

11. NYACK RURAL CEMETERY (3 Sections)  
W. Nyack, N.Y.

EXACT LOCATION:  
-Off Route 59, W. Nyack, N.Y. (North Side)  
(Upper and Lower Sections are located between  
W. Nyack Shopping Center and Home Lumber Company).  
(Adjoining Section is located East of Home Lumber Company).

Plot Number: 120-A-33.2 Private

Present Owner: Nyack Rural Cemetery, Inc.  
(Founded in June 1887; re-organized in 1930 and 1960)

Total Graves 268 (Upper and Lower Sections) Earliest Date: 1837  
Latest Date: 1977

Condition: Fair. No regular maintenance or care.  
Lou Evans, prior to his recent death, assumed responsibility for maintenance  
for many years.

Oak Hill Cemetery has agreed to future maintenance of Nyack Rural Cemetery.  
There is only one entrance to the main cemetery. This is the unpaved road uphill  
mall, has been barricaded and is no longer used due to dangers.

Recent testing has confirmed that most of the remaining sections of the main  
cemetery are not suitable for burial purposes, due to extreme rocky soil at about 2 foot levels.  
An option on about 4 acres at the Northern end was recently acquired by Pyramid  
Corp., developers of the nearby new shopping mall.

Nyack Rural Cemetery contains the graves of many familiar Rockland names:

Banta	Eckerson	Patterson
Blakeney	Haight	Polhemus
Blauvelt	Fisher	Summers
Coggeshall	Jersey	Swartwout
Cokalet	Maroney	Terhune
De Bevoise	Morrison	Townsend
De Noyelles	Oliver	Vanderbilt
De Grew	Owen	Van Houten

11. NYACK RURAL CEMETERY (2)  
W. Nyack, NY

HISTORY:

According to the original booklet issued by Nyack Rural Cemetery in 1887, Nyack Rural Cemetery, Inc. was founded in June 1887. It was envisioned as a special burial ground for "citizens of New York City, as well as those of Northern New Jersey and Rockland County," because of "its natural beauty and admirable location."

"The direct route to the Cemetery from New York is by the Northern Railroad of New Jersey, stopping at Nyack (the terminus), 28 miles from New York. The depot for this route at Pavonia is reached from New York by the Camber and 23rd street ferries, or the Cemetery may be reached by the West shore road from Weehawken, from the foot of Jay street ferry, or 42nd street ferry from New York City, or from that portion of New Jersey or Rockland County through which it passes to the Depot at Nyack turnpike; or for eight months in the year by the Hudson River Steamboat line, direct to Nyack, from Harrison Street or 22nd Street piers. On the Northern road there are 30 trains daily, 15 each way."

Officers for Nyack Rural Cemetery were: C.A. Chapman, President (Pres. Nyack National Bank); Garret Polhemus, Vice-Pres.; Adam C. Haeselbarth, Sect. and Treasurer; and David J. Blauvelt, Controller and Supt. Other trustees were: Gens. James H. Blauvelt and Abram Merritt, Garret Z. Snider, Esq.; Dr. Isaac C. Haring; Abram A. Demarest, Esq.; C. Irving Hopper, Henry Brinkerhoff; Dr. David De Graff. Only Garret Polhemus and David J. Blauvelt are buried at Nyack Rural. Twenty-one of the deaths and burials occurred prior to the 1887 incorporation.

Over the years the cemetery tract has been gradually narrowed. A part was sold to the small shopping mall, which comes close to the burial ground. Widening of Route 59 took an easement portion. Nyack Rural Cemetery was reorganized in 1930 and re-organized in 1980.

In 7/1982 the cemetery was given a zone change from residential to regional shopping status. On 7/12/82 Supreme Court Judge Anthony Cerrato approved sale of about 1 acre of land and the sandstone front "holding shed" (which dates from about 1889) to a lumber company. The former crypt is being now used for storage of building materials. Recently, Pyramid took an option on 4 acres on the lower end for a possible new burial site--reinterment of the Mt. Moor cemetery.

As with many local cemeteries, Nyack Rural has not recovered from the destructive vandalism which occurred in April 1976. About 34 of the 153 graves on the lower slope approaching West Nyack were damaged. The cemetery was also found to be badly littered and in poor condition. Lou Evans commented: "Most of the families have moved away or died off. The few that remain can't afford to fix the place up again."

11. NYACK RURAL CEMETERY (3)  
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HISTORY (Cont'd):

Among the important families buried in the main Rural Cemetery are those of Polhemus, Vanderbelt (Vanderbilt), Van Houten, and De Bevoise.

In the New City area, one of the most important and influential families was De Bevoise.

De Bevoise:

It was Peter De Bevoise (born 1/7/1798 in New York City) who moved to New City area about 1937 and purchased a farm of about 65 acres. He had been employed in the wholesale oil and glass business in New York City.

The ancestor of the family was Carel de Beauvais, a well-educated and highly-respected French Protestant who came from Leyden in Holland. The family name is derived from the ancient city of Beauvais, on the river Therin, northwest of Paris. Protestants, during the religious wars of the 16th century, were expelled from France. Carel de Beauvais fled to Holland.

He arrived in the U.S. on the ship Otter at New Amsterdam Feb. 17, 1659. He brought with him his wife, Sophia Van Lodensteyn, and 3 children.

The family settled in Brooklyn, reportedly just East of the site of the present City Hall and municipal buildings. He reportedly became the first schoolmaster in Brooklyn.

Youngest of 5 children born to Peter De Bevoise and his second wife, Emeline De Friese, was Peter De Bevoise, born 5/17/1804 in New City.

Peter De Bevoise was involved in the stationery business in Haverstraw, as partner with Jeremiah Fye in the undertaking and furniture business, operator of a store in New City, and for 12 years he was the postmaster in New City.

Charles De Bevoise's 4th child (Charles R., born in 1862) was employed by the Hodgeman Rubber Co. in NY City, and then for 6 years as a city salesman for Warner Brothers, the largest corset manufacturer in the U.S. In 1891 he went into business for himself, manufacturing his design of children's corsets and waists.