosity. Many may know it's a war memorial, dedicated to World War I soldiers. Far fewer may know that it is dedicated to nearly one million soldiers, nearly one out of every five American soldiers during WWI, who passed through Cresskill and Dumont, and lists the names of the 15 officers, 558 enlisted men, four nurses, and one civilian who died there—people who came from all over the US to support their country. This is the story of Camp Merritt.

The Camp Merritt Monument is a 65 foot tall obelisk of granite planned at the end of WWI to commemorate the camp itself and those who died at the camp. Many of those who died at the camp succumbed to the Spanish Flu epidemic which, beginning in 1918, killed more than half a million Americans, with a disproportionate number of those in the prime of life.

On the north face of the monument is a low-relief sculpture by Captain Robert Airken of a “doughboy” in a pose reminiscent of a Greek warrior and with an eagle at his back. At the base is a relief map of the camp streets and buildings. The inscribed names include 15 officers, 558 enlisted men, four nurses, and one civilian. On the southern face is the inscription, “In memory of those who gave their lives for their country while on duty in Camp Merritt. This monument marks the centre of the camp and faces the highway over which more than a million American soldiers passed on their way to and from the World War, 1917-19. Erected by the state of New Jersey, County of Bergen, Bergen County Historical Society, officers and men of Camp Merritt, many patriotic citizens and the Camp Merritt Memorial Association.”

General John J. Pershing, Commander of the American Expeditionary Forces, along

with other notables dedicated the monument on Memorial Day 1924, an event which was attended by a crowd of more than 20,000 people.

Modeled after the Washington Monument, this obelisk is no mere token marker—it is a soaring memorial to those who died while on duty at the camp and, at the time of its dedication, would have dominated the landscape for miles around. There

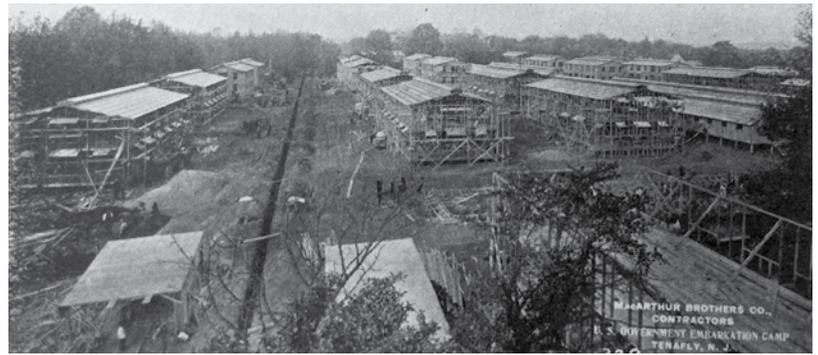
are many towns in New Jersey with memorials to those who died in WWI but none as large as this and none that stand on the site of an actual camp so important to the WWI administration of soldier deployment. It is also a testimonial of the extraordinary accomplishments of those who built this huge base in such a short time.

WHY IS THIS MONUMENT IMPORTANT?

Camp Merritt was constructed to assemble the soldiers and casuals of the American Expeditionary Forces heading to France. It was named after Major-General Wesley E. Merritt who fought in the Civil and Spanish-American Wars and was superintendent of West Point in the 1880s.

In April 1917, The United States entered WWI. In July of the same year, the US Army





Left: Intersection of Grant and Knickerbocker on 21 August 1917. Right: Block XV under construction on 17 October 1917. (Courtesy of the SC/UA, Rutgers University.)

selected a 770-acre site in Bergen County to construct an embarkation camp. Located on the hill between Cresskill and Dumont the site had conveniently located railroad stations within one mile of the proposed center and some out buildings in Tenafly, Demarest, and Haworth. The Erie Railroad line passed through Cresskill, and the main line of the West Shore Railroad ran through Dumont. Chosen also for its proximity to the Alpine Ferry on the Hudson River which transported men to Hoboken for their trip to the French front, the site also offered good drainage, ability to bring in fresh water from the Hackensack River, and access to build sewage conduits out of the camp. The camp was to be erected quickly and the owners who leased their houses and land to the government and were assured their property would be returned to them. It was designed to house and process 40,000 men weekly and construction was begun around August 1917.

But before any buildings were ready, the first infantry troops arrived. These troops were housed in tents a mile north in Demarest on the site of an old racetrack. By November 1917, the plan was to have more than 1,000 buildings to house and care for the men for a few days to a week before they embarked for France. By the end of the war the camp had processed more than one million soldiers, the largest number of any US embarkation camp.

The US Embarkation Service regarded Camp Merritt as the best of the embarkation camps as it had painted buildings, good drainage, and many social buildings—including The Liberty

Theater, which could hold 2,500 people. The massive enlisted soldiers club, Merritt Hall, was in comparison to most camps in the US, superlative in all ways. It was set up as a library with a fireplace and comfortable seating and offered soldiers billiards, thousands of books to borrow, and many home comforts such as pies and ice cream. By the summer of 1918 the population of the camp was approximately 45,000—yet the population of Dumont was less than 2,000 and Cresskill was less than 1,000.

The war ended in November 1918 and by October 1919 the camp was no longer needed. Embarkation camps are meant to be built, used as needed, and then torn down. The leased properties were returned to their owners and camp buildings were to be taken down and sold for other uses. Some were moved and/or re-purposed, but most were dismantled and sold-off in pieces. On 24 January 1920, the remaining buildings were sold to Harris Brothers for \$554,000 and slated to be dismantled in the spring. The last of the soldiers left Camp Merritt around 1 February 1920. Harris Brothers opened a branch store in Tenafly to sell off the Camp and what was advertised as new items.

After the camp closed there were a number of large fires that burned the wood buildings, including many of the hospital buildings. The first of the fires was on the night of 13 March 1921 and began with flames bursting from windows simultaneously in four or five buildings in the hospital section. A second fire occurred in April of 1921 after two men were arrested for living in the barracks. Ten buildings burned at a loss of \$10,000



BUILDING MATERIALS
LUMBER! DOORS! WINDOWS!
SPECIAL—Three million feet 1x4 inch Yellow Pine Flooring in splendid condition and suitable for use as sheathing boards, \$20.00 etc.—Quick Sale Price, as it runs, per 1,000 feet board measure.
 Sheathing Boards, lengths \$20.00 Sheathing Boards, lengths \$25.00 from 4 ft. to 8 ft. 8 ft. to 20 ft.
ALL DIMENSION MATERIAL, such as 2x4, 2x6, 2x8, \$29.50 per thousand 2x10, 4x4 and 6x6, including Novelty Siding and Flooring, \$29.50 per thousand.
 Heating Boilers Brand New \$2.35
 Guaranteed Paint \$1.50
 Radiators \$2.50
 White Porcelain Enamelled Bathtubs
 Two-Part Laundry Tubs
 Building Material of Every Kind!
HARRIS BROTHERS CO.
 CAMP MERRITT BRANCH—TENAFLY, NEW JERSEY



LEFT: Will Herbst taken at Camp Merritt December 1918. (Courtesy of the SC/UA, Rutgers University.) CENTER: Newspaper advertisement offering fixtures and “Building Materials of Every Kind” from Camp Merritt. RIGHT: Many buildings from Camp Merritt took on second, and third, lives. One of the out buildings of the Camp Merritt YMCA was purchased by the Methodist Church and moved to Hardenburgh Avenue in Demarest. In 1962 it became the Demarest Library. Many private homes in the area are also re-purposed structures from the camp and other homes may contain fixtures and building materials from the camp sell-off.

and there was one more fire in June of that year. The last conflagration was in April of 1927 when a fire swept through 20 more buildings—many of which housed workmen and their families. The Harris Brothers’ insurance would cover most of the losses.

In 1935, Edward Aloysius Kenney, US Representative for New Jersey, introduced a bill for the establishment of a national military park on the site of Camp Merritt. The bill authorized \$250,000 for the purchase of land and the development of the park. This bill failed and the site, which once was bustling Camp Merritt, was slowly absorbed into the suburban fabric of Bergen County.

But it was not completely forgotten. In the 1938 film, *The Shopworn Angel*, starring Jimmy Stewart, Margaret Sullivan, and Walter Pidgeon, Camp Merritt plays a part as the camp Stewart’s character has come to with his regiment.

Camp Merritt also lives on through this memorial obelisk dedicated to the 578 men and women who perished there; through the family stories of those whose ancestors lived nearby; in ephemera, photos, and letters from soldiers found in archives and attics; and in Bergen County’s story. The residents of Cresskill and Dumont, less than 3,000 in number, saw nearly

a million soldiers and civilians pass through the camp. And, if you look closely enough, you can still find some structures, re-purposed from Camp Merritt, as homes for families today.

WHAT’S NEXT?

See the online version of this article at www.njgsbc.org for more images of Camp Merritt. The Bergen County Historical Society, a sponsor of the memorial, has a number of articles about Camp Merritt, including a transcription of the names on the memorial, at www.bergencountyhistory.org.

GSBC Trustee Fred Voss, is currently conducting biographical research into select individuals on the memorial. This research may culminate in articles about these individuals and, possibly, a talk on the subject. If you have any background information (birth date, hometown, etc.) about individuals on the memorial, please send it along to camp@tweedriver.com.

Marjorie Hayes Keeler is administrator of the Camp Merritt Remembrance Page on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CampMerritt/>, where she regularly posts information about the camp and memorial.

A frequent lecturer at libraries and genealogical societies in the Tri-State region, Fred Voss is also a GSBC Trustee, Education Chair, and a tour guide at Ellis Island. Born in Germany, he was raised in Dumont within walking distance of the Monument.

ARTIFACT TITLE	Camp Merritt Memorial
LOCATION	Camp Merritt Memorial Circle at the intersection of Madison Avenue and Knickerbocker Road (County Road 505), Cresskill, NJ, 07626 / Dumont, NJ, 07628. GPS Coordinates: 40.9413°N 73.9768°W
DATE	The monument was Dedicated on Memorial Day, 30 May 1924.
DESCRIPTION	A 65-foot tall granite obelisk, in the style of the Washington Memorial in Washington, DC, inscribed with the names of 15 officers, 558 enlisted men, four nurses and one civilian who died at Camp Merritt during WWI.

World War I Research and 2017 Commemorations

April 2017 will mark the 100th anniversary of the United States’ entry into WWI. Watch for special commemorations and history projects to be launched soon. Although many WWI era military records were lost in the 1973 fire at the National Archives’ National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis [www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/fire-1973.html], there are a number of lesser known and underused resources for conducting research on WWI personnel.

- The National Archives’ facility in Maryland (Archives II) contains official records of WWI military units as well as applications and correspondences for those interred overseas. If not on the website [www.archives.gov/research/military/ww1], contact the archives directly.
- The State of New Jersey holds state military records up through WWI. In addition to muster rolls and other state-level records the state has an online collection of all New Jersey soldiers killed in the War. [<https://www.net1.state.nj.us/DOS/Admin/ArchivesDBPortal/index.aspx>]
- The Special Collections and University Archives (SC/UA) at Rutgers University has an extensive collection of documents, images, maps, and letters pertaining to Camp Merritt, those serving overseas, and the experience of war on the home-front. Finding aids to the “Great War” collection is available on their website [www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/libscua/scua.shtml]
- The SC/UA, Rutgers University, will be mounting a special exhibition, “Doughboys and Civilians: New Jersey and the Great War,” which opens 9 March 2017, and runs through early September. The exhibit will be on display in Gallery 50 of the Alexander Library (off the lobby) and in the Special Collections and University Archives Gallery (downstairs from the reference room).
- The US WWI Centennial Commission has launched a fund where municipalities who have WWI monuments in need of repair can apply for a grant [www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/100-cities-100-memorials-home.html]
- Lastly, don’t forget to check your local societies’ family files as well as local newspaper archives for articles about individuals and units—both at home and overseas. The press respected government black-outs on certain topics but were happy to publish articles on local soldiers who were serving, or who were killed in service of, their country.



The Genealogical Society of Bergen County, NJ (GSBC) Membership Form

The GSBC Membership year runs 1 November–31 October. Please make checks payable to “GSBC” and mail to:

Genealogical Society of Bergen County, P.O. Box 432, Midland Park, NJ 07432, USA or sign up with a **credit card at www.njgsbc.org**

The GSBC is a tax exempt organization as described in sections 501(a) and 509 (a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code. Membership dues are deductible for federal income tax purposes as provided by the IRS.

Membership Type: All amounts in \$US dollars Individual \$20 Family \$25 Junior (Ages 13–18) \$10 New Renewal

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip/Post Code: _____

Tel: _____

E-mail: _____

Surnames You Are Researching: (Renewing Members, please update) _____

Privacy Preference—May we post the research names listed above, as well as your name, to the Members-only area of the GSBC website? This may help you connect with other Members who are researching the same surnames. Your contact information **will not** be public and we will contact you if someone makes a request to get in touch with you.
 Yes, please share No, keep my names private

Delivery Preferences (US Members. International Members will receive materials via e-mail.)

GSBC Archivist Newsletter: B&W Print/Mail Color PDF/E-mail

GSBC Event Announcements: Print/Mail PDF/E-mail

All Members will receive the twice-monthly **GSBC E-News** via e-mail.

Save the Date!—Upcoming 2017 GSBC Meetings and Events

GSBC General Meetings are held at **7 pm every fourth Monday of the month** (except holidays and December) in the Ridgewood Public Library Auditorium, 125 N. Maple Ave., Ridgewood, NJ. Phone 201-670-5600. The program is preceded by a brief business meeting and announcements. Check www.njgsbc.org for up-to-date information on topics, speakers, events, and classes.

MONDAY, 23 JANUARY, 7PM

GSBC General Meeting

Eastern European Genealogy: Discovering Online Resources

Michelle Tucker Chubenko will cover easy to access online resources for conducting research in Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Hungary, and Croatia. No passport required!

MONDAY, 27 FEBRUARY, 7PM

GSBC General Meeting

Bill Griffeth—

The Stranger in My Genes

Join GSBC as we welcome CNBC host, Bill Griffeth, who will speak on his latest book *The Stranger in My Genes*. In this book, Griffeth undertakes a quest to solve the mystery of his origins—a quest which will shake his sense of identity. As he takes us on his journey, we learn about choices made by his ancestors, parents, and others and we see Bill measure and weigh his own difficult choices as he confronts the past.

MONDAY, 27 MARCH, 7PM

GSBC General Meeting

New York Research

So many of our immigrant ancestors began their American journey by living in New York City. In this talk, Barbara Ellman will identify resources such as vital records, naturalization, probate, property, and newspapers. Many will be available online but we'll note which can only be found on-site at various archives and repositories.

MONDAY, 24 APRIL, 7PM

GSBC General Meeting

Evidence Analysis: Which is the Right Record?

In the presence of conflicting facts, the following three criteria are used to evaluate each piece of evidence. Careful analysis reveals there are nuances and circumstances of these terms. An understanding of these terms leads to effective decision-making. In this talk, Rhoda Miller, EdD, CG, will review the process to identify and evaluate evidence, including three main tenets used in analysis.

GSBC Classes @ RPL

Check the calendar at www.njgsbc.org for the current schedule of classes. New classes are added all the time!

If you would like to see a class repeated or suggest a new topic, please contact RPL Librarian, Sarah Kiefer, at (201) 670-5600 x135 or at skiefer@ridgewoodlibrary.org

GSBC Speakers' Bureau

Did you know that the GSBC has expert speakers available to talk at your events on a variety of research and genealogical topics? Email contact@njgsbc.org for more information on speakers and topics.

GSBC Genealogy Consultants

Don't forget that your GSBC Membership entitles you to four free lookups and complimentary on-site assistance!