

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

MAR 7 1994

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gethsemane Cemetery

other names/site number Sand or San Hill, Moonachie or Moonachie Colored Cemetery, Hackensack Colored Cemetery, and Colored Cemetery

2. Location

street & number 360-370 Liberty Street  not for publication

city or town Borough of Little Ferry  vicinity

state New Jersey code 034 county Bergen code 003 zip code 07643

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 2/24/94  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper: Patricia W. Andrews Date of Action: 4/20/94

Gethsemane Cemetery  
Name of Property

NJ Bergen County  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |                  |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------|
|              |                 | _____ buildings  |
| 1            |                 | _____ sites      |
|              |                 | _____ structures |
|              |                 | _____ objects    |
| 1            |                 | _____ Total      |

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary/cemetery  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary/cemetery  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

No style  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A  
walls N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof N/A  
other (gravestones): marble, granite, slate  
& sandstone

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage: Black  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1860-1924  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1860  
1884  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

African-American  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Bergen Co.Div.of Cultural & Historic Aff.

Gethsemane Cemetery  
Name of Property

NJ Bergen County  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1 acre

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

|      |         |   |   |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---------|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18   | 5       | 8 | 0 | 8        | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 0 |
| Zone | Easting |   |   | Northing |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

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|      |         |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|---------|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
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|      |         |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|      |         |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Zone | Easting |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joan H. Geismar, Ph.D.

organization Joan H. Geismar, Ph.D. date July 1993

street & number 40 East 83rd Street telephone (212) 734-6512

city or town New York state NY zip code 10028

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

#### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name County of Bergen, Dept. of Parks, Div. of Cultural & Historic Affairs

street & number Administration Bldg., Court Plaza South telephone (201) 646-2780  
21 Main Street

city or town Hackensack state NJ zip code 07601-7000

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Unless otherwise cited, the information presented in this section was extracted from Geismar 1992.

Gethsemane Cemetery, located just north of Route 46 between Liberty Street and Summit Place in Little Ferry, Bergen County, New Jersey (Figure 1), is a 1-acre site originally set aside by three white trustees as a cemetery for Hackensack's black population in 1860. Burial and health department records document that it was mainly a family cemetery for the local African-American population but a potter's field for indigent Caucasians, many of them unidentified and not of local origin. Although only twenty-eight gravestones survive (all of them marking the graves of African-Americans), 238 burials were suggested by a ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey in 1990 (Mellett 1990), and a minimum of 496 burials were documented through historic research.

Gethsemane is situated on a sand dune or hill that gave the cemetery two of its names in the 19th century, San or Sand Hill. This sand was deposited about 17,000 years ago when glacial Lake Hackensack, which once covered the area, drained. The lacustrine deposits of this ancient lake also created the clay deposits that border the nearby Hackensack River in Little Ferry and were the basis for a local brick industry. According to an 1887 geological survey (Vermeule 1887), clay pits were located just north of the Gethsemane Cemetery site on Liberty Street and east of it on Bergen Turnpike. Many of those buried in the cemetery were associated with the brickyards that grew up around the pits in the late 19th century. One of the graves is that of a former slave who ultimately owned some of the pits (see Elizabeth Dulfer in Section 8).

Today, the cemetery rises above Liberty Street and Summit Place, its adjoining roads (Figure 2). Summit Place lies as much as 6 ft. below the southern part of the cemetery; a mound-like elevation found in its southeastern quadrant was thought to have been created by modern dumping or other disturbance, but archaeological field testing has proven it to be a natural sand deposit (Geismar 1993). Gethsemane's last documented burial occurred in 1924; after that, vandalism took its toll. Many of the twenty-eight stones now standing were reset in 1988 and 1989 through a Bergen County restoration program that funded the efforts of Lynette Strangstad, a stone conservator, assisted by administrators and of the Bergen County Division of Cultural and Historical Affairs (hereafter BCDCHA) and volunteers.

In the early 1970s, about fourteen years before Gethsemane was acquired by Bergen County and became an historic county site, students from a local school attempted to eliminate what was undoubtedly an eyesore. They removed dump-truck loads of trash from the cemetery at least twice. Unfortunately, these well-intentioned clean-ups may have eliminated evidence of African-American burial customs. Southern burial sites were, and are, often marked by personal belongings of the deceased, especially the last cup or spoon used, or some other item that would link the worldly life to the afterworld and ease their passage (e.g., Fenn

1985, 1989). Frequently broken glass, dishes, or pitchers marked these burials, perhaps representing the water and sustenance essential to life; these were meant to keep the deceased from fretting. But the debris--intact and broken bottles and trash--strewn about Gethsemane in the early 1970s, with most graves no longer marked or identified, required a clean-up to recover some semblance of the cemetery's function.

Between those first clean-ups and the county's acquisition of the site in 1985, trash had again accrued. It had no discernible connection to burial customs, but rather to neglect, trespassing, and wanton vandalism. Another trash removal in 1985 became the first step in restoring the cemetery as an historic site.

The 1985 cleaning revealed many headstones--most of them fallen--footstones, and stone bases. In the spring of 1986, the cemetery was surveyed by volunteers from what is now the African-American Studies Committee of the Bergen County Historical Society and BCDCHA staff under the direction of Joan Geismar (Geismar 1986; see Figure 2). Since then, a few more stones have been discovered and, when necessary, repaired and conserved by the aforementioned Lynette Strangstad. For the most part, these have been replaced on or near their original bases.

A plain sandstone obelisk stands in what is believed to be its original position approximately half way between Liberty Street and Summit Place, but off-center on a north-south axis. The location of Gethsemane's original entrance is unknown, but this sandstone monument may provide a clue (e.g., Pendleton 1989). The ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey does not document a burial associated with it (Mellett 1990), and a corridor devoid of burials appears to run from the obelisk to the cemetery's southern boundary (see Figures 2 and 16), suggesting a former entrance in this area. Yet Samuel Porter, an octogenarian with family buried at Gethsemane, remembers a Liberty Street entrance on the western side from his childhood visits (he also recalls clay-pipe grave markers; Porter 1989, 1991:personal communication). It should be remembered that Summit Place to the east, and Route 46 a bit further south, did not exist when the cemetery was active. It is conceivable that a dirt path or road led from what is now Liberty Street to an earlier entrance than the one remembered by Mr. Porter.

Today, a chain-link fence surrounds the cemetery and gates are centered on the Summit Place and Liberty Street fences, Gethsemane's eastern and western boundaries; these were installed after the county acquired the property. To the south is a Mobil Gas Station fronting on Route 46, and to the west is Liberty Street, formerly Moonachie Road; this is the oldest road in the immediate site vicinity and was first run in 1819. Private property abuts the cemetery's northern fence that runs from Liberty Street to Summit Place. Gethsemane is maintained by the county, and the grass is cropped and the property well kept (Figures 3-6). Unfortunately, vandalism remains a problem (see Figure 7).

Arnold Brown, a member of the Bergen County African-American Studies Group, an arm of the Bergen County Historical Society, first identified Gethsemane's vegetation, describing it as "Several small wild cherry, maple, oak and poplar trees, a clump of white birch, an aging cedar tree with a wild bee hive, bayberry shrubs and wildflowers..." (Brown n.d. [a]: 3). Subsequently, an extensive survey has been done for the BCDCHA. The cleanings have clearly revealed the plot markers of stone with remnants of metal piping and decorative flanges, and head and foot stones of marble, granite, slate, and sandstone dot the landscape; these all concentrate most densely in the northern part of the cemetery. Despite recent vandalism and the sounds of traffic from Route 46 and Liberty Street, Gethsemane Cemetery emanates an aura of tranquility (see Figures 3-14 for photos of the cemetery and selected tombstones).

Gethsemane Cemetery is significant under Criteria D because it has yielded information important to history. When it was established in 1860 to serve Hackensack's African-American population, slavery was still legal in New Jersey, and it functioned as an active cemetery long after slavery was finally abolished in January 1866. Its history is tied to the development of Bergen County, the state's largest slave-holding county.

Although slavery was legal in New Jersey when the 1-acre African-American burial ground was created in New Barbadoes township, 99% of the 314 African-Americans listed in the 1860 township census were free. Most were in service positions such as servants, domestics, laundresses, or laborers. Four, or 1% of New Barbadoes's black population, were listed as slaves.

On this census, almost all blacks--slave or free--report being born in New Jersey, or, more specifically, in Bergen County. The four documented slaves were all women, ranging in age from fifty-nine to seventy-seven. Those listed as slaves in New Barbadoes, as well as in adjacent townships, were at least fifty-four years old, and most were over seventy. This undoubtedly reflects 19th-century laws that limited slavery in New Jersey, but did not yet abolish it. Later in the century, non-local blacks would be recorded, but the time must have seemed right to create a burying ground for local free blacks as well as a few elderly slaves.

On November 17, 1860, John Baptiste Marshall and his wife, Mary Ann Boutout, sold one acre of land he had acquired from Edwin F. Randolph to serve as an African-American burial ground (Liber of Deeds [hereafter LD] N5 1860:309). To the north was the land of Jacques "Mirgon" (sp?) and to the south and east was Marshall's property, all of it formerly belonging to Randolph.

The deed was to three white trustees: Simeon Zabriskie, a surveyor who may have laid out Gethsemane; John J. Demarest, a farmer; and Garret Meyers Anderson, listed in the 1860 Federal census as a gentleman. All three were members of the Zabriskie family (Zabriskie 1963). Besides being related, they appear to have been near neighbors, and, while Anderson was the wealthiest, all were men of means. Just why they established a "Cemetery for the Colored Population of Hackensack" is unknown, but it functioned with various names for just over forty years when it was reorganized and incorporated under the name Gethsemane.

On March 21, 1901, seven men met at 51 Main Street in Hackensack Village to form the Gethsemane Cemetery Association (Book of Incorporation 3:138). All three original trustees had died by this time, and seven local African-Americans--Samuel Winfield, William Jackson, James P. Westcomb, Thomas See, George W[ashington] White, William Hire, and Thomas H. Tiebout--became the cemetery's new trustees. Named for the garden where Christ was betrayed, the first occurrence of the name Gethsemane in a death record is found eleven years later when Harriet Hawkins' death certificate lists it as her place of burial. Its last recorded burial was that of



Louis Swinney on December 14, 1924.

From its inception, Gethsemane served as a family cemetery for local African-Americans; after 1884, it also became a potter's field for indigent Caucasians. Burial and other available records provide a profile of the local African-American population from 1860 to 1924 and reveal the physical and social condition of urban blacks in 19th and early-20th century Hackensack and its environs. These same records offer information about a smaller Caucasian contingent that constitutes a comparative sample.

Gethsemane attained historical significance when it became the focus of a discrimination issue in 1884. At that time the furor surrounding the burial of Sam Bass, the black sexton of a Hackensack church who was refused burial in Hackensack Cemetery and temporarily interred at Gethsemane, was reported in local and New York City newspapers and resulted in the desegregation of New Jersey's cemeteries. And local histories remark on Elizabeth Dulfer, a more permanent Gethsemane burial, who was born a slave but eventually amassed commercially valuable land that had belonged to the family of her former owners. But perhaps most of all, Gethsemane's significance lies in the framework it provides for an in-depth study of African-Americans living in a New Jersey hamlet as it evolved into a city. The causes of death, age at death, occupations, and family histories of this buried population constitutes a profile of African-Americans during a critical period in our nation's development.

The cemetery was known by several names in its early years. The first official references are found on death certificates located in the State Archives in Trenton, the earliest of them from 1879. One notes a burial in the "Colored Cemetery, Hackensack" (Bergen County Death Certificate [hereafter BCDC] 1879:L11) and another "San Hill, Lodi township" (BCDC 1879:E6); in 1880, locations such as Hackensack, Little Ferry, or Moonachie, Bergen County are listed. Elizabeth Dulfer's (written "Dolph") death certificate is one of these, recording her death on January 11, 1880, and her burial place only as Little Ferry, New Jersey (BCDC 1880:D30). Because her headstone has been reset on its original base (see Figure 3), Elizabeth Dulfer's burial place is identifiable. Unfortunately, this is often not the case, and sometimes assumptions had to be made to determine if a burial was at Gethsemane.

At this writing, there are sixteen Bergen County cemeteries documented in the BCDCHA Cemetery Inventory where burials of African-Americans occurred in the 19th century. Therefore, not every local death listed in the records as "colored" is necessarily a Gethsemane burial. On the other hand, African-American burials specifically said to be in Hackensack before 1884 are assumed to be Gethsemane burials since no blacks are known to have been buried in Hackensack's two public cemeteries prior to the change in burial laws made on March 19, 1884, in response to the Sam Bass episode (State of NJ 1884:83). The Bass case and its ramifications are detailed below, but for the purpose of explaining assumptions made about

19th-century burials of local African-Americans, it should be noted that after March, 19, 1884, all New Jersey cemeteries were desegregated by law (e.g., Grossman 1976:71-72).

From November 17, 1860, when the "Coloured Cemetery" was established by the three white trustees, and for more than a decade after it was turned over to seven black trustees and incorporated as the Gethsemane Cemetery Association in 1901, it is often unclear from the records whether or not a burial was actually at Gethsemane (the first death associated with the name Gethsemane is Harriet Hawkins who died on December 31, 1912, and was buried on January 3, 1913). Unfortunately, no cemetery records have been found, and records of the Ricardo Funeral Home, the establishment responsible for many Gethsemane burials beginning in 1885, do not always list the place of burial, or refer to it by various names or only in very general terms. Consequently, decisions based on other data were often made to identify a Gethsemane burial.

If the deceased had family members in the cemetery, particularly if it was a child with siblings already interred, it was often assumed that these unspecified burials were also at Gethsemane. On the other hand, having a family member in the cemetery did not automatically warrant inclusion; for example, there are thirty-five burials of African-Americans with surnames associated with the cemetery, but either information is too sketchy to substantiate assuming burial at Gethsemane, or it is questionable. Mainly, this is because no cemetery is indicated, and, more often than not, relatives are not identified.

Just why family names alone do not indicate burial in Gethsemane is illustrated by two burials found in Ricardo's records where the deceased had surnames commonly found at Gethsemane, but were apparently buried elsewhere. One was James Thompson who was buried in the French Burial Ground in 1886, the other was George Jones buried in another New Jersey cemetery in 1887.

There are twenty-one Thompsons documented at Gethsemane, one of the commonest names found in the cemetery (only Jackson, with twenty-two burials documented, has more), yet James is definitely not one of them. This is also true of twenty-four-year-old George Jones buried by Ricardo in 1887. Neither his color nor burial place were noted in Ricardo's records, but Jones's death certificate indicates he was black and buried at North Fork Cemetery(?) in New Jersey (BCDC 1887:NB145). Yet there are seven people with the surname Jones buried at Gethsemane, all but one of them identified as being black (no color is given for the seventh).

It should be noted that Sand Hill may refer to Gethsemane before and after its 1901 incorporation, but Sandy Hill found on several Bergen County death certificates, none of them Ricardo burials, seems to refer to a Paterson cemetery. Also, "San Hill," found in some Ricardo records, appears to refer mainly to a geographical location rather than Gethsemane burials. This area is near the intersection of the Bergen Turnpike and

Hudson Street. It was a neighborhood inhabited by many who worked in the local brickyards and may have also been known as "Gillies Town" after John W. Gillies who owned a local brickyard in the 1880s (Peck 1990:personal communication). Both the Ricardo records and the 1900 Hackensack Directory list San or Sand Hill as a location.

With these and other factors in mind, 225 burials have been documented prior to March 29, 1901, when the Gethsemane Cemetery Association was incorporated. To summarize, they include those said to be buried at Hackensack Colored Cemetery, the Colored Cemetery in Hackensack, Colored Cemetery, Moonachie Cemetery, or Moonachie Colored Cemetery, Moonachie, Sand Hill and, in one case, San Hill. The Gethsemane roster also includes unidentified men buried at Moonachie Cemetery if they are listed in official records as being "colored" or black and if they are stillborn infants or buried by Ricardo at county expense. It also includes one unknown African-American male who drowned and was buried by the county in 1899 with no burial place indicated.

Individuals with engraved head or foot stones standing at this writing, and two tombstone entries listed in George Budke's cemetery records (Budke Collection 42 1916-1918:58) but now missing, are also included. Bergen County death certificates were researched in the State Archives, Bureau of Vital Statistics, in Trenton through 1900 when a change in the indexing system makes them unidentifiable by county alone; many of the earlier burials were identified or clarified through this research. The first documented burial in Gethsemane is Cornelia Smith, a ten-month-old infant known from her gravestone to have died August 13, 1866. Undoubtedly, there were earlier burials, but these remain unknown.

Among the 225 individuals buried at Gethsemane before March 29, 1901, is John B. C. Dulfer, the husband of the aforementioned Elizabeth Sutliff Dulfer and the first documented Caucasian burial in the cemetery. There is no gravestone for Dulfer who had been a widower for five years when, according to his death certificate, he died at sixty-five of dysentery and perforation of the bowels on February 23, 1885. He was buried at Gethsemane by William Furby, apparently a competitor of the Messrs. Ricardo.

#### THE ELIZABETH DULFER STORY

During the 19th century, the clay pits formed by glacial Lake Hackensack would become the source of a thriving brick industry in Hackensack and Little Ferry. Among those who had the foresight to tap Little Ferry's clay deposits was Elizabeth Sutliff, a locally-born African-American whose home is documented on the east side of the Bergen Turnpike road on Sidney's Map of Twelve Miles Around New York (1849) and the 1876 Walker Atlas of Bergen County. Elizabeth began amassing land early in 1847, and a deed from March 25, 1847, describes a purchase of two lots comprising 87 acres (LD K4 1847:32). These lay "west of the old road leading from Hackensack to the Little Ferry" (a road vacated in 1804). According to Arnold E. Brown, who has researched and written about

Elizabeth Dulfer (Brown 1986), title to the land was not secured until 1848.

Frances Westervelt, in her History of Bergen County, remarks on Elizabeth and one of her 1847 purchases:

In 1847 Elizabeth Sutliff [Dulfer], a negro woman, bought ten acres of land on the Hackensack, near Little Ferry, for \$1,500. She carried on a large business in the sale of clay, which was sent by boats to potteries in Newark, Jersey City and other places. In 1869 she sold out to Brundage and Schmults for \$15,000 (Westervelt I 1923:9).

Elizabeth had several last names during her lifetime: Dickerson, her maiden name; Campbell, her owner's name, for she was born a slave in about 1790 on William Campbell's farm, and land she later bought was originally part of this farmstead; Sutliff, the surname of her first husband, Alexander Sutliff, a Jamaican-born New York City teacher who apparently became a farmer when Elizabeth purchased her properties in what is now Little Ferry; and Dulfer, the surname of her second husband, who was born in Holland and was Caucasian. John Bernardus Conrad Dulfer was thirty-one years Elizabeth's junior, and her sole heir when she died at ninety. According to her death certificate, Elizabeth was buried at Gethsemane early in 1880. As noted earlier, Arnold Brown's report (1986) offers a detailed history of Elizabeth Dulfer's life.

New Jersey has a complicated slave-ownership history, and during the first three decades of the 19th century, Bergen County, which was then much larger than it is now, was the largest slave-holding county in the state (Geismar 1982:8). Its slave economy was responsible for the success of many of the early Dutch farmers who owned large tracts of arable land. But manumission was not uncommon in the first half of the 19th century even though slavery was legal until the ratification of the 13th Amendment in December, 1865 (the new law was apparently not in effect in New Jersey until early in 1866 [Moss 1950:289]). Indeed, 145 slave manumissions were registered in Bergen County between 1804 and 1841 (Manumissions Liber A). This undoubtedly reflects late-18th to mid-19th-century laws that regulated and limited slavery in New Jersey, but did not abolish it (see Price 1980; Geismar 1982:7-8; Wright 1988:27). Among those freed during this period was Elizabeth Sutliff Dulfer who was manumitted in 1822 when she was in her early thirties. After living, working, and marrying in New York City, she returned to Bergen County to become an example of a locally-born slave who apparently not only achieved freedom, but also financial independence and success.

#### SAM BASS

Samuel Bass, the sexton of Hackensack's First Baptist Church at the time of his death on January 22, 1884 (BCDC 1884:B-75), was refused burial at Hackensack Cemetery because of his color. According to one version of

the story reported in the New York Times, the officers of the church took charge of the funeral and permission was obtained from the agent of the Hackensack Cemetery Company to dig a grave, but some of the cemetery's trustees manipulated withdrawal of this permission just as Bass's funeral was to begin (New York Times January 26, 1884).

Another version of the events was told by J. S. Wells, the secretary of the Hackensack Cemetery Company. It was written as a letter to the editor and published in the New York Times and, in a slightly different form, the Hackensack Republican on January 31, 1884. In it he indicated that members of the First Baptist Church and friends of Bass attempted to surreptitiously bury him in Hackensack Cemetery without timely permission to open the grave, and by representing the body as that of a white man. Bass was subsequently buried at the Colored Cemetery [Gethsemane] on January 25, 1884, amid much dispute and complaint on the part of his friends, both black and white.

Public feeling on the matter was heated and reached beyond the local area; in addition to the New York Times, the The New York Globe, New York's African-American newspaper, carried several articles about the incident. One Times article suggested there was rivalry between John J. Demarest, the coroner who was also an undertaker, and William Furby, another undertaker (incorrectly cited as "Furly" in the article) who had been given charge of the body for burial. Demarest, who was a plot owner, was the first to object to the interment of Bass at Hackensack Cemetery:

[Rivalry as a motive] is made more plausible considering that yesterday [Jan. 25, the day Bass was buried] Sam Winfield, an employee of Mr. Demarest's and the grave digger for the Moonachie cemetery, refused to dig the grave for Bass [at Moonachie, later Gethsemane Cemetery] (New York Times January 26, 1884).

This statement suggests that Winfield refused to participate out of loyalty to his employer, but it is also possible he was protesting his role in keeping Bass out of Hackensack Cemetery. Whatever Winfield's motives, it is reported that the mourners had to do the work to bury Bass in the cemetery where Demarest presumably wanted him to be buried. A letter to the editor of the New York Times on January 29 stated that Demarest was unaware of Winfield's action and had rebuked him for it the next day (New York Times 1884b).

John J. Anderson, a Hackensack Cemetery trustee, was related to two of the original Gethsemane Cemetery trustees: he was the younger brother of Garret Meyer Anderson and was less closely related on his mother's side to Simeon Zabriskie (Zabriskie 1963:677). It appears that John J. was appointed his brother's executor when Garret died intestate at thirty-seven in 1864 (Letters of Administration 1864 B:64). The New York Times article of January 26, 1884, notes that John J. Anderson, a politician, "had claimed to carry the colored vote in his pocket," and that he was originally

willing to have Bass buried in Hackensack Cemetery, but was persuaded otherwise.

The Bass matter was brought before the State Legislature by the newly-elected governor, Leon Abbett, who called for a law granting any citizen the right of burial in a public cemetery, regardless of color. The statute was enacted in March of the same year (BCDCHA 1985; Acts of the 108th Legislature of the State of New Jersey 1884:84). Sam Bass's wife, Phebe A. Banks Bass, and mother, Lydia Bass, received permission to move his remains to Philadelphia on June 14, 1884 (BCDC 1884 B-76; Exhibit 30). According to an item in the Hackensack Republican (June 19, 1884:3:1), this was done on Tuesday, June 17. A lengthier article in the Bergen County Democrat is cited in its entirety:

#### SAM BASS

Of all the colored men in the County, Sam Bass created more trouble than all the others. And Sam wasn't living, either. If he was alive we suppose he would have objected to being buried among his white neighbors. At any rate he put Gov. Abbett and certain Republican legislators on their mettle, and as a result the colored man has the same right to have his bones laid in the best cemetery in this State, and with as much ceremony as the whitest of men, provided the means are at hand. Sam's mother objected, however, to having him occupy a grave in the wilds of Moonachie in the company of those whose color was on a par with himself, and this week the remains were removed to Philadelphia, where, in the soil of our Quaker neighbors, all that is mortal of the sexton of the Baptist church will repose (June 20, 1884:Vol. XXIV No. 85).

Despite recent attempts to locate Sam Bass's final resting place in Philadelphia, it remains unknown.

At his death, Sam Bass was only thirty-eight, but the records concerning his relatively brief life reveal many contradictions. To begin with, his birthplace required some sorting out: an 1878 marriage registry at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Hackensack and his death certificate note that he was born in New York City, yet the 1880 Federal census for New Barbadoes indicates his birthplace was Pennsylvania. Another concerns his parentage: some sources say his father was an Indian (New York Times January 26, 1884), others his mother (The Hackensack Republican January 31, 1884). But the biggest contradiction is strong circumstantial evidence that Samuel, who was apparently the respected sexton of The First Baptist Church of Hackensack upon his death in 1884, had previously been incarcerated for over five and one half years in Philadelphia's Eastern State Penitentiary for burglary, apparently his first and only offense.

As stated on the death certificate, Sam's parents were Lydia and

Benjamin F. Bass. In 1846, at about the time Sam was born, a Benjamin F. Bass is listed as a waiter in the New York Directory; no color is given for Benjamin who then lived at 152 Church Street in lower Manhattan. The next year, the 1847 directory indicates that Benjamin F. Bass, "Col'd," was a hairdresser who may have both worked and lived at 9 Thomas Street, also in lower Manhattan. His third, and final, listing notes that Benjamin was still a hairdresser at the same location in 1848. It is assumed that Benjamin and his family then moved to Philadelphia where a Bass family is documented (no record for a Benjamin Bass has been found in Philadelphia, but there are at least two Samuel Basses recorded in a source book of African-Americans found in newspaper clippings and censuses, both of them barbers and both too old to be the Samuel Bass in question [Abajian 1985, 1977]).

Lydia Bass, a fifty-six or fifty-seven-year-old widow, is first found on the two 1870 Philadelphia Federal census enumerations. On one she is listed as black, on the other as colored, but on both she is a domestic living in the household of a Margaret H. Stevens, a well-to-do white woman born in New Jersey (Lydia Bass was also New Jersey born). At this time, Samuel would have been twenty-four years old. According to this same census, a Samuel Bass who was a twenty-four-year-old mulatto laborer was then an inmate of the Eastern State Penitentiary (1870 FC, First and Second Enumeration). Available records suggest this was Lydia's son who was serving a seven year and two day sentence for burglary.

On February 7, 1866, a jury had found Joseph H. Trusty, one of three young black men accused of larceny, not guilty; a Sam Bass and a Henry Lane did not appear before a jury as had apparently been planned, and both were fined one cent and received sentences of ten months in "separate or solitary confinement at labor" plus the costs of prosecution. On February 15, what appear to be the same three men all pleaded not guilty to a charge of burglary, but a jury found them guilty; again, the fine was one cent, and Henry Trusty (Joseph H. Trusty above?) and Samuel Bass were given sentences of seven years and two days, and Samuel H. Lane (Henry Lane above?) four years and two days, to be served at the State Penitentiary for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. This information comes from court records, but no bills of indictment that might provide more concrete information were located. No explanation for the discrepancy in the names of Bass's companions has been forthcoming.

Samuel Bass and Henry Trusty are both found on 1870 Philadelphia census manuscripts as inmates of the Eastern State Penitentiary. Trusty, who was from Pennsylvania, was then twenty-two and Samuel Bass twenty-four and from New York as noted previously. Penitentiary records indicate that Samuel Bass had been twenty and Trusty eighteen when they were admitted on February 15, 1866. Both are listed as mulatto on these records; Sam's eyes and hair were black, he was 5 ft. 7 in. tall, and his foot measured 9 7/8 in. His health was good, he was vaccinated, and he could read but not write. It was reported that his mental state was "dull," and upon his discharge on November 17, 1871--approximately one year and three months

before his sentence was up--it was noted that he had a scar on his left cheek and left leg near the knee. At the time, only his mother was living; unfortunately, none of these records name her or his father. It was also noted that he was sober and single (Eastern State Penitentiary Records 1866-1875).

According to the 1880 Federal census for New Barbadoes township, Samuel Bass, a circus driver, and his wife, Phebe, lived in the household of Peter Billings, a fifty-three-year old "mulatto" laborer; Phebe, who was twenty-two, and Samuel, who was thirty-six, were also listed as mulatto. Phebe did washing and ironing, and Alice Banks, Phebe's nine-year-old niece, lived with them. What the relationship may have been between Billings and the Basses remains unknown.

Phebe A. Banks Bass was the daughter of Samuel and Mary A. Banks, residents of Carlstadt on the 1860 census. In that year, Phebe A. was one year old; her listed siblings were two older brothers, Charles Henry Banks, eighteen, and William W. Banks, four (William is buried at Gethsemane). If Phebe's age is correct on this census, she would have been only seventeen, not twenty-one, when she married Sam Bass on February 17, 1878. At the time of their marriage, Sam was a waiter in a hotel.

When Samuel Bass died of pneumonia on January 22, 1884, after being ill for only one week, he was the respected sexton of Hackensack's First Baptist Church. Yet his death certificate lends credence to his Philadelphia incarceration by documenting a twelve year residency in New Jersey prior to his death; this suggests that he came to his adoptive state soon after his November 17, 1871, release from prison.

While newspaper articles describing the controversy surrounding the burial of Sam Bass often marvel at the tempest raging about this supposedly unremarkable man's death, his life was not inconsequential. He appears to have been at best indiscreet as a youth, but to have redeemed himself to become an upstanding Hackensack citizen. Whatever the facts of his life, the circumstances of his death and burial became a catalyst in shaping New Jersey's history: the desegregation of its cemeteries in 1884 is directly related to Sam Bass's death.

#### GETHSEMANE SOCIAL STATISTICS PRIOR TO INCORPORATION IN 1901

##### Age and Gender at Death

Of the 225 burials documented before incorporation, 187 (83%) were identified as African-Americans, thirty-one (14%) were Caucasian, and seven (3%) remained unidentified as to race. The age and gender of 163 African-Americans have been determined through various documents. Eighty-five are females and seventy-eight are males, both adults and children. For comparative purposes, age categories were created that follow those used to analyze the African-American population recovered through archaeological investigation of the First African Baptist Church Cemetery in Philadelphia. They comprise two groups: adults who are fifteen or older, and sub-adults who died before their fifteenth birthday (Ward et. al. 1991:7).



Ninty-five of the 163 Gethsemane burials where gender and age were determined are adults. The numbers indicate that female deaths outnumbered those of males: forty-nine females (52%) and forty-six males (48%) were fifteen or older, or adults, at death. Similar percentages were found for sixty-eight sub-adults, or children, under fifteen: thirty-six (53%) were females and thirty-two (47%) were males (in addition, there were six sub-adults whose gender is unknown).

It has been noted that a normal biological population is usually a fifty/fifty mix of males and females (Ward et al. 1991:8), and this was nearly the case for Gethsemane's adult population. But great divergence was found at the First African Baptist Church Cemetery: of forty-two adults documented through archaeology, sixteen (38%) were males and twenty-six (62%) females (Ward et al. 1991:8). Since the Philadelphia sample is much smaller than Gethsemane's, it is conceivable that the disparity between the sexes in the Philadelphia population may be due to sample size rather than vital statistics; but it is also possible the data represent differences between an urban black population during the early years of the 19th century and what was found later in the century in a developing city like Hackensack. As will be seen, Gethsemane's gender statistics remained relatively constant throughout its history.

Age comparisons can also be made between Gethsemane's African-American population and the Philadelphia sample. At Gethsemane, death of males and females most frequently occurred during the first year of life. Among adults of fifteen and over, women lived to an average age of forty-seven while for men it was forty-six. Adult women most frequently died at forty-five (five examples), while seventeen and seventy were the modes for adult males, albeit weak ones (three examples were found for each; similar weak modes for women were documented for ages thirty-four and sixty-five).

Differences in modal ages appear to dissipate among the African-American elderly: four females and three males lived past eighty, and one female (Elizabeth Dulfer) and one male (Caesar Robinson) died at ninety. The oldest person known to be buried at Gethsemane is a Mrs. Susan Smith who, according to her death certificate, died at 108 on March 11, 1888.

In the Philadelphia sample, the average age of death for adult males and females was lower than at Gethsemane, but females also lived slightly longer on the average: for males it was thirty-seven and a half to thirty-eight years, while for females it was thirty-eight to thirty-nine years. Although this suggests that females outlived males, albeit only slightly, the mean and modal ages of death indicate that females in the Philadelphia sample actually died about ten years earlier than males (thirty-five years versus forty-five), but, unlike the Gethsemane sample, there were more older females than males in the buried population (Ward et al. 1991:8). Perhaps even more importantly, the average age of death for both males and females was higher in the Gethsemane population, and this would rise slightly for females with time (see below).

The thirty-one Caucasians documented from Gethsemane's early period comprise a markedly smaller population of mainly adult males: as noted earlier, there are no adult females, but there are two female infants; there are also four male infants and one whose gender has not been identified. The rest of the white population (24, or 77%) are all adults. No specific age is known for two of the adults, but it has been determined for twenty-two individuals. Of these, the youngest died at twenty-three, the oldest at seventy-five, and the average age of death of this adult all-male population is forty-three; this is slightly lower than what was found among the African-American population. The strongest mode for age of death among the white population is thirty-five, which is similar to the Philadelphia sample of African-Americans, and a somewhat weaker one is fifty.

#### Cause of Death

The cause of death of 172 of the 225 individuals (76%) buried at Gethsemane prior to March 28, 1901, again has been determined through funeral home records and death certificates. Of these, 145, or 62%, are African-Americans and twenty-seven (12%) are Caucasians. These data reveal a great deal about the illnesses that plagued the Gethsemane population, and how its black and white populations differed in this respect.

Just as the cemetery's African-American population is more diverse than its Caucasian segment, the causes of death within this group are also more varied. These men, women, and children who represent multi-generational, interlinked families, died of the diseases and events that plagued the population at large; there were, however, some differences.

Since white burials were often those of the indigent or poor, at least some, if not most, of the differences found between the black and white populations reflect the circumstances of an individual's life and death rather than innate differences. In addition to comparisons between these two mid- to late-19th century populations, comparisons can also be made with those who died during the first quarter of the 20th century (see below).

Most of the 145 African-Americans for whom cause of death is available died during the last two decades of the 19th century, a period that most readily offers information from death certificates. Foremost among the diseases was tuberculosis and related diseases, the cause of twenty-seven, or 19%, of the deaths that could be identified; this percentage is identical to that found in the death records for Philadelphia burials from 1835 to 1843 (Parrington et al. 1986:38). Other major diseases or illnesses among Gethsemane's black population included pneumonia (17, or 12%), bronchitis (11, or 8%), heart disease and atropic or wasting diseases (10, or 7% each), kidney disease and diarrheal disorders (6, or 4% each; one of these was a case of cholera). Strokes or paralysis accounted for seven deaths (5%) and senility or old age for six (4%), while accidents sent eleven individuals (8%) to their graves.

Accidents included six drownings, one of them occurring in August, 1879, when Matthew Eastly, seventeen, was buried at "San Hill" by Sam Winfield. In June, 1899, seventeen-year-old Oliver Addison also drowned. These two young men contribute to the male age mode of seventeen years at death noted earlier. Two drownings were of unidentified men and, most tragically, two were children: eight-year-old Edward P. Jones who drowned in June, 1898, and William W. P. Harris who drowned in a cistern a month before his second birthday in 1883.

Only two accidents are reported for women in this time period; one burned to death, the other--Sarah Louisa Bates--was struck by lightning in July of 1892. The three remaining accidental deaths were all men killed by trains.

A large category of miscellaneous causes, comprising thirty-four individuals, includes four deaths from liver disease or alcoholism, four premature births and two stillbirths, three who died from intestinal diseases, two from whooping cough (pertusis), and one from diphtheria; two each died from peritonitis, convulsions, dropsy, typhoid, and meningitis. Single deaths are recorded for skin disease, cancer, malaria, problems of pregnancy or birth, diabetes, rheumatism, exhaustion, cholera, and strangulation, this latter being Mary Meyers who choked to death at the age of two.

The Caucasian burial profile--mostly adult males but some male and female infants--indicates this segment does not comprise the interrelated, generational families found in the African-American population. Instead, it is mainly a disparate group of poor men, many of them unidentified.

Given the circumstances of most of the cemetery's Caucasian burials, it is not surprising that the majority of deaths in this group are accidental (after the turn of the century, stillbirth is the predominant cause of death among Caucasians). Of the twenty-seven Caucasian burials where cause of death is known, twelve, or 44%, were deemed accidental. These included six who drowned (all adults), five who were struck by trains, and one unidentified infant who died of a "fracture of the skull seeming to be caused by being thrown from [a] passing train of [the] West Shore Railroad by [an] unknown person," and not necessarily an accident, but considered so here.

The second largest category is made up of miscellaneous causes, each of them represented by one individual. These include alcoholism, intestinal problems, premature birth, convulsions, a strangulated hernia, and one suicide who apparently hanged himself. In addition, diseases also represented by one death each are cancer, kidney disease, "Ophshdemia" (indecipherable on the death certificate), and typhoid fever. Of all the illnesses, pneumonia, with four cases, or 14% of the identified causes of Caucasian deaths, was the most prevalent. Tuberculosis and related lung diseases, and heart disease, both leading killers among the black population, are not found among the identified causes of death for white burials.

### Occupations

Censuses, death certificates, and the Hackensack Directories for 1879 and 1900 provide some information about the occupations of 127 people buried at Gethsemane. Of these, sixty-one were African-Americans buried prior to Gethsemane's incorporation in 1901.

African-American men were predominantly laborers (26, or 43%) and females with occupations were mainly domestics (17, or 28%); the only other female occupation documented is laundress, and three, or 5%, of the African-American women in Gethsemane provided this service. A similar occupational profile was documented among the First African Baptist Church Cemetery in Philadelphia (Parrington et al. 1986:40). In addition to laborers, a hackman, a bootblack, a miller, a Pullman porter, and a church sexton--Samuel Bass--are documented at Gethsemane; each represents 2% of the identified occupations. There are also two farmers, two coachman, and two barbers, each representing 3% of the occupations. Four women (7%) between the ages of forty-four and seventy-three are listed as housewives on the censuses; while this is treated as an occupation in this study, it is undoubtedly comparable to being "at home."

Occupations among the cemetery's Caucasian population from this time period were difficult to identify since neither census data nor directory information were available for most of the deceased. Only seventeen occupations were identified for the twenty-seven adult Caucasians buried at Gethsemane. Like the African-American males, most were laborers (8, or 47%). But there were also three farmers (18%), two brickmakers (12%), and a salesman, a weaver, and one man identified as a tramp (each representing 6% of this small sample).

It should be noted that the 1900 Federal census for Lodi township lists twenty-seven black males engaged in brickmaking at the Myerhof Brothers brickyard, all but one from the South (one man was from New Jersey). All were boarders, and of the twenty-seven, sixteen (60%) were married but without their wives; the rest (40%) were single. Twenty-four boarded on Washington Avenue in Little Ferry in what appears to have been a compound of black and white brickmakers (the white brickmakers were mostly European) under the direction of James Nally and his family who were white; the three others--two from New York and the one identified black brickmaker from New Jersey--boarded with German-born William Stager. Yet, death records do not specifically identify brickmakers among Gethsemane's African-American population either before or after March 29, 1901 (a newspaper article reporting the death of seventeen-year-old Nohan Reed [Read] in 1902 does say he worked in the brickyards).

### Coffin and Burial Costs

By the middle of the 19th century, even before Gethsemane became a burial ground, the mass production of coffin hardware began to make elaborate coffins available to those of limited means and social standing (Bell 1900; Cooper 1991). In addition, the emergence later in the century of the funeral home, and its director, fostered more costly funerals. Funer-

al trappings that were once limited to the rich were now accessible to the economically disadvantaged and were no longer necessarily a sign of status or wealth.

The cost of ninety-six coffins or funerals, and sometimes both, are available for Gethsemane burials prior to March 29, 1901. This information comes solely from Ricardo Funeral Home records. Eighty-nine (93%) of these burials are African-Americans, four (4%) are Caucasians, and three (3%) are unidentified.

Of the eighty-nine African-American burials, forty-nine (55%) are adults, forty (45%) are children (sub-adults). Coffin prices range from \$3 to \$70, depending at least in part on the size of the coffin. Not surprisingly, those purchased for infants or children are consistently the least expensive. Funerals began at \$3 and went up to \$118, the most expensive in this time period being the funeral of Francis (sic?) A. Harris, a thirty-seven-year-old woman who died on October 5, 1897. She was a housewife whose cause of death is unknown. Included in her \$118 burial was a \$70 coffin.

Coffin costs alone are available for seventy cases and, when analyzed by \$10 increments, most cost \$3 to \$10 (25, or 36%); total burial costs available for eighty-nine burials were mostly in the \$11 to \$20 range when figured at \$10 increments (after the \$51 to \$61 range, burials were looked at in \$20-increments, but this did not change the predominance of \$11 to \$20 burials). The least expensive burials, costing from \$3.00 to \$10.00, only comprised thirteen cases (15%), as did those in the more expensive \$21 to \$30 range. Only two burials exceeded \$100, both of them women: one was Francis A. Harris noted above who died in 1896; the other was Louisa Pope, a forty-five-year-old housewife who died of typhoid fever in 1900. While these two burials occurred near, or at, the turn of the century, funeral costs are not necessarily related to time.

As noted previously, the cost of only four Caucasian burials are available. One, a six-day-old child, cost \$4; the three others are all males who were given \$15 burials. Two were killed by trains and one died in jail while intoxicated. All three were county burials.

GETHSEMANE SOCIAL STATISTICS AFTER INCORPORATION MARCH 29, 1901 to 1924  
Age and Gender at Death

Two hundred and seventy-one burials are documented in the years following the cemetery's incorporation; 194 (72%) are identified as African-Americans. Of these, age can be determined for 184 and gender for 187; only 178 have both age and gender identified. Age and gender have also been determined for forty-three of sixty-seven Caucasian burials, age alone for sixty-three, and gender alone for forty-five. Again, no adult Caucasian females are documented at Gethsemane, but the number of Caucasian infants and children--males, females, and those that could not be gendered--had increased from seven to fifty-three, or from 23% of the Caucasian population to 79%--a dramatic shift.

The adult African-American population statistics remained constant for males and females: the numbers increased from forty-nine females and forty-six males in the earlier years to fifty-four females and fifty-one males, but the percentages remained virtually the same (52% adult females, 49% adult males). Of seventy-two children under fifteen (sub-adults), thirty-two (44%) were females and forty (56%) were males, a shift to more young males than young females.

Ages at death in this later African-American population showed some variation from the earlier figures. Infants and children continued to suffer the highest mortality rates, and, like the Caucasian population, their numbers increased but not quite as dramatically (in the years before incorporation, seventeen African-American males died at less than one year, after incorporation the number was thirty-one; female infants increased from twelve before incorporation to twenty-one after). The average age at death of black females rose from forty-seven prior to incorporation to fifty-one after, a perceptible upward trend. The average adult male age at death remained forty-seven in this time period.

Weak modes for age at death are found in both the adult female and male African-American populations, but they may be significant: the female modes are twenty-two, forty-one, and sixty-nine, this latter mode being much higher than the forty-five-year-old mode found in the earlier population; modes for males are twenty-one and twenty-five, much lower than the seventy-year mode, noted in the earlier population (all these modes comprise only three cases). Adding to this apparent shift in predominance of older females is a possible trend noted among the elderly: no males over seventy-eight are recorded while there are six females over eighty. Again, the oldest documented burial is a female, Lydie J. Berry, who died on February 28, 1903, at the age of ninety-two.

#### Cause of Death

Cause of death has been determined for 113 (58%) of the 194 African-American burials identified after incorporation. This relatively small number undoubtedly reflects the limited access to death certificates after 1900 that has been noted earlier. Yet, there is enough information to compare the cause of death before and after incorporation.

After March 29, 1901, and through the first quarter of the 20th century, tuberculosis continued to be the major cause of death among Gethsemane's African-American population, and its incidence remained almost the same--18% (as compared with 19% earlier) of all African-American deaths were caused by this disease. This is also true of diarrheal illnesses which remained at 4% and included four cases of infant cholera (a fifth was listed as diarrhea). On the other hand, the incidence of heart disease doubled, increasing from 7% of those dying prior to incorporation to 15% after (10 cases before, 17 after). The incidence of kidney disease and pneumonia both increased by 2%. A major change is the number of stillbirths which rose from two, or 1%, prior to incorporation to eight, or 7%, after.

The miscellaneous category, which comprises causes of death with three or fewer cases, now included three cases each of cancer, convulsions, dropsy, and pertusis (whooping cough); peritonitis, problems with pregnancy or birth, poliomyelitis, and stroke each accounted for two deaths. Appendicitis, diabetes, exhaustion, fainting, premature birth or birth defects, senility, and typhoid fever each caused one death.

After incorporation, accidental deaths are documented for only five African-Americans, less than half the number in the earlier population. Three were drownings, all of them summertime deaths of young men between the ages of seventeen and nineteen. One was the aforementioned Nattie Reed, or Nohan Read, whose gravestone still stands in Gethsemane (see Figure 14); another, also seventeen, was Elmer Kirkpatrick, trustee Washington White's grandson. Henry Davis, a thirty-year-old laborer, was struck by a New York-New Jersey Railroad train; it seems likely that this accident occurred on Railroad Avenue near where Davis lived (the train ran at grade along this street). The only female known to die an accidental death after March 29, 1901, was seven-year-old Charlotte Clark. Like one of the accidental females deaths noted earlier, she died of burns.

Again, the causes of death for Caucasian burials differ from the African-American population. The primary cause is no longer accidents (now 5, or 11%) but stillbirths (17, or 38%) followed closely by premature birth (8, or 18%). Pneumonia is a minor cause (3 cases, or 7%), as is stroke (2, or 4%). Heart disease--a major cause of death among the African-American population--accounts for only one Caucasian death (2%); this is also true of diarrheal diseases and tuberculosis, the two other notable causes of death among African-Americans. Miscellaneous causes of death include intestinal problems, convulsions, rheumatism, peritonitis, meningitis, exhaustion, and asphyxiation of a newborn--each with one reported incidence.

Accidental deaths among the Caucasian population include an unidentified man struck by a train, another who fell from a hay load, an unidentified baby who drowned in English Creek, and an "unknown," probably a man, who drowned in the Hackensack River and was buried by the county. A ten-year-old boy, Edward Venable, who died in April 1913, was run over by an automobile.

#### Occupations

The occupations of forty-eight African-Americans who died after incorporation have been identified. As before, laborers predominate but the number and percentage are smaller than before (17, or 35% as compared with 26 or 43%); this is also true of domestics, who now number twelve, or 25% (compared with 17 or 28%). In this time period, the category of housewife, as noted earlier, not really an occupation, more than doubled in size--now nine (19%) as opposed to four (7%); when female occupations are looked at on their own, 43% of Gethsemane women are housewives. Among the males, there are two drivers, a carpenter, a carter, a farmer, a floor polisher, a mason, a mechanic, a Pullman porter, and a stableman (each 2%

of the general population). These occupations, and their numbers, are consistent with those found earlier and those documented earlier in Philadelphia (Parrington et al. 1986:40).

The number of occupations identified for Caucasian burials decreases sharply in this time period: while there were seventeen identified before, only six are now known. This undoubtedly reflects the shift to mainly infant or child burials among the Caucasian population, but it also highlights the anonymity of many of the Caucasians buried in the cemetery during this period.

Of the sixty-three cases of Caucasian burials where age has been identified, only ten are adults. Of these, occupations have been identified for six. Again, laborers predominate, but since this sample is so small, the four identified laborers make up 67% of the population. The others are a farmer and a farmhand, each representing 17% of the identified occupations. Not only is the number of identified occupations smaller among the Caucasian population than among the African-Americans, there is less occupational diversity.

#### Coffin and Burial Costs

There are almost three times as many cases with costs of coffins and funerals available in this time period than in the earlier one: while there were ninety-six cases before, there are 255 after incorporation. Of these, 188 (74%) are African-Americans, sixty-two (24%) are Caucasian, and five (2%) are burials where this information is missing.

Again, the least costly burials were of children, and time appears to be a minor factor in the cost. Yet, the two most expensive burials occurred in 1924, the last year of recorded burials. Both were African-American men: the funeral of Nicholas Burwell, a mechanic who died at thirty-seven, cost \$444; following closely is Louis Swinney, the cemetery's last recorded burial. Swinney was a driver who died of chronic kidney disease at forty-five; his funeral cost \$439.40.

Caucasian burials continued to show less cost diversity than those of African-Americans, but some variation is recorded. The predominant cost of both coffins and funerals continued to fall in the \$3 to \$10 dollar range (of sixty-two burials where cost is known, thirty-three, or 53%, were in this category), but unlike the earlier time period, more costly burials are documented.

Infants and children make up the major part of the Caucasian population, and the low cost of both coffins and burials reflects this. On the other hand, the funeral of Ethel R. Bates, a six-year-old who died of pneumonia in 1903, cost \$79, and Edward Venable, the ten-year-old noted earlier who was killed by an automobile, was given a \$100 burial. The most expensive Caucasian burial in this time period--\$155--is recorded for a Frank Thompson who was forty-three years old when he died of apoplexy on December 27, 1914; Thompson's occupation is unknown.



GETHSEMANE BURIALS BASED ON MILITARY RECORDS

The standing headstone of William Robinson, who served on the S. S. Savannah, marks a military burial at Gethsemane (see Figure 8), but others are documented. Both Peter H. Billings and Silas M. Carpenter served in the Union Army during the Civil War; both were in the Twenty-Ninth (Colored) Connecticut Volunteer Regiment, an Infantry unit that was ultimately one of four "colored" regiments in the Tenth Corps. Billings was in Company H and Carpenter in Company F. The Company records indicate both men were living in Connecticut at the time of their enlistment, but, while Carpenter was born in Connecticut, Billings was born in New Jersey.

The Twenty-ninth Regiment was created in August 1863, but most of its recruits--Billings and Carpenter among them--enlisted during the last three months of the year. For lack of officers, the regiment was not mustered into United States service until March of 1864, and it was mustered out in October, 1865. The regiment comprised ten companies and was engaged in five battles during the war, all in Virginia. During the year and a half of its service, twenty-five men died in battle, six died accidentally, eighteen were fatally wounded, one was captured, four were accidentally wounded, and 178 died of disease. Silas Carpenter apparently suffered an accident or ill health when the company was sent to South Carolina (see below), but both he and Billings survived the war.

As recently as 1983, a marker identified Peter Billings's grave at Gethsemane (Bergen Record 1983), but it has now disappeared from the cemetery. This simple white stone documented Billings's military unit as Company H of the 29th Connecticut Colored Infantry Regiment. His pension record indicates he had been a farmer before volunteering for service on December 30, 1863, that he held the rank of private, and that he was a musician. He was honorably discharged on October 24, 1865.

In 1891, when Billings applied for a pension, his complexion was described as "light." At the time, he claimed to be suffering from rheumatism that made him unfit for manual labor. His medical exam for this application notes that he also suffered from poor sight in his left eye. This same record indicates that at sixty-five he was 5 ft. 4 3/4 in. tall and weighed 154 pounds although his enlistment record documents his height as 5 ft. 3 in. In addition to rheumatism, he complained of heart and kidney disease, but his heart and kidney functions were found to be normal. According to information in his pension file, he was married twice: first, to Sarah Frances Savigover who died in New Haven in January, 1864, while Peter was in the service; and second to Elizabeth Sisco who he married in New York City in 1880. He reported that records of this later marriage were destroyed in a flood. He had three living children in 1898.

By 1902, Billings was also suffering from Bright's disease (kidney disease) as well as rheumatism and impaired vision, a condition caused by old age or senility. At this time he obtained approval for an increase in his \$6.00 monthly pension, and he had received a \$12.00 payment before he died of kidney and heart disease on December 5, 1902. Although there is no

official verification that his gravestone was provided by the military, its appearance suggests that it was.

The record for Silas Carpenter is less revealing. He was born in Greenwich, Connecticut on May 7, 1839, and enlisted in Company F of the 29th Connecticut Colored Infantry on December 19, 1863. Like Billings, he was mustered out on October 24, 1865. During his service he had suffered from "typho-malarial" fever and related discomforts that kept him intermittently inactive from July through part of October, 1864. His 1897 pension application lists rheumatism, bronchitis, injury to left ankle, kidney and heart trouble, lumbago, and emphysema as complaints.

In 1900, he claimed to have contracted "disease of the back, throat, breast and stomach" from a crash that occurred on May 15, 1864, while on duty in Beaufort Island, South Carolina. He had been hospitalized in South Carolina and later in New York. At the time of this application, he was sixty-one years old and was described as 5 ft. 6 1/2 in. tall with black eyes and hair and a "dark" complexion. He was then living in Little Ferry, New Jersey, but by 1907, when he too applied for a pension increase, his residence was Ridgefield Park. This document describes him at enlistment as 5 ft. 8 in. tall, colored, with grey eyes and black hair; his occupation prior to his military service was given as carpenter-farmer. After leaving the service, he lived in New York for four years and then for thirty-nine years in New Jersey.

Carpenter's personal data become more contradictory when, in 1912--the year he died--yet another pension application indicates that upon enrollment he was 5 ft. 6 1/4 in. tall with black eyes and hair. Before he died on July 29, 1912, his last pension payment was \$12, the same as Peter Billings. Although there is no record of Carpenter's gravestone, it appears more than likely that it too was a military marker.

#### STATURE OF GETHSEMANE'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN POPULATION

The question of the stature of Gethsemane's African-American population was generated by data from twenty-eight adult skeletons recently excavated from the First African Baptist Church Cemetery in Philadelphia (Ward et al. 1991:9-10). These burials were found to range overall from 5 ft. to 5 ft. 11 in., and to average 5 ft. 4 in. The sample included ten males and twenty-eight females, and the males averaged 5 ft. 7 in. while the females average was 5 ft. 2 1/2 in. As a comparison, it was noted that the average height of 20th-century African-American males is 5 ft. 7 in. and females 5 ft. 3 in.

Comparable data are unavailable from Gethsemane since the main source for determining the stature of its African-American population are the coffin sizes noted in some of Ricardo's records. Additional information is available in the military records of Peter Billings and Silas Carpenter (see above), but both offer somewhat contradictory statistics, calling into question the accuracy of these records in general. A height for Samuel Bass comes from a prison record that appears to be his (see

Samuel Bass above).

Because it is based on coffin sizes, not individual measurements, the height of most of those buried at Gethsemane can only be assessed in terms of range. In the 19th and early-20th centuries, coffins were most often made by cabinet or furniture makers who were also undertakers (sometimes undertakers also owned livery stables). But James and William Ricardo were exclusively undertakers and apparently purchased their coffins, perhaps in pre-determined sizes.

Coffin sizes are sporadically noted in Ricardo Funeral Home Records beginning in 1885, the first year these records are available. In that year, four such entries are noted, one for an adult male and three for children or infants. The coffin sizes for child burials are meaningless in terms of a population's stature, but those in Ricardo's records suggest that coffins were available in 3 in. increments. Coffin sizes for adults are more telling in terms of stature, but, since all but one of the Gethsemane adults received either 5 ft. 6 in. or 5 ft. 9 in. coffins, these may also have been standardized in 3 in. increments that blur minor height distinctions (William Abbate, a funeral director, reports that children's coffins are now available in 6 in. increments, and those for adults are variable).

There are seventeen adult coffins sized at Gethsemane, but one is from an ungendered, unidentified African-American burial. Since this was a 6 ft. coffin--the only one of its size--the deceased is probably an adult male, but this is unconfirmed and this burial is not included in the male versus female average. Of the two recorded sizes, two adult females and two adult males were buried in 5 ft. 6 in. coffins, and eight adult females and four adult males were buried in 5 ft. 9 in. coffins. Since a wooden coffin has to be at least 3 in. larger than the deceased (Abbate 1991:personal communication), two males and two females were 5 ft. 3 in. or less, and eight females and four males were 5 ft. 6 in. or less.

More specific stature information is theoretically available for Silas M. Carpenter, Peter H. Billings, and Samuel Bass. Based on available records, Billings, who was between 5 ft. 3 in. and 5 ft. 4 3/4 in., was within the range of other known Gethsemane heights, but both Carpenter, who was between 5 ft. 6 1/4 and 5 ft. 8 in. tall, and Bass, who was 5 ft. 7, were taller than the others. The unknown, ungendered individual buried in a 6 ft. coffin was at most 5 ft. 9 in. tall--the tallest known of Gethsemane's African-American burials.

This somewhat speculative information suggests an adult population with height measurements slightly different from what was found in the Philadelphia sample: an average height for Gethsemane's adult African-American population based on coffin size is about 5 ft. 5 1/2 in. as compared with the sample from Philadelphia's First African Baptist Church where the average was 5 ft. 4 in. based on skeletal measurements.

Coffin sizes for women in the Gethsemane sample suggest an average height of about 5 ft. 5 in., but this undoubtedly is too tall--certainly it is much taller than the 5 ft. 2 in. average from the Philadelphia sample, and even greater than the cited 20th century average of 5 ft. 3 in. The average height for Gethsemane men is approximately 5 ft. 5 3/4 in., or lower than the Philadelphia male average of 5 ft. 7 in. A slightly higher average for Gethsemane males is derived when an attempt is made to adjust the heights found for Billings and Carpenter (an average of 5 ft. 6 in.), but this again is lower than the Philadelphia male average. Only Sam Bass's 5 ft. 7 in. measurement suggests a slightly taller male.

It may be of interest that William Abbate, a funeral director in Southampton, Long Island, who services the local black community as well as the white population, found the coffin sizes documented at Gethsemane surprisingly small. In his experience, there is no height difference between African-Americans and Caucasians, and both groups are taller than suggested at Gethsemane (Abbate 1991:personal communication). While the question of stature has not been addressed for Gethsemane's Caucasian burials, it appears that the population in general is now taller than in the past.

#### HACKENSACK AFRICAN-AMERICAN PROFILES

When the Gethsemane acre was purchased to become a burial ground for Hackensack's African-American population, Hackensack was a hamlet in New Barbadoes township that was on its way to becoming an urban center; incorporation as the City of Hackensack occurred in 1921, just three years before the cemetery's last burial took place. A look at Hackensack's African-American population in the late 19th and early 20th centuries provides some clues to, and comparisons with, those buried at Gethsemane.

Not only did Hackensack shift politically from township to city during Gethsemane's time, there were several developments that undoubtedly affected the local African-American population, and, in consequence, the history of Gethsemane. Among them were the formation in 1861 of the Hackensack Cemetery Company, as noted earlier, a private cemetery that figured in the Sam Bass incident. After the subsequent desegregation of New Jersey's cemeteries in 1884, African-American burials in Hackensack were no longer limited to Gethsemane, at least theoretically. Also, the Varrick Memorial Church was founded in 1864 as the "Olive Branch Colored Mission Number 3 of Hackensack," as noted on the historic marker erected outside the present church building by the Bergen County Historical Society. This African Methodist Episcopal Church has been situated at 120 Atlantic Avenue since 1867; its name was changed to the Varrick Memorial Church in 1917 when its present building was erected. The founding of this church undoubtedly helped form and foster the local African-American community as did other local African-American congregations and institutions, such as the Mt. Olive Baptist Church organized in 1889.

The organization of Hackensack Hospital, and construction of its first building in 1888, did not directly affect Gethsemane, but it theoretically resulted in more accurate death records. (At least forty-seven

Gethsemane burials were deaths that occurred at Hackensack Hospital, the first of them in 1889.) The hospital had among its directors and staff two men who are often noted in Ricardo's records or on death certificates: Dr. David St. John, a founder of the hospital, and Dr. Alvah A. Swayze who became associated with Dr. St. John in 1898 (Westervelt II 1923:160, 487). Dr. St. John figured in the Elizabeth Dulfer story (see Brown 1986:22), and he and Dr. Swayze, who were both white, treated many of Gethsemane's African-American sick and dying as noted on many death certificates.

After the Civil War, the local brick industry in Hackensack and Little Ferry expanded. Perhaps both as a cause and an effect, this promoted an influx of African-American laborers. These newcomers, and a naturally growing local black population, prompted the growth of neighborhoods where African-American families clustered.

While it is not the intent here to delve into the many aspects of Hackensack's development, a limited analysis of its African-American population has been undertaken using two available Hackensack Directories (1879 and 1900) augmented by census data when appropriate. Over 200 adult African-American residents are listed in these two directories, and places of birth and occupations are available for many. In addition, these data allow for reconstruction of the residential clusters that attracted Hackensack's African-American population.

#### Place of Birth

As has been noted, through 1860, most local blacks listed their place of birth as Bergen County. In 1879, thirty-three male and four female African-American adults are listed in the 1879 Hackensack Directory, and place of birth is available through census data for nineteen, including one female. Of these, sixteen report being born in New Jersey, while one lists Delaware, one New York, and another Virginia. Based on this information, it appears that few African-Americans had migrated to Hackensack by 1879, and the number of local black households was quite small.

This number grew markedly by 1900. Of 115 listings of "col." residents in the directory where place of birth could be established through census data, fifty were males, and sixty-five were females. Of these, forty-four (38%) were born in New Jersey, forty (35%) in Virginia, eleven (10%) in New York, five (4%) in North Carolina and five (4%) in South Carolina, three (3%) in Maryland, two (2%) in Delaware, and one each in Florida, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., the West Indies, and Germany (1% each).

The figures not only document a growing local African-American population, but also an increasing number of blacks coming to Hackensack mainly from southern states (these numbers do not include the male brick-makers, almost exclusively from southern states, who were boarding in Little Ferry and are noted in the 1900 census but would not be found in the Hackensack Directory). The ramifications of this influx are beyond the scope of this study, but note should be made that many of the newcomers

undoubtedly brought with them Southern burial customs. These might very well have included the practice of marking graves with clay pipes and placing personal belongings of the deceased around a gravesite as noted earlier.

### Occupations

The occupations of African-Americans listed in the two Hackensack directories reveal a growing diversity of jobs over time, but service occupations predominated. In 1879, only four women who were "washing" are listed in the directory, and most men were laborers (21 of 33, or 64%), followed by coachman (5 of 33, or 15%). The percentage of laborers at this time was similar to what was found at Gethsemane before incorporation.

In 1900, occupations of 121 individuals were noted. Coachmen and liverymen had increased in number and percent (20 of 66 male occupations, or 30%) while laborers had decreased (12 of 66, or 18%). Many service occupations are listed--including two married men who were "housecleaners" (3%)--but the number of non-service occupations for men had grown. By then there were two night watchmen and two expressmen (3% each), a contractor, a farmer, a junkman, a mason (each at 2%), and three pastors or ministers (5%). With the exception of one nurse, two dressmakers or seamstresses, and twelve laundresses, thirty-six of fifty-five employed women were domestics (66%)--mainly maids, cooks, chambermaids, and servants. Not surprisingly, this profile of domestic service is similar to what has been found in the Gethsemane population.

It has been reported that domestic service among female African Americans in the North dates to colonial times, but that it increased most rapidly after the Civil War (Katzman 1981:203). One study notes that black women preferred day work compatible with having a family to live-in service, but this would become more widespread as the 20th century progressed. Surprisingly, the 1879 Hackensack Directory only lists "washing" as a female occupation, so it is impossible to determine the incidence of live-in and live-out domestic service based on directory information until the turn of the century. This is particularly odd since the 1860 and 1870 censuses both document local females in domestic service.

In the 1900 directory, where forty women are listed in domestic service (including cooks), twenty-seven (68%) are living in their employers' homes. While married women are listed as laundresses, a dressmaker, a cook, and a nurse, none are listed as servants. The rest were either not working as domestics, or were not listing themselves as such (53 married women are found in the 1900 Hackensack Directory without occupations). Laura Teamer, the only married cook, lived and worked in the same household where her husband, York, was a coachman, but neither are identified with Gethsemane. It appears that most household servants in Hackensack "lived-in," and, whether living-in or out, there is no indication in the directory that they are married.

Note should be made of the fifty-three supposedly unemployed mar-

ried or widowed women who may comprise a good-sized "at home" population (44%). This is comparable to the African-American women buried at Gethsemane after the turn of the century where 43% had been listed in censuses as being "at home."

Of thirty-seven listings in the 1879 Hackensack Directory, only three (8%) are later identified with Gethsemane: Sam Dickson [Dickerson]; Sam Porter; and H. Sanford (probably Henry Sanford). Although the list is too long to present here, thirty-one of 207 (15%) names in the 1900 directory were apparently later buried at Gethsemane.

#### Residential Clusters

Using the directories, it has been possible to reconstruct where Hackensack's black population lived in 1879 and 1900. This information was superimposed on maps of Hackensack found in Walker's 1876 Atlas of Bergen County, and several residential centers have been identified.

It becomes apparent that Hackensack's late-nineteenth and early-20th century black population was clustered, but these clusters were not limited geographically; instead they were located in various parts of town. This is in contrast to an observation made in 1939 that "the most sharply defined racial colony in Hackensack is the Negro section of about five blocks along First Street between Berry Street and Central Avenue" (WPA 1939:258). This neighborhood did not yet exist when Hackensack's African-American community was developing during the last half of the 19th century, and Railroad Avenue to the east was but one residential core.

The 1879 and 1900 directories identify a residential center located along Grove Street, running northwest to Kansas Street, and branching east on State Street and more densely on Railroad Avenue. Union Street was populated in 1879, and other clusters are found on Essex and Passaic Streets, although locations on these streets appear to shift over time. Further east, homes were located on Main Street and River Street north and south of Anderson Street, but throughout this time period, Railroad Avenue remained an address for a large segment of Hackensack's black population. It is perhaps noteworthy that no homes of African-Americans are documented on Atlantic Avenue even though the Varrick Memorial Church had been located here between Railroad Avenue and Union Street since 1867. By 1900, the area around Berry Street that would become a cluster of African-American families was just beginning to develop.

Several African-Americans owned homes in Hackensack, most but not all of them mortgaged. Among the Hackensack home owners later buried at Gethsemane was Samuel B. Porter who owned a house on Lodi Street at the corner of Huyler; his brother, Jesse, also owned a house nearby, but he does not appear to be buried at Gethsemane. In addition to the two houses owned by the Porter brothers, the 1876 Walker atlas identifies a Porter property on Railroad Avenue. However, Mr. Samuel T. Porter, Samuel B.'s grandson, has no recollection of the family owning property there (Porter 1991:personal communication), and neither the 1870 nor 1900 directories

identify any Porters living on this street.

Samuel T. Porter has kindly made a photo of his grandfather's homestead available (Figure 15). Believed to date from the 1890s, it shows the Porter family on the front porch of a substantial, well-kept clapboard house, and may include a likeness of Samuel B; it may also show his first wife, Josephine who died in 1894.

Other Gethsemane families who owned homes in Hackensack in 1900 were [George] Washington White, a Gethsemane trustee whose house was on South First Street; Henry Sanford who, with his wife Anna, owned a house on Lodi Street; and a Betsy Kizer on Main Street, probably Betsy Kaiser, possibly the only Gethsemane African-American to own a mortgage-free house in 1900.

Ricardo Place, a small street located north of Lawrence Street, between Railroad Avenue and Union Street, is not found on the 1876 Walker atlas but is noted in Westervelt's History of Hackensack (II 1923: 497). It seems more than likely that this street, situated in an area where so many African-American families continue to live, is a tribute to the white undertakers intimately tied to Hackensack's black community. Surely, this street commemorates James and William Ricardo who buried so many of Hackensack's African-Americans and left a record that makes it possible to re-create a history of their lives.

#### GETHSEMANE FIELD SURVEYS

Between August 1989 and October 1992, five field surveys were carried out at Gethsemane, two of them ground penetrating radar (GPR) surveys conducted by James Mellett assisted by the writer and other field crew (Mellett 1989, 1990). This non-intrusive testing identified 238 possible grave sites and several radar targets thought to represent the underground remnants of clay pipe grave markers. Subsequently, three field surveys were undertaken under the direction of the writer (two of them coordinated with Dr. Mellett): two entailed probing and some excavation to verify the findings of the GPR survey, one--the most intensive effort--was a field survey where the gridded cemetery was systematically raked to collect artifactual material associated with burials and burial practices. This raking survey was augmented by probing and excavation of several shallow test pits, a shallow test trench, and one excavation unit placed to determine whether a hillock in the cemetery's southeastern corner was dumped debris or a natural deposit. In addition, artifact collection and probing were also undertaken in 1988 and 1989 by BCDCHA staff and volunteers working with Lynette Strangstat, the stone conservator who restored and reset many of the cemetery's twenty-eight standing headstones.

All fieldwork was designed to minimize subsurface disturbance. Details of the surveys, probings, and their findings will be found in Geismar 1993. Figure 16 offers a general plan of the cemetery, its survey grid, and the information recovered during the GPR 1990 survey. It also indicates the location of any test pits (TP), test trenches (TT), excavation units (EU), and features of note. Wherever possible, artifactual material



collected by the BCDCHA has been correlated with the grid system used during the 1990 GPR survey and reestablished for the raking survey in 1992.

#### Material Findings

Seventy-eight artifacts were recovered during the 1992 raking survey, seven from the 1990 verification survey, and 100 from collection and probing done mainly in 1988. The categories of these "grab" samples include ceramics, glass, bone (faunal material), brick, metal, shell (also faunal material), plastic, and wood.

Since these are almost entirely grab samples, the number of artifacts in each category is not statistically valid, but the presence or absence of objects is noteworthy. Of particular interest are grave markers in the form of clay pipe fragments, or hardware from plot markers or coffins. A few examples of possible grave goods were also recovered.

Twenty-five artifacts collected during the 1992 survey appear related to burials: eleven have been identified as coffin hardware (many of these identifications were made by William Hartgrove of the Frank E. Campbell Memorial Chapel in New York City); ten are fragments of ceramic pipe grave markers or hardware for plot markers; and four may have been grave goods.

The terra-cotta or other ceramic pipe fragments, most of them sewer pipes, but at least one of them a chimney flue, are of particular interest. Three were located underground but in place through probing in 1988 (Figure 17), and fragments were recovered below and above ground during this and subsequent surveys. A similar marker has been found at a Staten Island cemetery (Thompson and Cornet 1981:195), but it is the only other example known from a Northern African-American cemetery. In addition to connecting the world of the living and the dead, these clay pipes were water related, an example of African symbolism. A straight-sided stone-ware rim fragment collected during the 1992 survey may either be part of a food storage crock or a different type of pipe.

Warm water mollusk shells, mostly fragmented but one whole, and a single clam shell fragment are also noteworthy. The terra-cotta pipes and the warm water shells undoubtedly were remnants of grave markers or grave goods that make Gethsemane burials unique. While these are unique, the recovered coffin hardware seems typical of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, although their costs may vary.

The availability of mass produced coffin hardware after 1850, and its proportionately decreasing cost are discussed by Bell (1990). Over time, it became an unreliable indicator of status. It may be noteworthy that two white metal coffin screws or tacks recovered in 1990 are similar to those from a Massachusetts almshouse cemetery that functioned from 1848 to 1872 (Bell 1990:59, 65 Figs. 6c and 7). Whether this is indicative of the economic situation of Gethsemane's buried population or the economics

of the cost of coffin hardware is a question.

A metal "tassel" with an attached piece of chain recovered in 1988 was apparently related to a 52-in. chain collected nearby in 1992. Both were undoubtedly used to define a burial plot and were attached to one or more of the stone plot markers that abound in the northern part of the cemetery. A metal flange is another piece of recovered plot-marker hardware and it is possible that a 3-in. diameter metal ring may also have served this function.

A cup or bowl fragment and 2/3 of a dish with gilt sheaf-of-wheat designs collected in 1992, as well as a dish rim and base fragment recovered during probing in 1988 that may have on it a rendering of wheat, are also of interest. While not specifically related to African-American burials, a sheaf-of-wheat is believed to be a symbol of age (Baranowski 1993: personal communication) or a "full and bountiful life" (Baugher et al. nd) and is known from other cemeteries (e.g., Baugher et al. nd; Huber 1982: 101). The relation to age is borne out by records from the Ricardo Funeral Home, the source of so much pertinent burial information for the Gethsemane study.

The burial records of two female African-Americans document sheaf-of-wheat as part of their burial costs. Both of them may have been buried at Gethsemane, but this has not been fully established. Both were adults, but their ages are unknown. However, information is available about the ages of eleven Caucasian burials where sheaf-of-wheat is noted (these records were found on the same pages as African-American burials used in the study). Of these, four were sixty-three to seventy years old, two were seventy-five to seventy-eight, and five were eighty-three to eighty-eight, verifying the association of a sheaf-of-wheat with age.

The sheaf-of-wheat decorated dish found during the 1992 survey lacks wear marks on either its base or surface, suggesting it had never been used (the other two objects were too fragmentary or their condition too deteriorated to assess wear). These would be the marks left by repeated pushing along a table or cabinet shelf or from cutting with a knife or scraping with a fork or spoon. Rather than being used by the deceased, these objects may have been bought especially to be left as grave goods (this may also be true of a whole edged plate without a sheaf-of-wheat design that also does not show any wear).

Two nickel or coin-silver plated spoons, one a soup or tablespoon collected from the surface in 1992, the other a teaspoon found 1 ft. below the surface in a test trench dug in 1990, may be artifacts associated with African-American burial customs. Yet again, these may be the last utensil used by the deceased, but both were found where the GPR survey did not record any burials and where no grave markers are known. Both could have been moved over time. Based on information found in a shallow test pit dug during the 1992 survey, the sandy soil rather than purposeful burying could account for the tablespoon's location below the surface. This is

suggested by a surveyor's shiner (a small, round metal disk) found about 5 in. below the ground surface; it had been used to mark a grid coordinate established for the 1990 GPR and, although sunken into the sand, the disk was still in its original position.

Several examples of embossed bricks from late-19th and early-20th century local brick manufacturers--whole "J.W.G." [James W. Gillies] and "C. E. WALSH" bricks as well as a fragment that read "M. B...." [Mehrhof Brothers] were collected during at least two of the surveys, as was a selection of personal artifacts. These included a link-chain bracelet with a spring clasp and one remaining green glass stone, a rhinestone clip, and a YALE lock to name a few.

As noted earlier, a total of eight marine shell fragments and one whole specimen was collected during the surveys, eight of them warm water mollusks and one a clam. Seven of these were fragments of the Emperor Helmet (Cassis madagascarensis); one was a whole auger-shaped mollusk shell. All but the clam were seen by Dr. William Emerson, Head of the Department of Invertebrates of the American Museum of Natural History, who identified and commented on these specimens.

The Emperor Helmet is a marine mollusk native to warm waters from Florida to the Lesser Antilles and the Bahamas. The handsome, massive shell ranges from 4 to 9 in. long when whole, but it could not be ascertained whether the Gethsemane fragments came from one or more individuals. Dr. Emerson also identified the single small auger-shaped shell as a cerithian (Cerithinidae sp.), a member of a large genus of warm water marine mollusks that range southward from South Carolina. The clam shell fragment appears to be a common quahog available locally. Of the three species, the clam is the most problematic. While it could have been included in trash dumped at the site, clam shells often decorated Southern graves (e.g., Vlach 1978:143). The warm water mollusks, however, are more readily identified as grave goods. It has been noted that:

a few large conch shells [similar to the Emperor Helmet] are set near the headstone or in a line from the head to the foot of the grave; small oyster or clam shells can frame the outside of the burial plot or they may completely cover the entire mound (Vlach 1978:143).

Bone (faunal material) was also collected, but its historical significance is a question. Forty-three specimens of several wild and domestic species, as well as two possible human bone fragments, were recovered. With noted exceptions, they were identified by Barbara Davis. Among them were eleven elements of a juvenile woodchuck (Marmota monax), including the left mandible and a maxillary fragment. The mandible of an opossum (Didelphis marsupialis) in three pieces and eleven chicken (Gallus gallus) bones were found near each other in 1988 (several of these bones mended to become one element).

According to one source, a funeral custom traceable to Africa involves sacrifice of a white chicken to the spirit of the deceased (Vlach 1978:144). (More recently, glass chicken figures have replaced the live chicken in southern cemeteries [Vlach 1978:144]). It is possible the eleven chicken bones collected during the 1988 survey survived a grave side ceremony from many years ago, but it is also possible they are household trash left when Gethsemane was a dumping ground and a place of public access.

A badly weathered, mice-gnawed whole sheep (Ovis/Capra) metapodial was recovered from the surface in 1988 (a lack of evidence for mineral absorption suggested it had never been buried). Also, thirteen domestic cat (Felis catus) bones, most likely from one individual, were collected from a test pit in 1992.

The two bone specimens suspected to be human remains were examined by G. James Sawyer of the American Museum of Natural History Department of Anthropology. One was too fragmentary to be unidentifiable. The other appears to be a distal tibia fragment of a child of about five years old, an identification based on the size and degree of epiphysial fusion. Both specimens have been reinterred at their original location in Gethsemane.

#### CONCLUSIONS

By studying the Gethsemane population--the ages at death, the causes of death, the occupations, and the kinships--facets of the history of a Bergen County city and an integral part of its population have been examined. Between 1860 and 1924, a minimum number of 496 burials are documented; most (381 or 77%) are African-American, but many (98 or 20%) have been identified as Caucasians; a small number (18 or 4%) remain unidentified as to race.

The African-Americans at Gethsemane represent a stable group of hardworking men and women, and, too often, their young children. It is an interrelated population of families with ordinary but often poignant life histories. The white burials, on the other hand, which are first documented in 1885--a quarter century after the cemetery was formalized through a deed--comprise a disparate group of infants and children and often unidentified, indigent men buried by the county. For the local black population it was a family cemetery; for the white people buried there it was akin to a potter's field.

Among those buried at Gethsemane are Elizabeth Dulfer, a local black woman who became a well-to-do landowner in Little Ferry where she had been born a slave, and Sam Bass, a man who inadvertently helped shape New Jersey history. For Bass, who died in January 1884, it was only a temporary resting place, but before his disinterment and removal to Philadelphia in June of the same year, New Jersey's cemeteries had been desegregated because of the furor that surrounded his burial.

The terra-cotta pipe grave-markers found at Gethsemane indicate

that aspects of surviving West African burial customs found in Southern cemeteries are also found in this Little Ferry burial ground. This may also be true of the warm water mollusk shells and some ceramics and personal objects. These may all reflect practices introduced by the growing number of Southern blacks documented during the late-19th and early-20th centuries in the Hackensack profiles developed for this study.

The 187 artifacts collected between 1988 and 1992 through surface collection, trenching, and a systematic raking survey, as well as chance collecting, have provided information that relates Gethsemane to Southern African-American cemeteries. If nothing were known about the site, these mainly fragmented artifacts would have revealed its cemetery function and suggested its African-American association. Moreover, this was discernible with little disturbance to the site.

To a degree, the birth, life, and death of Gethsemane Cemetery echo the stages of a human life, or of any well-conceived story: it has a beginning in 1860, when three white men purchased a 1-acre plot as a burial place for Hackensack's African-American population; it has a middle that documents increasing numbers, the inclusion of a Caucasian element that was undoubtedly never anticipated by the original trustees, and incorporation under seven black trustees in 1901; and it has an end culminating in its abandonment and neglect. But any end is also a beginning, and its demise as an active cemetery has given Gethsemane the chance for a new life: as a Bergen County Historic Site, it is a monument to its past, and to those African-Americans who were an integral part of the growth of Hackensack and its environs.

Abbreviations Used in Sections 5 and 8 and Indicated in Bibliography

BCDC Bergen County Death Certificate  
BCDCHA Bergen County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs  
FC Federal Census Manuscript  
LA Letters of Administration  
NJSBH New Jersey State Board of Health  
RFHR Ricardo Funeral Home Record  
RW Record of Wills  
SC State Census Manuscript  
USGS United States Geological Survey

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All that certain tract, lot, parcel of land and premises situate lying and being in the township of Lodi in the County of Bergen and State of New Jersey Beginning at a point in the public road leading from the Sand Hill to Moonachie and the southwesterly corner of the said Lot and southwesterly corner of a Lot of land of Jacques Mirgon from thence running (1) along the line of said Jacques Mirgon south sixty seven and three quarters degrees East three chains and seventeen links (2) south twelve and one quarter degrees West three chains and twenty four links (3) North sixty seven and three quarters degrees West three chains and seventeen links to the aforesaid public road and thence (4) along the said public road North twelve and one quarter degrees East three chains and twenty four links to the Beginning Containing One Acre Bounded Northerly by land of Jacques Mirgon Easterly and Southerly by the lands of the said parties of the first part and Westerly by the aforesaid public road.

An undated but relatively modern plotting of property at Little Ferry (after Woodland Avenue was run) illustrates that the cemetery land remained unchanged (Figure 18). This still appears to be the case.

These boundaries were accepted since they describe the original and present cemetery plot.

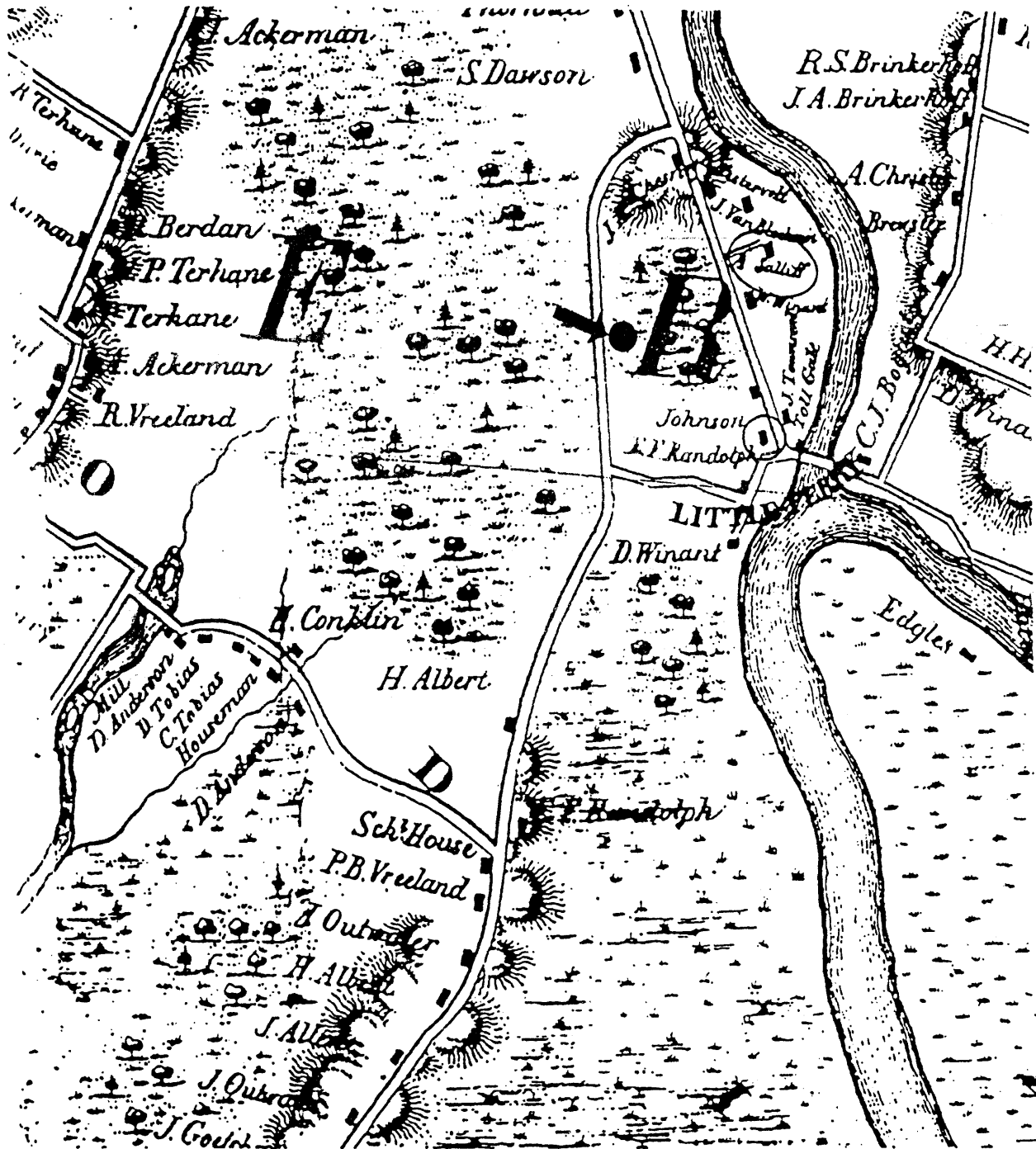


USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

(Gethsemane Cemetery)

(Bergen County, New Jersey)

Sydney's Map of Twelve Miles Around New York--Detail, 1849



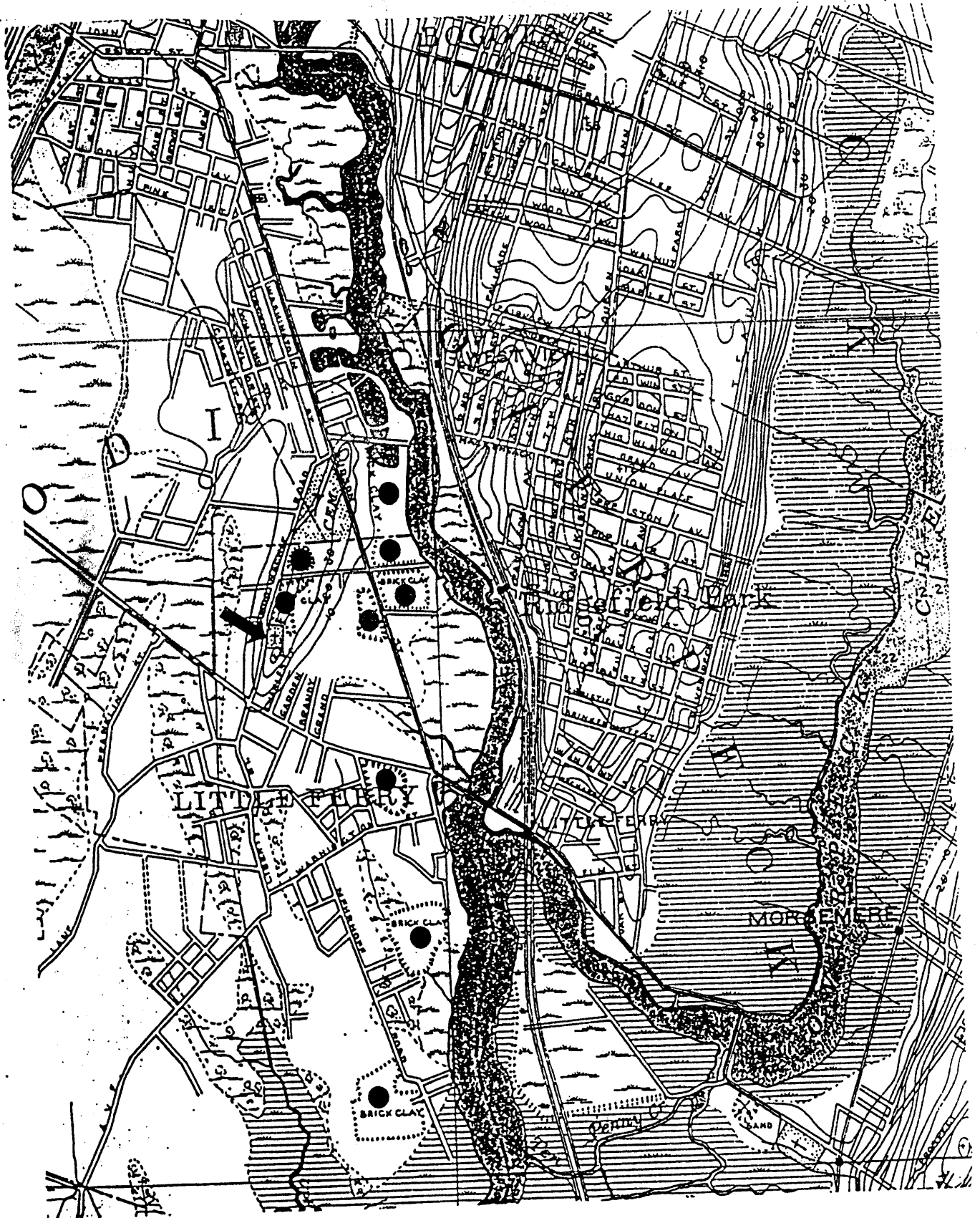
● Gethsemane site (approx.)

○ A. Sutliff (Elizabeth Dulfer home)

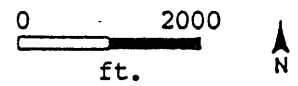
no scale



USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
(Gethsemane Cemetery)  
(Bergen County, New Jersey)  
Little Ferry, Geological Survey (Vermeule 1887, updated to 1914)



➔ Gethsemane Cemetery  
● clay pits documented on the survey



USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
 (Gethsemane Cemetery)  
 (Bergen County, New Jersey)  
 Maps/Figures

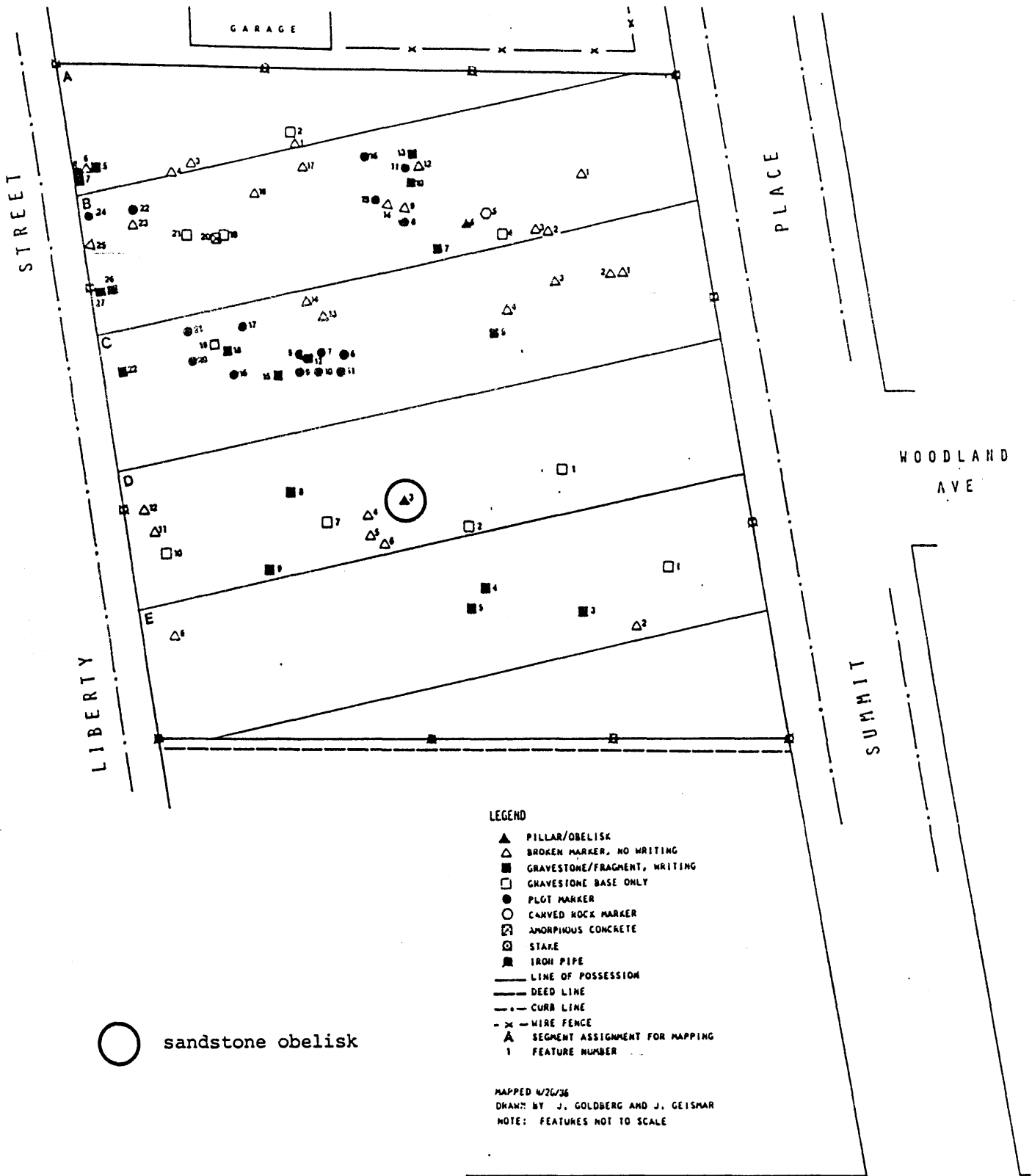
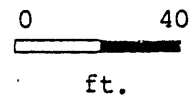


Figure 2. Gethsemane Cemetery Survey, 1986



USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
(Gethsemane Cemetery)  
(Bergen County, New Jersey)  
Maps/Figures
















-  headstone
-  headstone, broken
-  clay pipe
-  plot marker
-  headstone, restored
-  headstone base
-  4 in. marker
-  radar target, depth in ft.
-  stake + (50 ft. grid)
-  undisturbed area
-  obelisk (D3)
-  possible entrance corridor
-  test pit (TP)
-  excavation unit (EU)
-  test trench (TT)

Figure 16. Conventions (not to scale on Figure)

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
 (Gethsemane Cemetery)  
 (Bergen County, New Jersey)  
 Maps/Figures

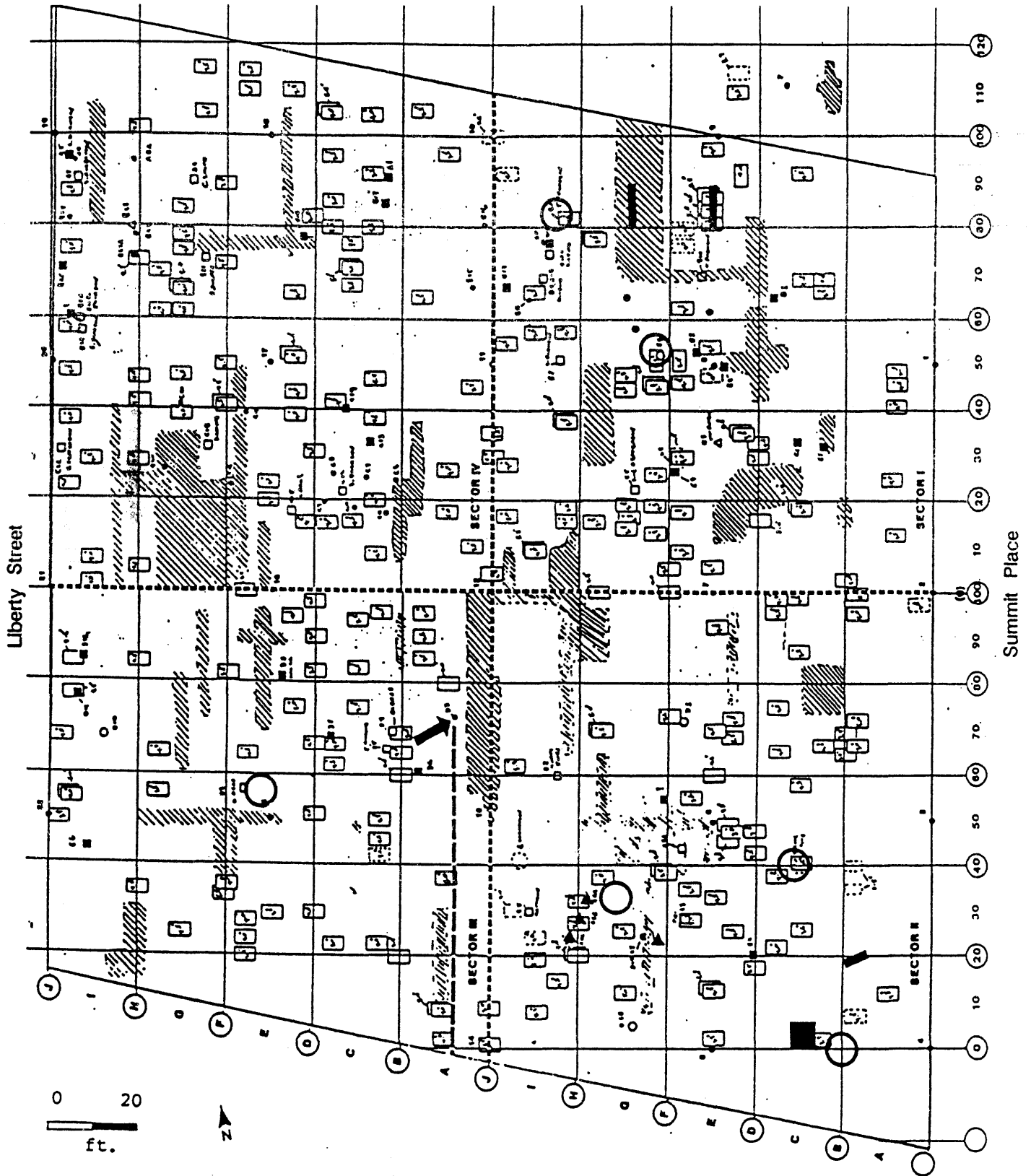
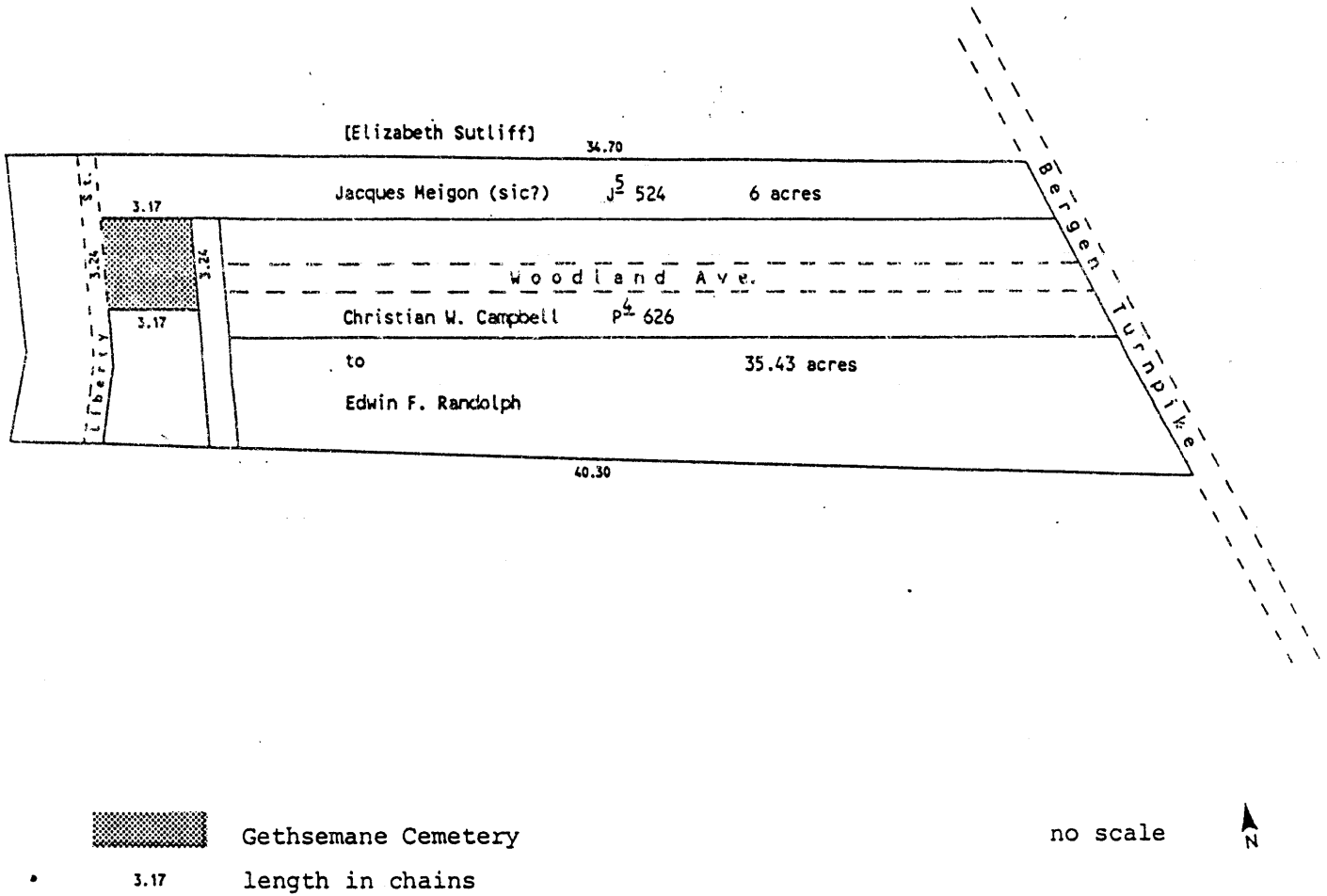


Figure 16. Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Survey with Test Locations and Other Information Noted. See conventions on following page.

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
 (Gethsemane Cemetery)  
 (Bergen County, New Jersey)  
 Maps/Figures



(Courtesy of James O'Donnell)

Figure 18. Plotting of Properties at Little Ferry, New Jersey, n.d.

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
(Gethsemane Cemetery)  
(Bergen County, New Jersey)  
Photographic Identification

(Page 1)

Photos 1-12 were taken by Joan H. Geismar in September 1991. Unless noted otherwise, negatives for these and other photos are stored at the Bergen County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs, Administration Building, Court Plaza South, 21 Main Street, Hackensack, NJ 07601-7000.

13. Arnold E. Brown, April 1988. Negative in Mr. Brown's possession.

14. Photographer unknown, date approximately early 1890s; print in possession of Samuel T. Porter, Hackensack; copied by Joan H. Geismar December 1991.

# *New Jersey Rev. War and War of 1812 Counties*

## COUNTY

~~Atlantic: Pleasant Mills~~ Atlantic: Pleasant Mills

Bergen

Burlington

Camden

Cape May

Essex

Gloucester

Hudson

Mercer

Middlesex

Monmouth

Morris

Ocean

Passaic

Salem

Somerset

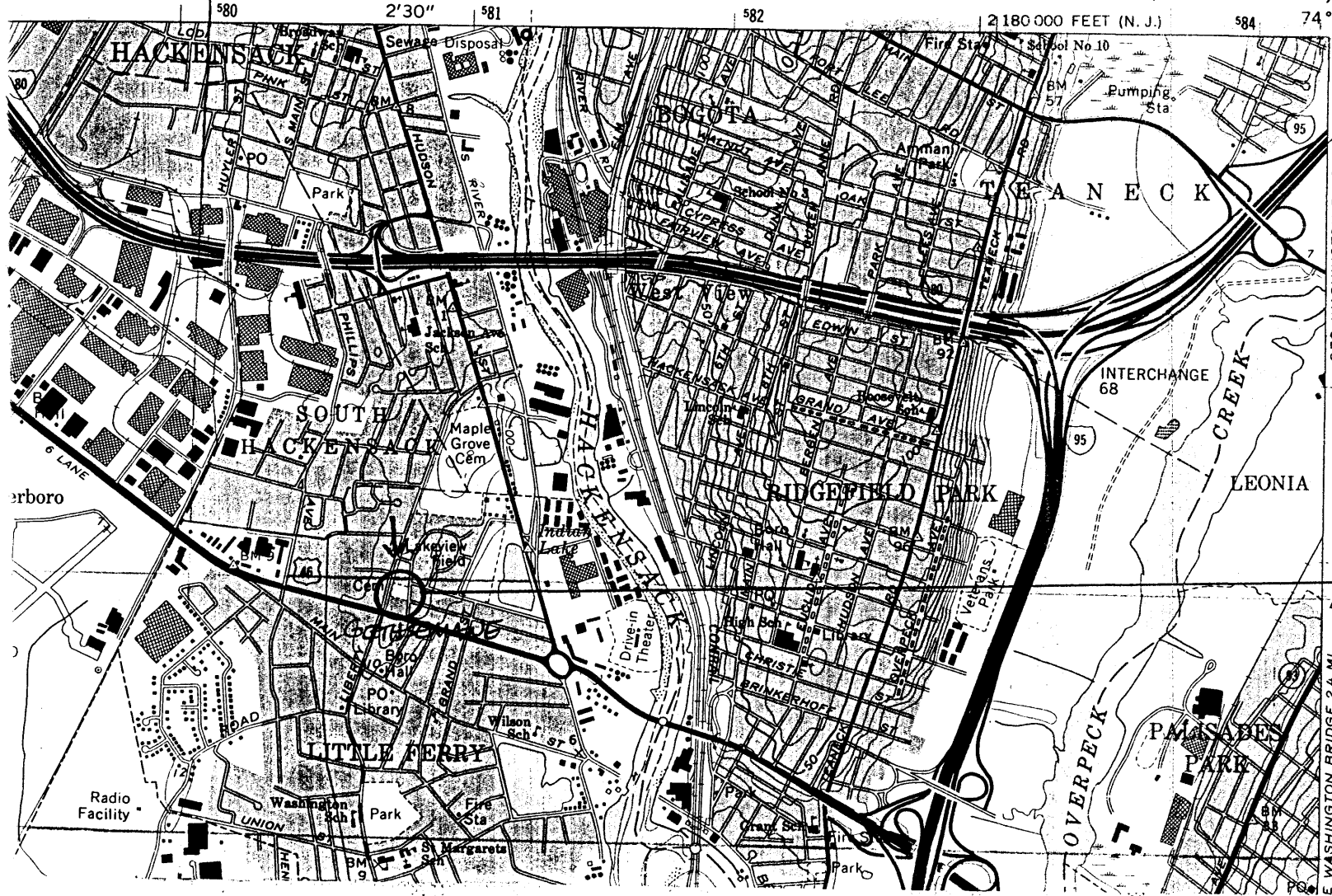
Union



WEEHAWKEN QUADRANGLE  
 NEW JERSEY-NEW YORK  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

6265 IV NW  
 (YONKERS)

GARDEN STATE PKWY



2 180 000 FEET (N. J.)  
 584 74° 00'  
 40° 52' 30"  
 4525  
 GEO. WASHINGTON BR. 2 MI.  
 740 000 FEET (N. J.)  
 4523  
 E WASHINGTON BRIDGE 2.4 MI.  
 GETHSEMANE CEMETERY  
 LITTLE FERRY  
 BERGEN CO.  
 NJ  
 UTM  
 18-5-80-800  
 45-22-940