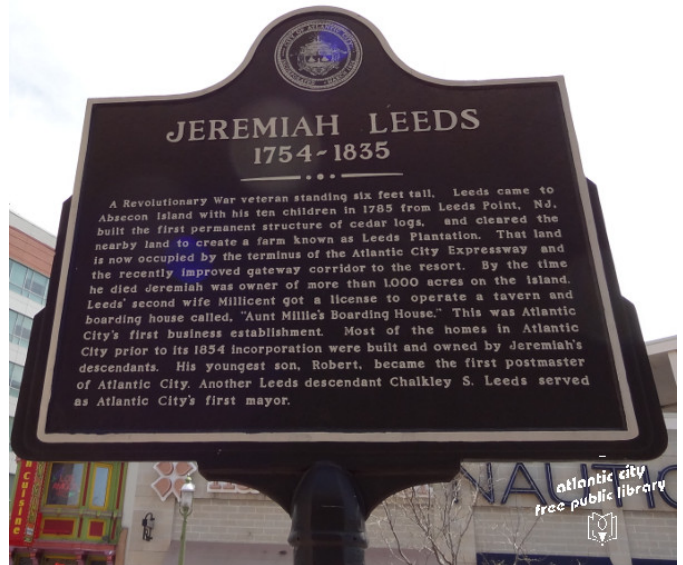


Marker is located on Northeast corner of Michigan and Atlantic Avenues.

Historical Marker text:

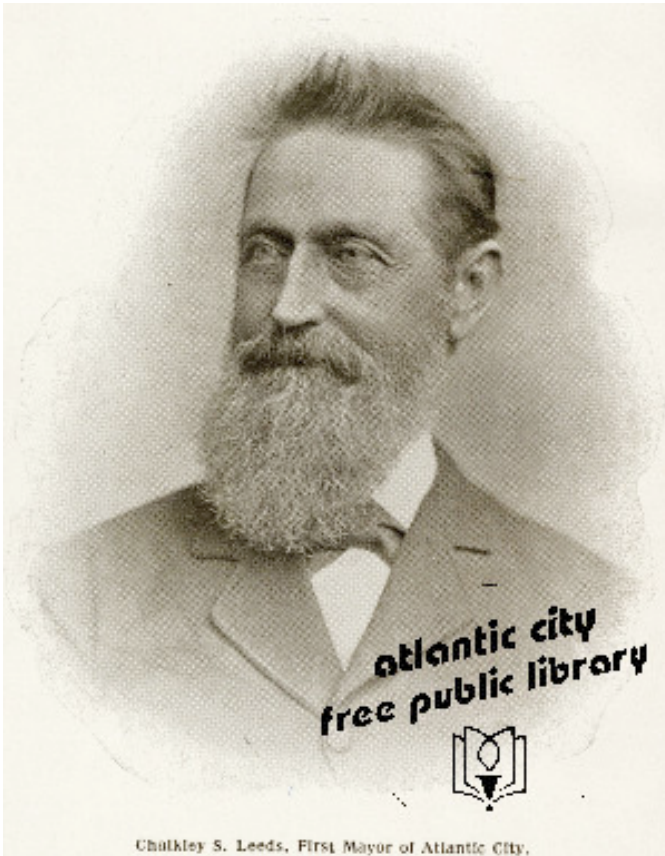
1754-1835

A Revolutionary War veteran standing six feet tall, Leeds came to Absecon Island with his ten children in 1785 from Leeds Point, NJ, built the first permanent structure of cedar logs, and cleared the nearby land to create a farm known as Leeds Plantation. That land is now occupied by the terminus of the Atlantic City Expressway and the recently improved gateway corridor to the resort. By the time he died Jeremiah was owner of more than 1,000 acres on the island. Leeds' second wife Millicent got a license to operate a tavern and boarding house called "Aunt Millie's Boarding House." This was Atlantic City's first business establishment. Most of the homes in Atlantic City prior to its 1854 incorporation were built and owned by Jeremiah's descendants. His youngest son, Robert, became the first postmaster of Atlantic City. Another Leeds descendant Chalkley S. Leeds served as Atlantic City's first mayor.



Additional information:

Leeds is one of the most ubiquitous names in southern New Jersey history, due to the family's early settlement of the area and its many branches. Jeremiah Leeds' ancestors came to America from England in the 1670s. Jeremiah served as a



lieutenant in the Gloucester County Militia during the Revolutionary War, and married Judith Steelman, a member of another prominent New Jersey family and the granddaughter of one of the first people to own land on Absecon Island, where the modern-day Atlantic City now stands. Sources generally agree that Jeremiah Leeds settled here in 1783, with the family cabin standing approximately at what is now the intersection of Arctic and Arkansas Avenues.

Though Jeremiah died before the idea to turn Absecon Island into a seaside resort came about, his family's influence in Atlantic City continued for many years. His second wife, Millicent Steelman Ingersoll, was still running her boarding house in the resort's early days. When his son Chalkley Leeds ran for mayor, there were only 21 registered voters on the island - and many of them were members of the Leeds clan. Another descendant, Sarah Leeds, founded the Haddon Hall hotel, which was transformed into Resorts Casino in the 1970s. Jeremiah Leeds is buried in a small family plot at the center of Oxford Circle in Northfield. There are rumors that he was originally buried on Absecon Island and his remains were only later transported to this location, but no evidence exists either in favor of or against this claim.

Chalkley S. Leeds, First Mayor of Atlantic City and son of Jeremiah Leeds. (Alfred M. Heston, Annals of Absegami. Atlantic City Heritage Collections, Atlantic City Free Public Library)

For more information, see these resources in the Atlantic City Free Public Library, Atlantic City Heritage Collections:

Local History Biography Files -

Leeds Family