

Origins of Hillside Cemetery, Eastport, Maine
Revised Version By Wayne H.M. Wilcox,
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The original owner of the section of land that became Hillside Cemetery was John McGuire. He received Lot No. 6 in the 1791 survey of Moose Island by Solomon Cushing. REF. (1) Kilby's *History of Eastport and Passamaquoddy*, page 490. (See *Note at bottom of page 4, REF 16)

In the mid- to late 1790's, he was unable to pay his debts and lost his land to creditors from Boston, Massachusetts. REF. (2) Washington County Registry of Deeds, Machias, Maine.

The creditors sold the land by the late 1790's to John Campbell Todd of Cherryfield (Narraguagus), a merchant who moved to Eastport before 1801. This land became known as Todd's Head. (REF. (3) Ibid.

The first road laid out in Eastport was in 1799 and was named High Street. It ran from the south end, Prince's Cove, through the "notch" in the ledge on William Clark's land, Lot No. 5, and ran by the Meeting House in the north end of town. In October, 1803, the town accepted High Street as laid out from Mr. Shackford's, south end, to Mr. Todd's northern line. REF. (4) Kilby's *History of Eastport and Passamaquoddy*, pages 67, 96, 232, 234.

Clark Street was laid out not long after the British left in 1818 and connected to High Street where the Meeting House was formerly located. This corner was later called Smith's Corner. REF. (5) Ibid, 530.

Around the time of the War of 1812, John C. Todd lost his land, unable to pay his debts and it returned to the Boston creditors who sold it to him. REF. (6) Washington County Registry of Deeds, Machias, Maine.

At this time, the larger town burying ground was located at Little's Cove in the north end of town below Todd's Head. There were also a number of family cemeteries located around Moose Island. The town Meeting House had a small cemetery next to it which was used by the British

during the occupation, 1814-1818. The first settler of Moose Island , James Cochran, Lot No. 1, retained 2/ 1/4 acres of the land for a burying place when his children sold a portion of the land, Lot No. 1, to the Bucknam brothers, Nathan, Benjamin and Seward on Nov. 23, 1811. REf. (7) “1827” map of High Street, Eastport, Maine: has location of old burying ground on the corner; *Eastport Sentinel*, September 2, 1874, “Old News, Eastport as It Was;” *Eastport Sentinel*, March 3, 1889; Kilby’s *History of Eastport and Passamaquoddy*, page 530; Washington County Registry of Deeds, Machias, Maine, Volume 7, pp. 119-120, Cochran to Bucknam.

The town cemetery at Little’s Cove was having problems with erosion. The bank by the roadside was washing away at times and exposing coffins and bones of the deceased. Finally the town had to something.

The town bought a section of land next to High Street from the Boston creditors that owned the former John C. Todd lot on August 1, 1818 REF (8) *Eastport Sentinel*, September 2, 1874; Washington County Registry of Deeds, 1818, Machias, Maine, Volume 11, page 292.

Shortly after purchasing the land for a new cemetery, the town began transferring bodies from Little’s Cove to High Street. Unfortunately there was no regard on how the lots were laid out or the placement of bodies or how paths and roads were to be located. REF. (9) *Eastport Sentinel*, September 30, 1857.

The local Masonic lodge in Eastport, Eastern Lodge, No. 7, marked out a section for their future Masonic Tomb at the southeast corner of the new cemetery. REF (10) *Eastport Sentinel*, December 23, 1829.

By 1827 a group of businessmen took steps to make improvement to Hillside Cemetery. E. Richardson, Jesse Gleason, J.C. Noyes and Lorenzo Sabine laid out the plans for proper lots, paths, and placement of graves. REF (11). *Eastport Sentinel*, September 30, 1857, October 7, 1857.

The Masonic Tomb was completed on October 14, 1828. This date appears on the two marble keystones and inscribed as “Oct. 14 A-L 5838.” In Masonic terms this is “ANNO-Luciferous, in the year of light 1828.” This is the Masonic date. REF (12) Wayne Wilcox, author.

Sometime in the 1840’s the other tomb was constructed by the Shackford, Kilby and Hayden families next to the Masonic Tomb. REF (13) Hugh French, Tides Institute.

The cemetery was expanded when the town bought a piece of land on the south side in 1848. In 1858 the town bought another plot of land on the north side. REF (14), *Eastport Sentinel*, June 2, 1858.

In 1887, the cemetery was expanded again when two lots of land were purchased on the other side of High Street and was called Hillside West.

The first section bought was known as the Powder House lot, 250 feet along High Street and 400 feet deep. This was toward the south end of town.

The town then purchased the Harris lot 330 feet along High Street and 280 feet deep toward the north end of town. Both lots together make a lot of 580 feet along High Street, avenues 18 feet wide, average price per lot \$10.00. Eastport appropriated \$200.00 at the annual town meeting for these two lots. REF (15), *Eastport Sentinel*, June 8, 1887.

*Note: John McGuire Lot. N. 6 — In the fall of 1800, John C. Good bought 73 acres from James Bradbury who acquired this land from John McGuire, sea captain, and his wife, Abigail. On May 1, 1801, Todd bought for \$1,000.00, the rest of the McGuire lot from the widow, Abigail. From Washington County Register of Deeds, Machas, Maine 1800, 1801.

REF (16). Eastport Walk-About: Walking Guide to Eastport. #77 Todd House, original research by Wayne H. M. Wilcox.