

Cranford UMC – Cemetery History

The cemetery was established in 1730 when Pohick Episcopal Church (Church of England at the time) occupied this property site. The Pohick Church was on the site until 1774. Most buried at the time would have been British citizens but others could have included: citizens from other European countries, slaves and possibly Native Americans. When Pohick Church relocated to its present day site, the gravestones were also removed and relocated but the buried remains were not.

In 1781 the Colonial army under General George Washington and a French army under the command of General Jean Baptiste Rochambeau travelled from the New York/New Jersey area to Yorktown, VA. Their route included what is now Old Colchester Road; those armies marched within yards of the Pohick cemetery. Although unlikely and unrecorded, it is possible that if any French soldiers ill and died near this site they may have been buried in this cemetery.

One of the oldest surviving grave stones in the cemetery is located near where the Pohick Church had been; it is that of Thompson Clarke, who died March 8, 1842, aged 51 years. His grave attests to at least one use of the cemetery during a time when no church building occupied the site.

In 1857, the first Methodist Church in this community was built. James and John Cranford did much of the work on the new church. The spot selected for it was the former location of the old Pohick Church. When the new church was dedicated, it received the name of Lewis Chapel, in honor of the Rev. John Lewis, who inspired the Methodist movement.

During the War Between the States, 1861 to 1865, a few small fights between Confederate and Union soldiers took place here. Both Confederate and Union soldiers were buried in Cranford's cemetery. Unfortunately, none of the markers of the Confederate or Union soldiers remain today.

The Cranford Church cemetery has grave-sites dating to the period of 1898 the time of the Spanish American War, it is not established whether any veterans from that war were buried here. What is known is that veterans from the First and Second World Wars, and the Korean War are buried here. Veterans of the Viet Nam war and other recent conflicts either are or plan to be buried in Cranford's cemetery.

