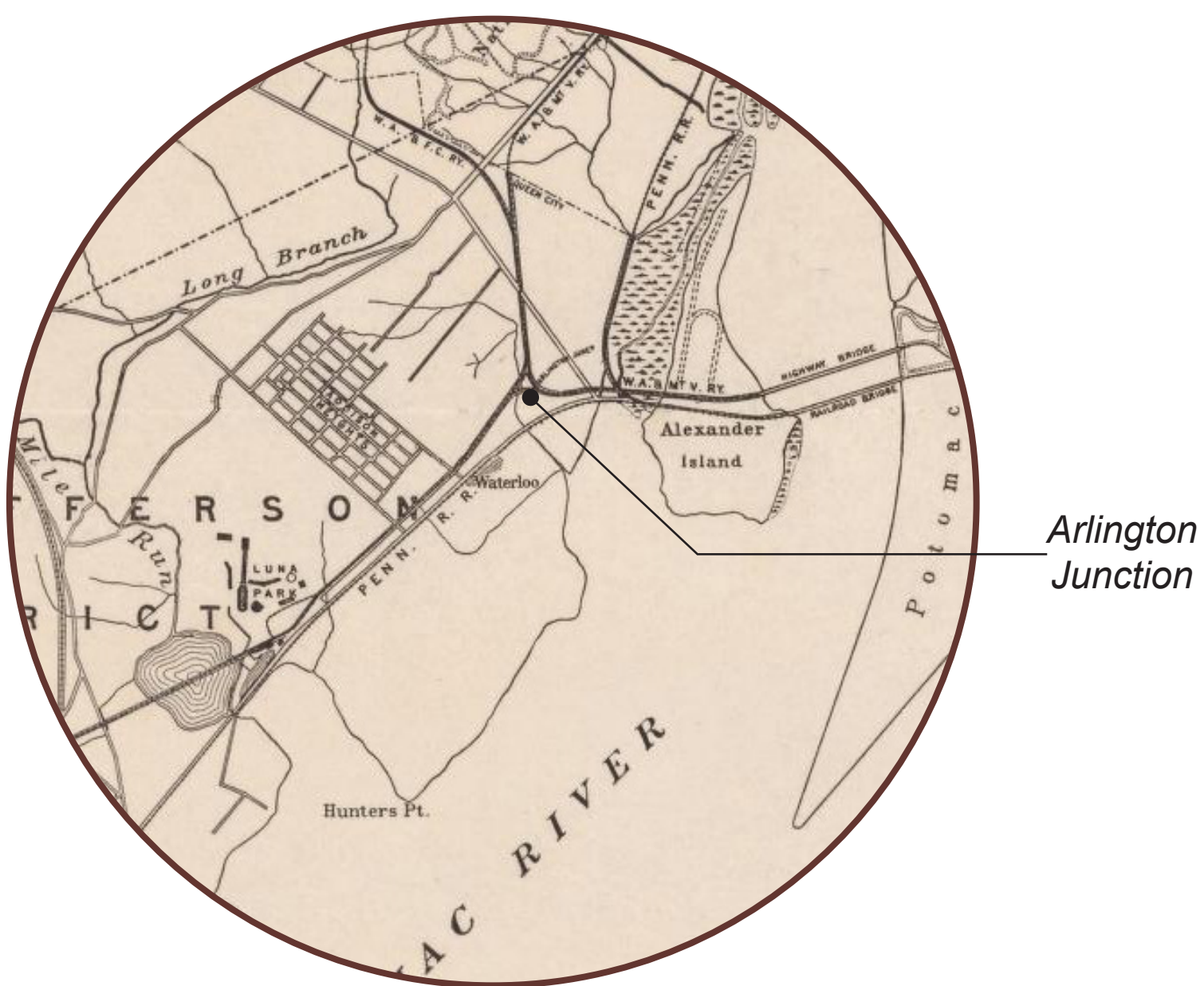


# ARLINGTON JUNCTION & ALEXANDRIA CANAL

The park you are in today reflects the evolution of how people move and use public space in Arlington County. Before it was a park, The Alexandria Canal and an electric trolley station called “Arlington Junction Station” marked a change in how people used public land in Arlington from travel on our waterways to rail lines, before shifting again to roads and now, a public park

The Alexandria Canal had been completed in 1843 as an extension of the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal, allowing merchants on the south side of the Potomac River to be connected to markets in Georgetown, D.C., and Maryland. When completed, the Alexandria Canal connected the Rosslyn neighborhood to Georgetown via a 1,000-foot-long aqueduct that crossed the Potomac River. The canal then ran seven miles south, through this site and into the City of Alexandria, exchanging goods such as wheat, corn, fish, salt, plaster, lumber and more. Shipments continued until the canal was abandoned in 1886.

Arlington Junction Station was one stop on the new trolley line that was constructed in 1896 along the towpath of the previously abandoned Alexandria Canal. The new trolley line allowed the Mount Vernon Railway Company to offer continuous service between Washington, D.C. and Mount Vernon. Once trolleys made it to Arlington Junction Station, the line’s route split and passengers could continue west to Fairfax City and Falls Church or take a diverging line that served Arlington National Cemetery, Rosslyn, and the Green Valley neighborhood.



Map of Alexandria County, 1907. Image courtesy of Library of Congress.

Electric trolleys served Arlington Junction Station until 1932. The last trolleys of the Washington-Mount Vernon line ran on January 18, 1932. Later that year, the tracks were removed, and portions of the right-of-way were used to build the George Washington Memorial Parkway. A line between Clarendon and Arlington Junction was abandoned on July 1, 1932, marking the end of Arlington Junction as a trolley station.

