

view map

by Mechelle Kerns-Nocerito

° Historical research has shown that London Town was not only a tobacco port but also a travel-town and the location of two 18th century ferry crossings, as well as merchant warehouses taverns, homes, and a ropewalk.

° The Anglican Church was active in Anne Arundel County in the 1680s, although it seems that early church activities were itinerate.

° the Church of England became the official church of Maryland in 1692.

° "The original South River or All Hallows Parish Church (apparently an earthfast building) was built ca. 1680. However, it was in need of replacement and considered dangerous to use by 1729. ... the "Brick Church" replaced the first church and has served Anne Arundel County residents since 1733. " (Fire destroyed the church in 1940, leaving only the brick walls intact, and a reconstructed colonial period interior was used in restoring the church).

° Meeting place of the congregation prior to 1733 is unknown: "In the 1670s and 1680s, before the establishment of London Town, the county court and the Maryland Assembly occasionally met at the tavern of John Larkin at "The Ridge". About two miles from the current church, Larkin's may have been the location of the first church or a meeting place, as the parish's second minister, Rev. William Colbatch, purchased property adjacent to this early gathering place."

° "When the parish system was established in 1692, each county's commissioners and justices were to... "erect and build in the most convenient place of the said parish, one Church or Chapel in such dimensions and proportions and in such methods and ways as by the said vestry men in their discretion and judgement shall think fit and convenient..." (MSA 1894: 428). Both All Hallows Parish churches (the first perhaps located at Larkin's "Ridge" and the second at the current location) were placed on the county's main north-south thoroughfare, Solomon's Island Road, or Maryland Route 2."

° "South River Parish [later known as All Hallows] consists of South River Hundred and a small part of West River Hundred. Vestryment for the said parish chosen and etc, viz. Capt Henry Hanslope, Mr. Edward Burgess, Mr. John Gresham, Mr. Walter Phelps, Mr. William Roper,

and Mr. John Watkins (Vestry Records, October 1696)

The Town Acts of 1683 designated that each town was to have open space and a lot to erect a church or chapel. Early land records suggest that one lot was indeed set aside in London Town. It is interesting to note that the act did not dictate that the towns must erect a church, thus helping to explain the absence of a church in London Town. The community already had a church or meeting place in which to worship, the original 17th century All Hallows Church. Although the location of the first church remains undocumented, the 1733 brick church is a short four and half miles from London Town and served as the religious center for the community during the 18th and 19th centuries. Many of the colonial townspeople are buried there.

THE ALL HALLOWS GRAVEYARD PROJECT

In the summer of 2000, the Lost Towns Project studied the graveyard of the current All Hallows Parish church, in order to gain more information about the residents of London Town.

Each grave marker was photographed, drawn to scale, and the text of the marker was transcribed. For grave markers that were difficult to read, and to capture those with distinguishing characteristics such as family shields, an intern made rubbings to more fully record the content of the stones. ... Textual information from the rubbings was transcribed and entered into a searchable database along with the rubbing image. A probe survey, accompanied by ground penetrating radar was used to find buried head and footstones as well as unmarked graves.

The church has no published history, so secondary sources had to be thoroughly searched for information about the parish and its property. No records exist showing the original acquisition or transfer of the property. Through information from later deeds it appears that the church was built on property once owned by the Brewer family and was donated to the parish in the early 18th century.

A review of the primary documents discovered heretofore unknown properties owned by the church, e.g. the priest who presided at Col. Moses Rawlings wedding, Rev. David Love, purchased 174 acres for a parish glebe (MSA Land Records 1767). Its location was south of and adjacent to London Town on what are still called Glebe Bay and Glebe Creek. Before 1768, Glebe Creek was known as Hill's Creek, owned by Dr.

Richard Hill of London Town. At the turn of the 20th century the glebe tact was sold and became consolidated as part of the area known as Glebe Farm. [“glebe”; Etymology: Latin *gleba* clod, land Date: 14th century **1** *archaic* : **LAND**; *specifically* : a plot of cultivated land **2** : land belonging or yielding revenue to a parish church or ecclesiastical benefice]

“When the survey of the graveyard started, it was assumed that many of the graves would pre-date the 1729/1733 construction of the brick church. Current church officials assumed that the current site was the original location of the first church. The Lost Towns projects research established that this was not the site of the 1690s-period church. The oldest graves, those of the Burgess Family from the 1680s were not original to the churchyard. The DAR had moved the graves there in 1960. The oldest original grave for the site is from 1733: that of Samuel Peele, a merchant from London, Engl., who lived in London Town.

The fact that there are no pre-1729 graves located at All Hallows suggests that they are in another unknown location, perhaps at Larkins’ Ridge. ...Somewhere in the parish, at an unknown location, there is a large 17th century graveyard. Early parish burial records note the burial of hundreds of people during the period of the 1690s until 1729 and the construction of the current brick church.

THE LOST DEAD of All Hallows’ Parish

A B

Alldridg, William

son of Nicholas and Martha

Burial: Jul. 26, 1702

Source: SPECIAL COLLECTIONS (All Hallows’ Protestant Episcopal Church Collection) Parish Register 1669-1721, p. 22, 3 [MSA SC 2458 M 221]

Alldridg, Edmond

son of Thomas and Elizabeth

Burial: Mar. 19, 1703/4

Source: [IBID p. 23]

Alldridge, Nicholas

Burial: Nov. 21, 1708

Source: IBID p. 43]

Aldridge, Martha

daughter of Thomas and Elisabeth

Burial: Oct. 6, 1719

Source: IBID p. 19]

Aldridge, Elisabeth

wife of Thomas

Burial: Feb. 10, 1723/4

Source: [IBID, p. 28, 11]

Alridg, Mary

daughter of Thomas Disney and Jane Alridg

Burial: Oct. 21, 1719

Source: [IBID p. 19]

Aldridge, John

son of Jane

Burial: Sep. 29, 1724

Source:[IBID p. 30,13]

ALDRIDGE Nicholas 1678 Anne Arundel Co., MD Anne Arundel inventory of the estate of William Jones (Physician) proved 28 Nov 1678. Inventory appraised by Samuel Lane and Francis Stockett. Large number of debtors mentioned including Col. William Burgess, William Parker, Cornelius Howard, James Saunders, Edmond Purdow [Purdy], Nicholas Aldridge, Capt. Thomas Beason, Nathaniel Heathcott, Edward Foster, John Jacobs, Robert Proctor and others. ALDRIDGE Nicholas 1679 Anne Arundel Co., MD Inventory of the estate of Thomas Besson, the elder approved 29 Apr 1679. Appraisers Richard tidings (Tydings) and James Sanders. List of debts: Edward Piles, Edward Rawlings, Anne ? , John Grassam, Edmond Purdy and Nicholas Aldridge. ALDRIDGE Nicholas 1680 Anne Arundel Co., MD Survey for 300 ac. "Aldridge's Beginning," for Nicholas Aldridge, 20 Aug 1680 on the south side of the Magotty River. Anne Arundel rent rolls show that the tract was still in the possession of Nicholas in 1707. This tract was in Broad and Town Neck Hundred.

ALDRIDGE Nicholas 1680 Anne Arundel Co., MD Anne Arundel administration of the estate of **Thomas Besson proved 31 May 1680.** Includes payments to Capt. Nicholas Gassaway, Edward Selby, William Burgess, Christopher Foster, John Welch, Henry Hanslap, Nathaniel Heathcott, John Larkin, James Finly and John Besson. **Mentions also Martha Aldridge.** Executrix was Hester Sutton, wife of Thomas Sutton with note that Hester is very aged. It is proved that **Capt. Thomas Besson Sr. came to VA first then to MD ca. 1649.** He was married to **Hester.** They had children:

John, William, Thomas (the younger), **Martha m. Nicholas Aldridge**, Anne m. Nicholas Gassaway, Thomas (the elder) m. Margaret Saughier. **Anne and Nicholas Gassaway** had issue John m. Eliz. Lawrence and **their son Nicholas Gassaway had dau. Mary who m. James Aldridge s/o Nicholas and Martha. ALDRIDGE Nicholas 1682 Anne Arundel Co., MD** Deed from Wm. Swewick [sic] (?Sissick) of Anne Arundel to Christopher Vernon of same made 3 May 1682, recorded June 1682. Witnesses George Yates, Samuel Reinger, Nicholas Aldridge, Robert Franklin. Tract called "Pascales Purchase," formerly belonging to Wm Swewick and William Naylor. Lying near Herrin Creek. **ALDRIDGE Nicholas 1687 Anne Arundel Co., MD** Deed from Richard Beard of Anne Arundel to Edward Hale of same. Deed dated 25 Nov 1694. Original grant to Richard Beard 1 Oct 1687 for tract "Huckleberry Forest," **south side Magety River**. Boundbranch, being the main branch of a creek called Cattaile. Bounded by land belonging to the following: Abraham Chiles, John Gray, Lancelot Todd, Walter Phelps, Henry Hanslap, Matthew Howard, George Saphire. And, **by land formerly laid out for Nicholas Aldridge**, called "Nicholas Past," by land formerly laid out for Thomas Sutton by land of William Gibbs and by land of Francis Mead. Wife releases dower.

ALDRIDGE Nicholas 1688 Calvert Co., MD Calvert inventory of **George Parker** approved 6 Jun 1688. Appraisers: John Craycroft and Edward Isacke. Numerous **debtors mentioned including Jeremiah Eldridge and Nicholas Aldridge. ALLDRIDGE Nicholas 1708 Anne Arundel Co., MD**

Nicholas Alldridge buried in All Hallows Parish, Anne Arundel Co., MD 21 Nov 1708.

Eldridge Notes (3 pages): Nicholas Aldridge seems to have previously resided in Isle of Wight Co, Va.