

9. BELVA ANN BENNETT LOCKWOOD  
(1830–1917)

Originally a teacher and school principal, Widowed in 1853, she was determined to attend college and graduated at age 27. Belva and her daughter moved to Washington, DC “to see what was being done at this great political centre... and to see what the great men and women of the country felt and thought.” There she married Ezekiel Lockwood. Despite her fine academic rating and ten years in the teaching profession, two law schools denied her applications for fear that a 40-year-old woman would “distract the other students.” She and several other women were finally admitted to the new National University School of Law (now the George Washington University Law School). Although she completed her coursework in May 1873, the law school refused to grant her a diploma because of her gender. She appealed to President Ulysses S. Grant as a Chancellor of the National University Law School, he signed her diploma a week later. By this time, Lockwood was already an established leader and a spokeswoman for the DC suffrage movement, and a lobbyist for women’s equal employment. The first woman licensed to practice law, she was an ardent lobbyist for women’s rights and frequently argued before Congressional committees against sex discrimination. Barred from the Supreme Court based on “custom,” she successfully drew up legislation to allow women to practice in that court, becoming the



Belva Lockwood (c.1915)  
Library of Congress LC-H261-4415

the first woman allowed to argue before the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1884, she was the Presidential candidate for the Equal Rights Party, the first woman to run for president on a major party ticket. Even though women did not have voting rights, she received 4,000 votes. She practiced law 43 years, dying three years before women earned the right to vote.

R78/S296



**A WORD OF CAUTION:** The centuries have made many grave markers and sites unstable. Please be careful near grave markers and watch where you step: depressions and sink holes lie hidden in grass, and footstones and corner markers can trip the unwary.

*Join us!*

The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established in 1976 and dedicated to the restoration, interpretation, and management of Congressional Cemetery. It is predominantly a volunteer-based organization relying on over 400 neighbors, history buffs, conservators, dogwalkers, and armed forces personnel each year to help restore and maintain this national treasure. In 1979, the Association succeeded in having Congressional Cemetery listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It became a National Historic Landmark in 2011. Please join the Association or make a donation and help in the third century of service to the Nation’s Capital.



Association for the Preservation of  
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ESTABLISHED 1807

Association for the Preservation of  
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*Walking Tour*  
**CIVIL RIGHTS HEROES**

History comes to life in Congressional Cemetery. The creak and clang of the wrought iron gate signals your arrival into the early decades of our national heritage. Surrounding you are the men and women who shaped the new capital and gave substance to the new nation – congressmen and tradesmen, diplomats and domestics, explorers and architects, soldiers and musicians. Throughout the cemetery’s history, it has been the final resting place for Washingtonians who fought for social justice. Whether they hid runaway slaves on the Underground Railroad in the nineteenth century, marched for women’s right to vote in the twentieth, or championed equal rights for LGBTQ+ in the twenty-first, these righteous men and women pushed the social norms of their respective times to make this nation a more perfect union.



This CIVIL RIGHTS HEROES TOUR highlights just a few of the hundreds of fascinating people buried in Congressional Cemetery. As you walk the trail of this self-guided tour, note the artistry and craftsmanship of the memorial stone carvings and try to decipher the cultural language of the iconography.



The following are numbered to correspond with the map on the back. Please also refer to the Range (R) and Site (S) grid numbers to help locate each grave site.

**1. ADELAIDE JOHNSON (1859–1955)**

A sculptor, best known for the statue of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucretia Mott, she presented it to Congress by the National Woman’s Party on February, 15, 1921, and placed in the Capitol Rotunda. After only one day, it was sent down to the basement. Finally, after 76 years

it was moved back up to the Rotunda of the United States Capitol over Mother’s Day weekend in 1997. Perennially in debt, Johnson did everything she could to raise funds, including appearing on the quiz shows “Strike it Rich” and “Wheel of Fortune.”

**R61/S152**



*Adelaide Johnson, 1939*  
Rep. Sol Bloom (NY) presents sculptress with check of almost \$2,000 from anonymous New Yorkers to save her DC home. She had no means of moving several busts and statues which she had in the house and had set about destroying them. Miss Johnson, shown here receiving the check, was allowed to stay and continue her work. In the background is a bust of Susan B. Anthony.

**2. ANN G. SPRIGG (c.1800–1870)**

She ran a boarding house in a row of houses on First Street SE, now occupied by the stairs to the Jefferson building, Library of Congress. Although it is unclear whether or not Sprigg was directly involved in the Underground Railroad herself, her boarding house became known as “Abolition House” for the



*Mrs. Sprigg's Amicable Boarder, The Log Cabin Sage, January 2020.*

anti-slavery clientele it attracted. Sprigg also hired slaves from other families that ran away with alarming regularity. Her house may well have been a “station” where slaves could “hide in plain sight” until it was time to leave.

**R53/S41 no marker**

**3. PUSH-MA-TA-HA (c.1764–1824)**

One of the greatest Choctaw Chiefs in history, Push-ma-ta-ha was a warrior and a diplomat. Refusing to join other tribes who allied with the British in the War of 1812, he and his soldiers served with Andrew Jackson in the Battle of New Orleans. After the war,

the promises Jackson had made to the Choctaw remained unfulfilled. In 1824, Push-ma-ta-ha traveled to Washington seeking payment of debts owed by the Government to his nation. While here, he died of croup (and the debts were unpaid until 1888). His military funeral, led by then-Senator Andrew Jackson, stretched a full mile with thousands in the procession and others lining the way to his resting place. The guns from Capitol Hill thundered the tribute he had requested, “that the big guns be fired over me.” This stone replaces the original which was weatherworn.



*Push-Ma-Ta-Ha (1824)*  
National Portrait Gallery

**R31/S41**

**4. DAVID A. HALL (1795–1870)**

Hall is one of two cemetery residents whose graves are recognized as part of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom. Hall arrived in DC about 1820 to study law with Elias Boudinot Caldwell, clerk of the Supreme Court and one of the founders of the American Colonization Society. Hall was at first opposed to abolition because he believed that slave owners should be compensated, but he also gained a reputation as being anti-slavery. In April 1848, 77 local slaves attempted a daring escape on a boat called The Pearl. They were captured before the Pearl left the Potomac River. The slaves and the ship’s officers were imprisoned in the Washington Jail. Daniel Drayton, the Captain, wrote “Mr. David A. Hall, a lawyer of the District, came to offer his services to us. Key, the United States Attorney for the District, and who, as such, had charge of the proceedings against us, was there at the same time. He advised Mr. Hall to leave the jail and go home immediately, as the people outside were furious, and he ran the risk of his life. To which Mr. Hall replied that things had come to a pretty pass, if a man’s counsel was not to have the privilege of talking with him.” Hall served as their counsel until Horace Mann was recruited for the defense, and continued to do research for Mann until another local lawyer replaced him.

**R34/S63**



**5. WILLIAM SHOREY COODEY (1806–1849)**

When the Cherokee who survived the Trail of Tears settled in the new Indian Territory in 1839, it was William Shorey Coodey who drafted the Cherokee Constitution uniting the former nations of East and West Cherokee. In the early 1840s a new combined Cherokee government began to function. William Shorey Coodey was elected to be the Senator from the Canadian district on the west side of the Arkansas River. There, he was elected President of the Senate. As such, he was Acting Principal Chief in 1846 during the absence of the Principal Chief and also the Assistant Principal Chief. He visited Washington often, staying with his close friend, Daniel Webster. He died of an unknown illness.

**R43/S50**

**6. LEONARD MATLOVICH (1943–1988)**

As an Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War, Matlovich was awarded a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star for killing two soldiers during a Viet Cong attack on his sentry post. In 1975, Matlovich decided to test the military ban on gays, and came out in a letter to his commanding officer at Langley Air Force Base. After 12 years of exemplary duty, Matlovich was discharged. He fought the discharge, in the courts, in the press, and in the hearts and minds of Americans who found his treatment unfair. After he settled his case with the Air Force, Matlovich continued to champion gay rights. In 1988, as he was dying from AIDS, Matlovich decided he did not want to be buried among the anonymous, identical veteran’s stones in Arlington National Cemetery. Instead, he designed this grave for himself, incorporating the same reflective black granite as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. The pink triangles are the mark that Nazis forced gays to wear in concentration camps. And his epitaph, “When I was in the military, they gave me a medal for killing two men and a discharge for loving one” has become a rallying point for gay veterans everywhere.

**R20/S161**



*Gay veterans gather at grave before protests, November 2010*  
Photo by Sean Carlson, LeonardMatlovich.com

**7. DR. WILLIAM BOYD (1820–1884)**

Caught “stealing” slaves and convicted, he was later pardoned by President Lincoln. The slaves of DC were emancipated on April 16, 1862, and it is unlikely that Dr. Boyd made any further runs to Pennsylvania. But, he continued to stand for the rights of the black community. On June 10, 1865, a crowd of about 200 rowdy soldiers began looting and beating the black residents in the area of Virginia Avenue and First Street SW. Dr. Boyd, who lived nearby, stepped out of his house with a revolver in his hand in an attempt to restore order. He was hit in the



head with a brick and a soldier was about to strike him with an axe when a group of women intervened. Boyd’s grave is recognized as part of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

**R5/S222**

**8. PETER PERKINS PITCHLYNN (1806–1881)**

Pitchlynn served as a delegate representing the Choctaw nation almost continuously from 1853. In 1861 when the American Civil War started, he was in Washington, DC. He had gone to Washington to address national affairs of the Choctaw but immediately returned home to Oklahoma, striving to keep the Choctaw Nation neutral during the conflict. Peter P. Pitchlynn was elected Principal Chief of the Choctaws in 1864 and served until 1866. His legacy includes eradicating polygamy, controlling liquor traffic, and establishing the Choctaw Academy. He was a friend of Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay and was spoken of highly by Charles Dickens in his “*American Notes*.” He was a prominent Mason and received his degrees in the Scottish Rite with Governor Sam Houston.



**R87/S294**