

# STORIES of New Jersey

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## A CONFEDERATE SHRINE IN NEW JERSEY

The heroes of the Civil War are honored on two memorial days in New Jersey. May 30th is dedicated to the soldiers who fought for the Union, and April 26th to the Confederate soldiers.

At Finn's Point National Cemetery, adjoining the Fort Mott reservation, about five miles from Salem, the Federal Government, in 1912, erected an 85-foot monument at the base of which on 12 tablets are inscribed the names of 2,436 soldiers of the Confederacy who died during a cholera epidemic in Fort Delaware, where they were held as military prisoners.

To this spot, south of the Mason and Dixon line, but which remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War, a group of women of the Confederate Daughters of America journey every April 26th to place wreaths at the monument in tribute to the men who were brought here for burial from the island fort where they had died, far from their homes -- not fighting, as they would probably have preferred, but miserably and slowly of neglect and disease.

The cemetery, enclosed by a gray stone wall, with its orderly rows of gravestones, its well-kept lawns and fine trees, is an impressively peaceful spot. A fringe of native brush and scrub oaks is kept as a bird refuge. The songs of birds and the wind in the trees are the only sounds that penetrate the quiet. Leading inward from the entrance gates are two rows of bronze plates on each one of which is inscribed a verse of Theodore O'Hara's famous poem, "The Bivouac of the Dead."

One verse of the poem sounds a solemn note:

"Rest on, embalmed and sainted dead!  
Dear as the blood ye gave  
No impious footstep here shall tread  
The herbage of your grave:  
Nor shall your glory be forgot  
While Fame her record keeps,  
Or honor points the hallowed spot  
Where Valor proudly sleeps."

At one end of the cemetery a smaller monument honors the 165 Union soldiers, of the Fort Delaware garrison, who died in the same epidemic. Now that the scars of war are healed, the Union soldiers are also honored by a wreath placed there by the descendants of their former enemies. Over the graves of all, the Stars and Stripes flutter constantly in the breeze.