

## SEARCHING FOR THE EARLY SETTLERS

Of

### ALL HALLOWS PARISH

Welcome to ALL HALLOWS' historic cemeteries! Searching for ancestors and other historic figures is a singularly rewarding, although at times complicated, experience. The following history may explain a few of the attendant mysteries.

Many of All Hallows' records have been lost. Some very early records, such as the earliest church Register are accessible at the Maryland State Archives. You may access them through the Internet or by visiting the Archives in Annapolis, MD. At the end of this article you will find a short list of additional helpful resources to aid your research.

All Hallows existed as a religious congregation as early as 1669 when the Reverend Duel Pead, an itinerant preacher, recorded its first Baptism.

Many of the early settlers lived in nearby London Town or on surrounding farms and plantations. London Town was founded around 1683 and prospered for several decades before its decline.

In 1692, by "THE ACT OF ESTABLISHMENT", the Crown decreed the Anglican Church the official church of the colony of Maryland and appointed "ALL HALLOWS, SOUTH RIVER PARISH" one of the first official parishes. At that time, a parish was a geo-political entity – it had "metes and bounds" – similar to what we would consider a county today. It was centered around All Hallows Church, whose rector was responsible for collecting taxes from the people of the "parish" whether they worshipped at All Hallows or not. (The original tax is believed to have been 40 pounds of tobacco. The Crown did not permit the colonists to use currency at that time.) The "Vestry" was composed of the most influential landowning men of the parish, regardless of their participation in the religious community.

*Informational Brochure  
found at the entryway to the "Old Brick  
Church" during visit there 10/5/2016*

Around 1727-1728, the congregation of All Hallows Church appealed to the General Assembly for funds to replace their church building which was in dangerously dilapidated condition, possibly having suffered a fire. The new church was built sometime around 1729-1730. That church is "The Brick Church" which exists today on Old Solomon's Island Road in Edgewater, MD.

The central issue of this narrative is the mystery of where that original, very early first church was located. There are some reports that place it near All Hallows' early rectory close to "the Ridge" near Harwood along Mill Swamp Road and Rt.2. Alternatively, it is possible that it may have existed on or near the site of the present church – or elsewhere within the metes and bounds of the parish. We have been researching this mystery for years, finding it much more complicated than expected. Of course, the most frustrating question is where to find the churchyard – All Hallows' earliest cemetery.

The archival records list the names of settlers from the church Registers and most often report that a person was buried in "All Hallows Parish" "ALL HALLOWS PARISH" REFERS TO THAT GEO-POLITICAL ENTITY – NOT ALL HALLOWS CHURCH. Those burials might have been anywhere within that very large administrative area. It should be remembered that some records are unreliable and some information (and spellings) are not "written in stone". It is probable that many of these colonists were buried in family burial grounds that may still exist, or more probably, have been lost to time, development, forest regrowth, etc. Occasionally, the Register may list a person buried "in All Hallows Churchyard". We hope, someday, to find that churchyard. Unfortunately, if you are searching for pre-1733 burials, at this time, they will not be found at the Brick Church cemetery.

The churchyard at ALL HALLOWS BRICK CHURCH at 3600 Old Solomon's Island Road, Edgewater, MD 21037, shows some evidence of early graves that are unmarked and cannot be identified. The earliest known grave is dated 1733.

The churchyard at "ALL HALLOWS CHAPEL" (erected 1860), is located at 864 W. Central Avenue, Davidsonville, MD 21035. The graves there are dated after 1860

in addition to several earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century graves which were moved from nearby family farms.

Both of these churchyards are still active cemeteries.

You are most welcome to visit our cemeteries. We ask that you be careful around the gravestones, which, because of their age may be unstable. No climbing, sitting, or walking on them, please. Be especially careful that children do not play on them. Gravestone rubbing and cleaning are not permitted.

All Hallows is involved in an active cemetery preservation program under the guidance of the Association for Gravestone Studies and The Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites. Donations for our preservation work are always welcome and greatly appreciated.

We welcome visitors to our services at both churches:

The Chapel: Sunday, Holy Eucharist, 8AM, Rite I

The Brick Church: Sunday, Holy Eucharist, 10:30AM, Rite II

Please let us know if you would like us to share your contact information with others who are searching for the same family names. It is a great way to develop new sources for your research and you may discover long, lost cousins!

If we don't have the information you are looking for, stay in touch; we never know when something interesting will present itself. If you are searching for an early parishioner of All Hallows, you are descended from illustrious ancestors! Be persistent and enjoy the hunt. It is a grand adventure!

With best wishes from All Hallows,

Bridget Blake, cemetery committee

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Helpful reference resources:

Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore 410-685-3750

Kuethe Library, Anne Arundel Genealogy Society 410-760-9679

Wright, F. Edward, "Anne Arundel County Church Records, 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries"  
Family Line Publications, Westminster, Maryland

Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland 1-800-443-1399, [archives@ang-md.org](mailto:archives@ang-md.org)

LondonTown <http://www.historiclondontown.com>

Md.StateArchives

<http://www.msa.md.gov/megafile/msa/speccolm/scm200/scm221/000001/000001/pdf/msa.scm221.pdf> enter access codes aaco and aaco# (very long download time)

also,

[https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/All\\_Hallows\\_Parish,\\_Maryland](https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/All_Hallows_Parish,_Maryland). click first entry under Parish Records / Parish Registers, enter access codes aaco and aaco#