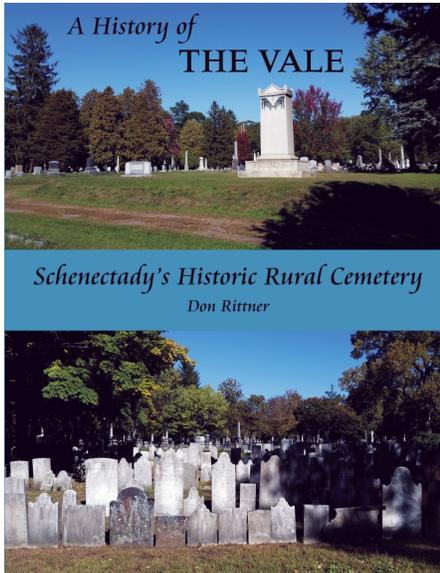




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A History of The Vale: Schenectady's Historic Rural Cemetery

by Don Rittner

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Book Summary: Schenectady's Vale Cemetery was established in 1857 as part of the "Rural Cemetery Movement" of the early 19th century. When it was originally designed by Burton A. Thomas and John Doyle, it indeed was rural. Expansion of residential and commercial development eventually engulfed the area around the cemetery, and it is now an integral part of the city.

Vale is not only a beautiful and well laid out cemetery—it is also a history lesson. Many of the residents buried at Vale made major notable contributions to American history in science, politics, military, literature, education, business and invention, and a host of other disciplines. Laid out among the 33,000 residents at Vale are many names found in history books. Among the millionaires and notables can be found the small business owner, tailor, soldier or iron worker.

The book contains chapters on the burial practices during Schenectady's first 200 years of history, the development of The Vale over more than a century, and a description of the various plots, such as the Union College Plot and the African-American Burial Plot. Extensive appendices include short biographies of 101 notable people, as well as a listing of plantings throughout the acreage. Hundreds of photographs and illustrations make this an indispensable narrative to the history of the city that was once known as "The City that Lights and Hauls the World."

About the Author: Don Rittner is an author, environmentalist, documentarian, historian and archeologist. He has authored close to 40 books and over 1000 articles in science, history, computers and the Internet. He was the former Schenectady County and City Historian (2005-2013) and Albany City Archeologist (1972-79). He headed the construction of The Onrust, a replica of the first fur trading ship built in America (2005-2014). Rittner was the owner of The Learning Factory, an alternative education center from 1996-2001. He was the producer of award winning documentaries, *The Neighborhood That Disappeared* and *ECHOES From The Neighborhood That Disappeared* that documented the displacement of 9000 immigrant families from Albany's South End during the construction of the Empire State Mall during the early 1960s.

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