



Montgomery County Planning Department
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Montgomery County Burial Sites Inventory

Historic Preservation ID:

HP-208

Name:

Cecil-Davis Family Cemetery

Description:

Family cemetery possibly dating to the 18th century.

Community:

Religious:

Family:

African American:

Other Site Type:

Number of Burials:

Visible Markers:

Formal Entrance:

Cemetery Sign:

Active:

Earliest Year:

Latest Year:

Is the Site Extant?:

Unknown

Is the Location Sensitive?:

Sensitive Contact:

Sensitive Reason:

Location Confidence:

Known

Location Confirmed:

No

Volunteer Forms and External Web Links (Montgomery Planning is not responsible for content. Links provided for informational purposes only)

2006 Survey Summary:

https://mcatlas.org/filetransfer/HistoricPreservation/MCCI_Summaries_2004/MCCI_Summary_ID_208.pdf

Montgomery Preservation, Inc.:

https://mcatlas.org/filetransfer/HistoricPreservation/Cemeteries/208_Cecil-Davis_Family_Takoma-Park/208_Cecil-Davis_Family_Takoma-Park_2018/208_Cecil-Davis_Family_Takoma-Park_2018_Survey.pdf

FindaGrave.com:

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2650159>

Maryland Tombstone Transcription Project:

Other Website:

Master Plan Historic Resource No.:

Historic Resource:

Confirmed by Planning Board:

Confirmation Date:

Site Survey Date:

Revision Date:

Yes

05/16/2019

05/19/2018

12/15/2018

Site Surveyor Name:

Glenn Wallace

Data Originator:

Montgomery Preservation, Inc.

Notes:

Mentioned in deed reservations from 1863 through 1923. The location is shown on Plat number 366 dated May 1924. The site is described as a "Grave Lot" in a 1986 deed (Liber 7360 Folio 876). There are no visible markers.

Technical information about the locational information shown in the online map.

Public Display Scale:

Is there a Restriction on Sharing Information?:

1: 0

GIS Source Date:

GIS Source Datum:

Boundary Type:

10/15/2018

Point

Horizontal Accuracy:

GIS Data Source:

2006 inventory

Additional Information:

The cemetery is mentioned in deed reservations from 1863 through 1923: "one quarter of an acre in the grave-yard which is hereby excepted and reserved" 1863, Liber JGH 9 Folio 68; "exclusive of one quarter of an acre in the grave yard, which is hereby excepted and reserved" 1878, Liber E.B.P. 19 Folio 234; "exclusive of one quarter of an acre reserved as a Grave Yard" 1880, Liber E.B.P. 23 Folio 10; "less 1/4 of an acre in grave yard lying in said description" 1912, Liber 230 Folio 275; "excepting 1/4th of an acre contained in the graveyard located at the southwest corner of the tract above described" 1923, Liber 328 Folio 351.

It is referred to as a grave lot in deeds dated 1932 and 1986: from Joseph Davis to James Augustus Davis, Sr. "known and distinguished as and being one-fourth acre, Grave Lot in Samuel J. Fenton, deed, and more particularly located as unnumbered lot in Section 3, Block G. Flower Avenue Park in Montgomery County, Maryland" Liber 548 Folio 153; the same language is repeated in 1986 in a deed from Delores Elizabeth Gates, Barbara Ann Smith, and William H. Berkeley to Dorothy Williams (Liber 7360 Folio 876).

The engineer's certification in Plat 366 (May 1924) reads: "That, the "one-fourth of an acre contained in the graveyard" is not a part of the subdivision; but is shown for convenience only;" the plat shows the "Davis Family Lot containing one-fourth of an acre" at the corner of Prospect Street and Greenwood Avenue.

Jane Lutes Cromer signed a sworn affidavit before a Notary Public on December 8, 2000 stating: "I, Jane Lutes Cromer, observed evidence of a cemetery located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Greenwood and Prospect Avenues in Takoma Park, Maryland. During the period 1921-1975, I resided at 8214 (formerly 814) Flower Ave. and at 8208 (formerly 808) Flower Avenue, Takoma Park, MD, located less than three blocks from Greenwood and Prospect Avenues. On numerous occasions in the early part of this period, I passed by this property and I observed its appearance as a burial site, including the presence of several small headstones."

Partial Transcript: Evening star. [volume] (Washington, D.C.) 1854-1972, August 08, 1937, Page F-2, Image 48

GRAVEYARD LINK IN HISTORY

Area Is Probably Last Resting Place of Some Prominent Citizens of Montgomery County
Well-Kept Garden in Present Condition
Early Takoma Park. By John Clagett Proctor.

IN THE early days there were many private burial plots in and around Washington, which were here when the Capital was moved to this location in 1800, and some of these could be identified for a considerable number of years afterward. One of the most notable of these was the Burnes graveyard, which stood on the south side of H street, between Ninth and Tenth streets, about where is now the Printecraft Building, and here was the famous Van Ness Mausoleum until 1872, when it was removed to Oak Hill Cemetery. However, although so many of the early burial places hereabout are known, still, occasionally suspicion of an unknown one bobs up, as was recently the case when an excavation was being made in downtown Seventh street, and a human skull was unearthed. In this case there was no record of a burial place in this particular location, and it is quite probable the skull was brought to this spot from some nearby graveyard, or it might have been just a part of a homo specimen.

But once in a while a hitherto unknown graveyard does show up and proves very interesting, as one the writer recently investigated in response to a letter addressed to the Editor of The Star, in which the author said: "Being a constant reader of The Star ever since I can remember, and quite

interested in unusual and quaint things and doings or customs of by gone days, my eye caught this little clipping I am inclosing with my letter in Thursday or Friday evening's Star. It is interesting to me, because I have in my care an old family burial plot, dating back many many years in the past, and all the markings of the graves have been done in the manner mentioned in mis clipping, by my ancestors. I am making this a sort of pastime or hobby, if it may be called that. When I came into possession of this piece of ground, it was covered with old brambles and honeysuckle, weeds and, indeed, most everything had covered the entire one quarter acre; with great care and lots of work I have made it over into a pretty nice park. I thought maybe Mr. John Clagett Proctor might be interested. I read his writings every Sunday and they are quite interesting to me. I have the deed to the property and other information, should anyone be Interested and would like to call and see me. Most sincerely.

J. A. DAVIS

901 Prospect Avenue,
Takoma Park, Md.

The clipping referred to by Mr. Davis, as taken from The Star, follows;

MARKING OLD GRAVES.

There is a burying ground near Webster, Mass., in which the graves are marked with field stones; large ones Indicate old men and the small ones young men.

WHEN the writer called on Mr. Davis, whose home and cemetery are at the comer of Prospect and Greenwood avenues, at the extreme north end of Takoma Park, Md., he found a man much fascinated by the work he has been doing - in beautifying and caring for the graves of some of his early ancestors.

Mr. Davis is not an old man, or for this reason we might attribute his great reverence for the dead, but to him caring for this sacred plot is a matter of sentiment, aroused, perhaps, by the fact that he inherited the one-quarter acre of ground, upon which also stands his home, from an uncle, who stipulated that this particular piece of land should always remain in the family.

According to Mr. Davis, in all there are about 125 persons buried in this plot, and this includes his great-grandfather and great-grand mother. Hezekiah Davis and wife.

At an early date the farm here about, which must have been of considerable acreage, was known as the Cecil Plantation, having been inherited by Anna Cecil, who, according to the family Bible, married James Davis, May 5, 1799, and Scharf, in his "History of Western Maryland, practically substantiates this in his Montgomery County records, where he records the issuing of a marriage license to James Davis and Anney Cisell, April 25, 1799.

The parents of Anna Cecil, who was born July 12, 1775, were Gabriel and Mary Cecil, and beside Anna, the children of the latter included: Samuel Cecil, born October 4, 1752; Eleanor Cecil, born April 19, 1754; John Cecil, born October 9, 1757; James Cecil, born February 8, 1759; William Cecil. January 31, 1761; Mary Cecil, born January 31, 1763; Jemima Cecil, born November 25, 1766; Thomas Cecil, born March 20, 1771, and Anna, who married James Davis,

The age of this burial plot (there apparently being no records to go by) is believed to run back at least as far as 1734, and that the Cecil family lived somewhere in this neighborhood at that time. Indeed, not long since, James A. Davis, who lives on the place, found a confirmation certificate issued to Mary Cecil during the year mentioned, by the then rector of St. Paul's Church, more generally known as Rock Creek Church, and she was probably the mother of Gabriel Cecil, who was the father of Anna, who married James Davis. This certificate is now one of the prized relics in the library of the Washington Cathedral.

The family name, Cecil, is a very old one in Maryland history, and the writer was able to pick up at random the name of Joshua Cecil, who is mentioned as living in Calvert County as early as 1695, though it is likely the family was among the pioneer settlers, for there was a known friendship between the Calverts and the Cecils before the charter of Maryland was issued to George Calvert, the then Lord Baltimore, June 20, 1632.

The friendship between these two families is said to have been increased when Sir Robert Cecil, Queen Elizabeth's principal secretary of state, later recommended George Calvert as clerk of the Privy Council of King James, and though George Calvert never came to America, having died before the execution of the patent to Maryland, named in honor of Queen Henrietta Maria, yet his son, Cecil Calvert - undoubtedly named in honor of his friend, Sir Robert Cecil - did settle here as history so notably records. Of course, Cecil County, in the northeastern part of the State, is named either for some member of the Cecil family or for Cecil Calvert, Lord Baltimore.

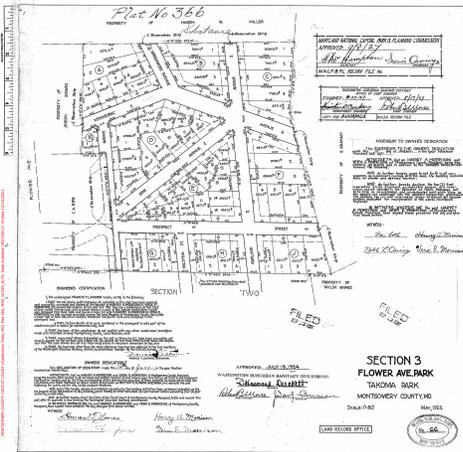
In glancing over the first United States census, for 1790, but two heads of families of the name Cecil were found then living in Montgomery County, Md., these being Archibald Cecil and Kinsey Cecil. At this time the former was married and had two sons under 16 years of age and two daughters, while Kinsey Cecil was married and had one son under 16. At this time there were also living in Frederick County William Cecil, sr., and William Cecil, jr. John Cecil was then living in Queen Anne County.

As to the Davis side of the Cecil and Davis families, the family Bible records the issue of James Davis and Anna Cecil as being Thomas Truman Cecil Davis, born March 10, 1800; John Briscoe Davis, born January 14, 1802; Philip Sabret Cecil Davis, born October 14, 1806; Eliza Davis, born January 10, 1809; Sabret Cecil Davis, born August 20, 1811; Hezekiah Davis, born September 6, 1813; Samuel Cecil Davis, born February, 1816. and Benjamin Davis, born May 28, 1818.

Among the Davises recorded as living in Montgomery County in 1790 are Griffith Davis Ephraim, Forrest, three persons by the name of Charles and Baxter, Jeremiah, William, John, John V., Joseph, Levi, Lodowick, Mary, Morris, Nathan, Robert, Thomas and Walter Davis.

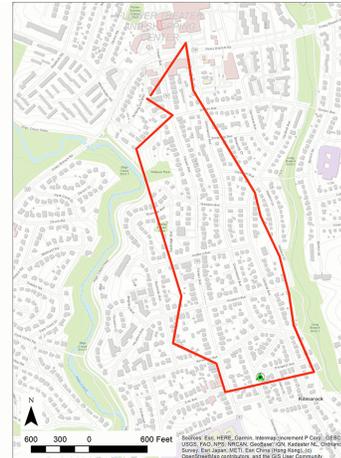
Benjamin Davis, who lived in the little log house which originally stood near Carroll and Garland avenues, died 35 or 40 years ago, when what was left of his farm, except the cemeterial plot, was sold to Mr. Thompson, who removed the little house to Greenwood avenue, where it now stands near the old apple orchard which once belonged to the Davis family. Later it was weatherboarded over the logs, and remains in this disguised way today.

Images:



HP-208-01
1924 Plat. The Cemetery is located in the Davis Family Lot.

Date
Photographer



HP-208-01
Boundary of 1863 deed with first reference to cemetery. Green triangle is the location of the Cemetery.

Date 11/18/2022
Photographer Brian Crane



HP-208-03
1937 Washington Star Article

Date
Photographer



HP-208-04
1714 Kilmarnock Patent (blue) on 1900 USGS map. Cemetery shown as green dot. Note house 500 feet south of cemetery.

Date 11/21/2022
Photographer Brian Crane

MARKER ID GIVEN NAME FAMILY NAME DEATH YEAR