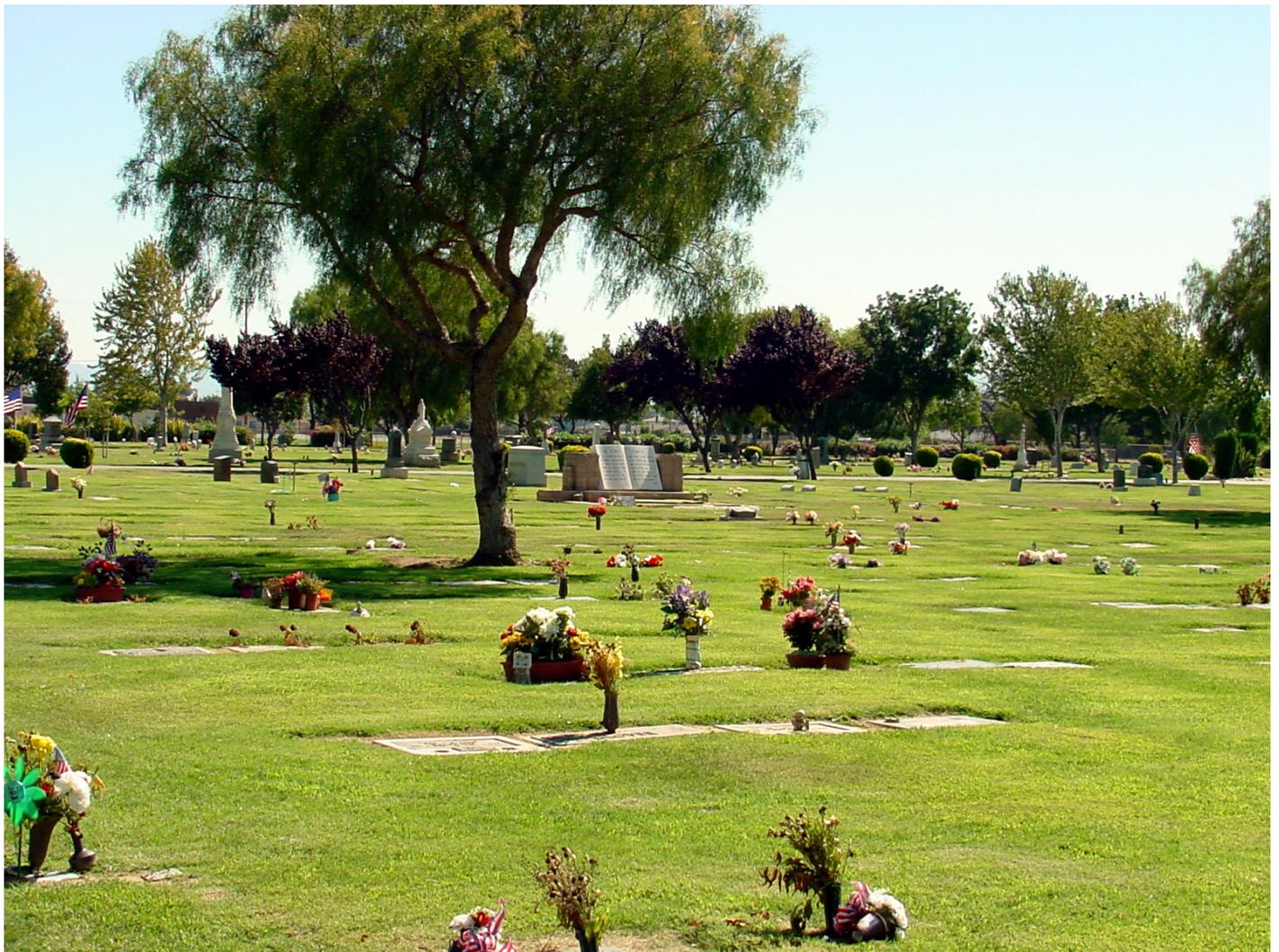


Irvington Memorial Cemetery

Walking Tour

Cemetery of the Pioneers



Acknowledgements

These biographies were written by Jim Griffin, Barbara Baxter, Kelsey Camello, Patricia Schaffarczyk, Wally Betchart, and Timothy Swenson, with additional material provided by Phil Holmes and Lila Bringhurst. Additional help has been provided by Stuart Guedon. Thanks to Nancy Johnson for her assistance with information on the origin of the cemetery.

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Washington Township Museum of Local History



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Brief History of the Cemetery



IN ORDER THAT
WE MAY
SERVE YOU BETTER
We Are Starting
Construction
of a New
**CREMATORIUM
and CHAPEL**
To be Completed Soon.

Many Beautiful
Sites Available*
in a Lovely
Setting
Perfect Drainage
**ENDOWMENT
CARE**

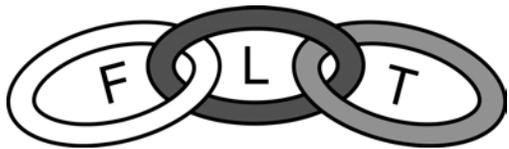
*We need an experienced man for light office work
and bookkeeping, with selling opportunities.

**IRVINGTON MEMORIAL
CEMETERY**
41001 Chapel Way, Fremont
Irvington District 656-5800

Irvington Memorial Cemetery was originally owned and operated by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows Mission Peak Lodge #114. The Lodge is still in operation at 40955 Fremont Blvd and accepting new members.

In December of 1873 the Lodge purchased 5 acres of land for a cemetery from Mr. Walters at \$200/acre. An additional acre was later purchased for \$100. Initially the rules for burial in the cemetery stipulated that all those interred must be Odd Fellows in good standing. This rule was later changed to allow for additional income for the Lodge. Notice when walking around the cemetery that many of the grave markers have the familiar three link symbol of the Odd Fellows (Friendship, Love and Truth). This symbol indicates that the person was a member of IOOF.

There were various reasons why people would have joined the organization in the late 1800s and early 1900s, but a reason for many would have been the offer of death benefits. Life insurance as it exists today was not commonly available. However, Lodge members would have their burial and funeral expenses paid for, as well as their land, property and family taken care of after their death. Organizations with similar benefits include the Masons and the Woodmen of the World.



In April 1957, 83 years after IOOF purchased the land, the Lodge sold the cemetery to the Eureka Holding Co. of Alameda. It was sold for \$22,500, giving the Lodge a profit of \$21,400, not counting the cost of upkeep over the years. The cemetery was later sold to Berge, Pappas and Smith Mortuary. Burials in this cemetery still take place today.

This walking tour booklet includes the biographies of only a small number of those buried in the Irvington Memorial Cemetery. As the tour expands, so too will this booklet. Interested in a specific burial in this cemetery or looking to help with the next walking tour? Please contact the museum directly.

Anthony E. Alameda

b. Jun. 25, 1895 d. Aug. 30, 1984

Plot: Section B; Row 3A; Space 23

Anthony E. Alameda was a farmer and farm foreman. He was a director for the Alameda County Water District for 7 years, from 1962 to 1969.

Anthony (Tony) was born and raised on a Centerville farm. He started farming for himself at the age of 19. He was drafted and served in World War I. He was always interested in education and became president of the Board of Trustees of Washington Union High School District. He presented high school diplomas to his six children who graduated from Washington Union High School. The Athletic field at Irvington High School was dedicated in his honor. He became known to old-timers as “Mr. Fremont” and was foreman of the L. W. Williams farm for many years. Tony was a founding director of the Washington Township Healthcare District, which manages Washington Hospital.



Tony was very active in community organizations, including; Fremont Chamber of Commerce, Alameda County School Trustees Association, Men’s Club of Washington Township, Irvington fire commission, UPEC, Druids, the Elks, the Knights of Pythias, Lions Club International, Irvington Apricot Festival, and Irvington Chamber of Commerce.

John Blacow

b. Feb 1, 1820 d. 1884

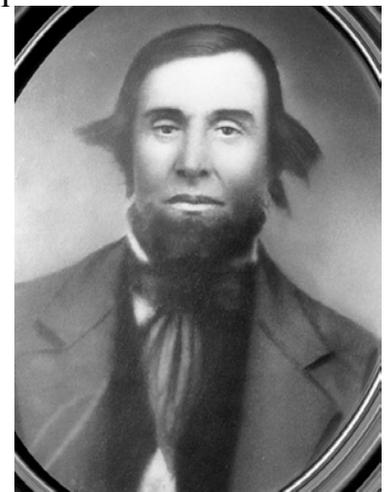
Plot: Section B; Row 10; Lot 55, Space 65

Sophia Rathke Blacow

b. 1833 d. 1917

Plot: Section B; Row 10; Lot 55, Space 65

John Blacow came to the United States from England in 1841 to join his brother Robert in Missouri and Illinois. When Robert left for the California Gold Rush in 1849, John stayed behind. He met Sophia Rathke (originally from Germany) and the two were married in 1853. When John’s brother Robert had returned to make the trip to the west with family and other close friends, they joined the overland trail to California. In 1865, John and Sophia acquired an 80-acre farm in Washington Township at today's Blacow Rd and Stevenson Blvd (now the Sundale neighborhood). They raised a large family (nine children survived), farmed the land, tended an apricot orchard, and raised Durham cattle, a breed suitable for both dairy and beef production. John died in 1884 (age 64) and Sophia in 1917 (age 84). Their descendants later sold the land for tract homes,



a park and school. Named and dedicated to John Blacow, Blacow School opened in 1961. In 1968, the family sold the rest of the land to the Sundale Development Corporation.

George W. Bond

b. Jul. 19, 1804 d. Dec. 14, 1892

Plot: Section B; Row 10; Space 46

Captain George W. Bond came to California in 1852. He opened the first store in Centerville that same year. The first store was described as a "primitive affair" so it was probably a tent. In the next two years he built a new store and went into business with Stevens and then Haley. In 1854, he built a new store and went into business with Capt. Valpey. Capt. Bond was the first postmaster for Centerville. With James Baezell, he also started the first blacksmith shop in Centerville. By 1863, he was the Justice of the Peace for Centerville. In 1876, he was the first president of the Pioneer Society. He built his home in about 1853 near the corner of Thornton and Fremont Blvd. From this land he donated a section for St. James' Episcopal Church.

John Antrim Bunting

b. Mar. 2, 1855 d. May 1, 1916

Plot: Section B; Row 10; Space 16

Elfleda Olive Bunting

b. Jun. 30, 1857 d. May 5, 1939

Plot: Section B; Row 10; Space 16

John Bunting came to California with his widowed mother Evelina in 1876, having bought a farm on present day Thornton Ave. John Bunting married Elfleda (Fleda) Overacker in 1877 at St. James' Episcopal Church. John purchased the farm from his mother, and Fleda was given 10 acres of land as a wedding present from her parents. John was not very successful at farming. He tried operating a hardware store in Centerville and still had problems. John had to sell the farm land back to his mother and the Overackers. During his financial crisis, Fleda divorced him in 1885. Fleda inherited the family farm when John's mother died in 1898. Her parents deeded nine acres of land to her in 1900.

John started working for the railroad as a freight conductor. He invested in some oil bearing land near Bakersfield and started an oil company. John's luck changed and the oil wells produced very well, allowing him to invest in other oil ventures



and an iron works in Coalinga. John returned to Centerville a wealthy man and remarried Fleda in 1900. John was able to take his oil money, pay off debts and then built a new house in 1901. The house was three stories and had ten bedrooms. The barn at Sycamore Farm was often used for civic functions as it had a finished wood interior. They had a steam plant for power. The Buntings also owned a private Pullman rail car, built at a cost of \$40,000. It was called the "El Fleda" and they often traveled in it. It was sold in 1910. John died of cancer in 1916 age 61. Fleda sold the farm in 1918 and lived until May 5, 1939.

Adolphus Decoto

b. Oct. 10, 1824 d. Nov. 30, 1921
Plot: Section B; Row 18; Space 12

Elizabeth Decoto

b. Jun. 14, 1836 d. Feb. 28, 1895
Plot: Section B; Row 18; Space 11

Adolphus Decoto came to California in 1860, to join his brother Ezra. In 1870, he and his brothers, Ezra and John, purchased land from Jonas Clark, in the area that is now known as Decoto. The Decoto brothers had heard that a train line was going through and bought the land on speculation. They sold part of the land to the Decoto Land company. Later Adolphus purchased land in Irvington for farming. Adolphus married Elizabeth Lowrie and his brother Ezra married Janet Lowrie.

Frederick Dusterberry

b. Feb. 8, 1871 d. Aug. 27, 1936
Plot: Section B; Row 15; Space 29

Frederick Dusterberry was the son of pioneer Henry Dusterberry who came to California in 1854. Raised in Centerville, Fred went into the plumbing business, installing and repairing plumbing for many buildings in Centerville. He advertised "Sanitary Plumbing, Well Being, Pumps, and Windmills. In 1916, Fred was providing water to local residents, including the laying of water pipes along the roads to reach his customers. Fred was also a trustee of the Washington Union High School District. Frank is in the upper left corner of this picture with his father (lower, center) and mother (lower, right).



Mary Griffin

b. 1891 d. 1988

Plot: Section B, Row 25, Space 37

Mary Liston Griffin was born in Alvarado in 1891. Her father, Jonathan Liston, a telegrapher, was the railroad stationmaster, a job considered “high tech” at the time. Mary was born in the Alvarado station house, where the family lived. Henry C. Smith, founder of the town of New Haven, hired her grandfather, William Morris Liston, in 1851 to build warehouses. William later operated the Brooklyn Hotel, ran a stagecoach from Hayward (as it was called then) to Warm Springs and was a Justice of the Peace. Upon graduation from Oakland High School, Mary became a legal secretary, riding the ferry from her home in Oakland every day to San Francisco. She also served in the stenographic pool in Sacramento when the California State legislature was in session. Mary was a fighter for women’s suffrage, and when women were finally given the vote, she never missed casting her ballot in an election until her death at age 97.



World War I was over in 1918 and Mary met Randy Griffin, a wartime “buddy” of her brother when he was in France. They married and Mary began a new life in Irvington, then a small town in the country. Mary applied her secretarial skills and business training to assist Randy in rebuilding the family construction business. Two children were born, Helen and Jim. Mary and Randy were active in community and school affairs. During World War II, Mary served as a community volunteer with the Red Cross and later as the release time teacher at the local Presbyterian Church.

Mary, a member the Country Club of Washington Township, assisted in the writing of the second edition of the “History of Washington Township”, published in 1950. The committee’s work was instrumental in forming the Washington Township Historical Society, where Mary served as secretary for the first twenty-five years.

Mary lived an active life in the white house at the corner of Bay Street and Chapel Way until her death in 1988. Teaching herself to speak French after the passing of her husband, because she had heard that having two languages was like having two souls, she took on Chinese when she was 80, eventually concluding that two souls would be sufficient.

Frank Griffin

b. 1866 d. 1915

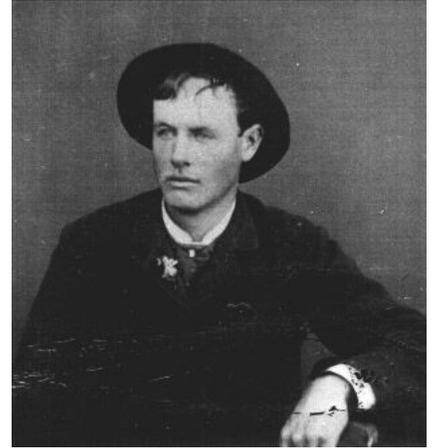
Plot: Section B, Row 25, Space 34

Minnie Griffin

b. 1871 d. 1913

Plot: Section B, Row 25, Space 33

Francis "Frank" Griffin was a member of the McCarthy family that once owned the Territorial Enterprise in Virginia City, and was on his way from his home in Virginia City to join the Jesuit seminary in San Francisco. He first stopped in Irvington to spend the summer with cousins, the Strivers, and found employment at A.O. Rix's wheelwright shops. Frank met Minnie, and they were soon married. Frank was 21 and Minnie 16. Minnie Rix was the second child of A. O. and Angie Rix.



To accommodate their growing family, three boys and with more to come, Frank built Minnie a home in 1892. The house still stands at the corner of Bay Street and Chapel way. Frank continued building houses, dairies and barns and Minnie continued practicing and improving her artistic skills, traveling by train to San Francisco to take painting lessons. She opened a studio in her new home where she painted, sold her artwork and painting supplies and taught china painting to the women of the community, an art in vogue at the turn of the century. Her work was exceptional. She won a first prize at the 1883 World's Fair in Chicago. Minnie taught classes Tuesdays and Saturdays in Irvington and Wednesdays in Centerville at the Women's Country Club.



Minnie was active in community affairs including the Women's Country Club of Washington Township while raising her five children and being busy with her art. On July 4, 1913 tragedy befell the family. Minnie died during childbirth at age 43.

Services were held at the home on Bay Street followed by Minnie's four sons carrying her casket from the family home to the family cemetery plot, not far away.

Alfred Griffin

b. Jun. 25, 1888 d. Sep. 10, 1920

Plot: Section B; Row 25; Space 35

Minnie's oldest son, an architect, designed the Mission San Jose School, built by his father, Frank. Alfred was in charge of the building of the Essanay Studios in Niles; joining the company, he left with Charlie Chaplain for Hollywood in 1915. Rising in the industry to become location director and set designer, he suddenly died in 1920 at age 32 of acute appendicitis.

Philip Griffin

b. 1900 d. 1964

Plot: Section B; Row 25; Space 35

Philip was a reporter for the Chronicle and became a Journalism professor at UC Berkeley. While a student at Washington high School in Centerville, he and Gordon Kibby started the school newspaper, The Hatchet. Philip was the faculty spokesperson to the media during the Academic Freedom movement in 1952, the McCarthy era.

Randolph Griffin

b. 1892 d. 1965

Plot: Section B; Row 25; Space 37

Randolph, together with his brother Lee, joined with their father in 1913 in his construction company. They built the Irvington Monument for the Chamber of Commerce to keep cars and trucks from colliding after the death of a local boy. Randolph went to war with Lee, and after the war returned to continue the construction company until retirement in 1963. He was a Master Builder, engaged in the design and construction of custom homes, dairy barns, commercial and industrial structures over a fifty year period, Randy, as he was called, was a community leader, serving as school trustee, fire commissioner and officer in local organizations. His hobby was reading, especially about Californian history and the Wild West.



John Hall

b. Jun. 19, 1821 d. Jan. 13, 1886

Plot: Section B; Row 22; Space 23

John Hall, born about 1822 in Ohio, owned a large and successful ranch bordered on the north by the Oakland-San Jose Highway (Alvarado Blvd). He started raising thoroughbred horses in 1864. In 1876, he was showing the horses at the California State Fair. During the 1870's, John was a member of the State Agricultural Society. When the South Pacific Coast Railroad came through Alvarado, it crossed over his property. The railroad built a rail stop call "Hall Station" on his property. John was married to Phoebe, a native of New York.

Charles Horner

b. Nov. 11, 1868 d. Dec. 1, 1917

Plot: Section B; Row 25; Space 29

Charles Frederick Horner and his wife, Sarah, are pictured here in the first electric car in the Township, a one cylinder, eight horsepower Thomas. Charles returned from Hawaii to live in Irvington; their "pretty cottage, with handsome grounds" was on the Irvington-Centerville Road. Charles Frederick was born to William Yates and Ann Horner at Irvington in November, 1858. He graduated from Washington Elementary School and attended Washington College. His family (William Yates Horner) moved to Hawaii around 1879. He married Sarah Lowrie Decoto in 1883 in Decoto and returned to the Hawaiian Islands where he served in the legislature from 1887-88. Charles and Sarah returned to Washington Township in 1895.



In 1900 he was elected to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors where he served 11 years. He was chairman of the board in 1908. Charles earned an enviable reputation as a public servant especially in regard to better roads and was credited with obtaining the modern steel bridge in Niles Canyon.

Horner was appointed by the Board of Supervisors as the County Assessor in 1911. He was well known in fraternal circles as a member of several societies including the IOOF. The William Yates Horner house, where Charles most likely grew up, is still located at 3101 Driscoll Road today.

Stacy Horner

b. Oct. 13, 1794 d. Aug. 17, 1862

Plot: Section B; Row 24; Space 39

Sarah Horner

b. Dec. 25, 1796 d. Feb. 20, 1890

Plot: Section B; Row 24; Space 40

Stacy and Sarah Horner were the parents of John and William Horner, two men who helped found Centerville and Union City. Stacy and Sarah joined their sons in California in the early 1850s.

Hugh Edward Mosher

b. Jul. 21, 1844 d. May 9, 1937

Plot: Section B; Row 13; Space 32

Sarah Jane Mosher

b. 1846 d. Jan. 13, 1935

Plot: Section B; Row 13; Space 32

Hugh Edward Mosher was born on July 21, 1844 in New Brunswick, Canada. He married Sarah J. Warnick in 1866 in Canada, lived for a short time in Massachusetts and came to California in 1867. After living in Livermore, the Moshers came to Centerville in about 1870. Hugh was a member of St. James' Episcopal Church for 67 years and was Senior Warden of St. James' from 1924 to 1935, the year of his death.

Origin Mowry

b. Jul. 3, 1825 d. Nov. 7, 1888

Plot: Section B, Row 12, Lot 42, Space 4

Sarah Delina Mowry

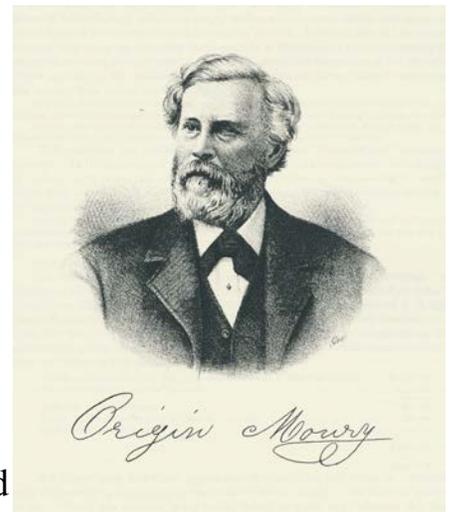
b. Jul. 31, 1829 d. May 23, 1899

Plot: Section B, Row 12, Lot 42, Space 3

Origin Mowry was born in Rhode Island in 1825. He emigrated from the east coast to California aboard the famous Mormon ship Brooklyn in 1846. The six-month voyage ended in San Francisco. Origin worked briefly in San Francisco, then Sausalito, and eventually found work conveying interested parties to Sutter's Fort on his sloop. Origin then tried his hand at mining in Murphy's Camp before taking a trip to Chile. He returned with goods, which he sold to miners. He then purchased land in San Francisco and at Newark, where he established Mowry Landing and farm. This land was located at the very west end of Mowry Ave near Mowry Slough.

In 1854, he married Sarah Delina Cheney, four years his junior, and together they had four children. On his land, Origin built a home, dock and a warehouse, and he used his ship Neptune to travel back and forth to San Francisco with local game and agricultural products. Other San Francisco merchants also rented spaces from Mowry at his landing, and soon many families moved nearby.

The Mowry's Landing School District formed in 1856 and a schoolhouse built in 1874 (later burned and then replaced in 1884). In 2014, the demolition of the schoolhouse took place, though the



City of Newark preserved it for a time, as did the East Bay Regional Park District. Origin died in 1888 (age 63) and Sarah died in 1899 (age 70).

Howard Overacker

b. Nov. 21, 1828 d. May 22, 1911
Plot: Section B; Row 9; Space 13

Deborah Overacker

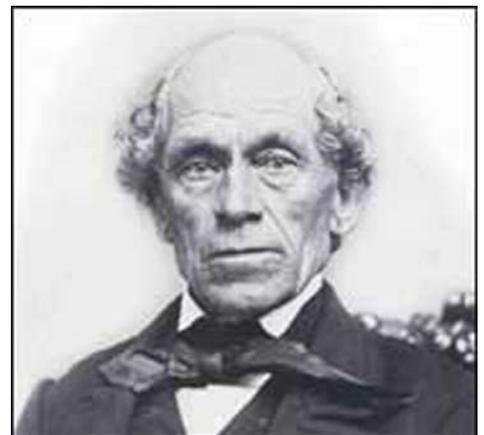
b. Nov. 14, 1834 d. Aug. 29, 1923
Plot: Section B; Row 9; Space 13

Howard Overacker was born in Ohio on November 21, 1828 and grew up in Michigan. He came to California in February of 1852. After not doing well with gold mining, Howard came to Irvington to work as a ranch hand. He returned East in 1855 and married Deborah Monroe on January 28, 1856. Howard and Deborah returned to California and set up a farm in Niles. In 1860, he sold that property and bought property in Centerville. In 1868, Howard was attacked by a bear while deer hunting. He sustained a number of grievous wounds, but after a friend helped him home, he was able to recover after some surgery. Howard was elected as Alameda County Supervisor from 1862 - 1866 and 1871 - 1879. Howard was initiated as a Mason in 1863 in the Alameda Lodge #167 and donated land for the first Masonic Lodge located on what is now Peralta Blvd. Howard owned property on Peralta Blvd running back to Alameda Creek. Howard and Deborah were founding members of St. James' Episcopal Church in 1862.

Timothy Rix

b. Jan. 31, 1798 d. Nov. 5, 1873
Plot: Section B, Row 24, Space 30

A patriot, Timothy Rix lied about his age to fight in the War of 1812. His father and grandfather had fought in the battle for Bunker Hill in 1775, his grandfather dying on the way home. Timothy became a seafaring man, owning a fleet of small ships sailing out of Boston Harbor, trading with the West Indies. In his fifties and retired when gold was discovered in California, Timothy formed a cooperative corporation, The Boston and California Mining and Trading Joint Stock Company, organized "to exploit the riches of the distant coast with righteousness and dignity". The company sold shares to 150 young scions of New England families for \$300 each and purchased a ship, the Edward Everett, named for the president of Harvard who provided each with a bible and an admonishment about the "wickedness and ignorance that stood in their path". They sailed around the Horn of South America, arriving in San Francisco on July 4, 1849. It was a hot July, and mining was hard work. The company disbanded after some say just eleven days and many shareholders returned home. Timothy remained, first building a small



house on First Street in San Francisco, where he became a member of the vigilantes. In 1850, he purchased 175 acres from Pio Pico near what is now Fremont Blvd. at Stevenson in Fremont. He then re-bought the land 1857 from the U. S. Government for 1.25/acre, as the Pico claim was not honored. There he erected a lead Quonset hut that he had brought on his ship, and sold provisions to miners on their way to the goldfields, including eggs for 2 to 3 dollars a dozen.

Timothy sent for his wife and children, and in 1853 they arrived via the Isthmus of Panama. After a harrowing crossing through the tropical rain forest on burros, the younger children became separated. Living first in the tiny dwellings that he had built on property purchased from Pico, the family soon moved to San Francisco where his wife was more comfortable. Timothy and son, Alfred (A. O.) built a house at the “Corners” where he had also acquired land grant property between Bay Street and Fremont Boulevard down to the cemetery with lumber shipped around the Horn. The house was restored by Lila Bringhurst and still stands on Bay Street.

With his many skills, Timothy and his son, A. O., established a wheelwright business, one of the first industries in town, manufacturing wagons, farm implements and cabinets to sell to the new and thriving farming community.

In 1870, Timothy traded the property that he had purchased from Pio Pico for a wagon and team of mules and became the first postmaster in Irvington.

Alfred Osgood Rix

b. Apr. 4, 1835 d. Aug. 5, 1910
Plot: Section B, Row 24, Space 33

Velonia Angelica McDavid Rix

b. Aug. 9, 1849 d. Sept. 8, 1900
Plot: Section B, Row 24, Space 32

While crossing the plains in a Prairie-Schooner in 1853, Angie (age 4) had the task to keep alive a redbud seedling taken from the family home in Redbud, Illinois. It was to be planted "at the door step of their new home out West, where the snows never fall. To bloom as you'll bloom out yonder; a gay new redbud by the door"* . She settled with her family at Mowry's Landing and attended the little red schoolhouse that her father, along with Origin Mowry had built. It was a happy and exciting time, playing with other children of early settlers, together building a new life in the expanding community. Angie was then sent to attend the Young Ladies Female Institution, in the “charms of old Santa Clara”, to enhance her writing and music skills.



Progress, community building and family were in the minds of early settlers, and at her young age the urge to participate was irresistible. Angie met Alfred Osgood (AO) Rix, son of Timothy Rix, the old Argonaut that arrived in

California in 1849 and settled at “The Corners”, soon to be Irvington. Alfred had joined him in 1853, traveling with his mother and siblings via the Isthmus of Panama. Angie and Alfred were married Christmas day, 1865. Angie was 16 and Alfred 30. Together they had four daughters, Julia, Minnie, Helen and Mila.



Angie and Alfred were leaders in early community affairs including the founding of the Odd Fellows local organization, the establishment of the cemetery, the founding of the community church and the beginnings of the local schools and in the social events of the day for which Irvington had become noted. Angie died in 1900 at the age of 51. The first house where she lived with her husband and raised her daughters still stands on Bay Street in Irvington.

**From a poem by her daughter, Mila Rix Norris entitled “The Redbud Tree”.*

Margaret Williams Rix

b. Dec. 1, 1803 d. Oct. 15, 1869

Plot: Section B, Row 24, Space 29

Nothing in her life had prepared Margaret for the work and resourcefulness required of a pioneer woman. Raised in Boston, in style and comfort, and already 50 years old with three grown children and three younger children, she was content in caring for her family in the city while Timothy had been at sea. When Timothy wrote for the family to join him in California she was surprised and unprepared.

The voyage on the steamer to Panama was pleasant and uneventful. When the ship debarked at the mouth of the Chagres River Margaret and her children found themselves immersed in rain, head, confusion and cacophony. They were in the midst of immigrants from all over the world clamoring to get to California to claim the best land, along with adventurers and opportunists still streaming in at the tail end of the gold rush. The Transpacific Railway was not yet completed, and the 49 miles to the Pacific was to be transited partly by boat and partly by burro along the 300-year-old Las Cruces Trail. In the chaos, the younger children became separated and found themselves in the hands of natives with machetes. They were frightened thought that they had been captured by pirates. The natives cooked for the children and successfully led the small party across the isthmus, where, happily, they joined the rest of the family at Panama’s Pacific port.



Timothy had hoped that the family would live in the small structures that he had built on the Pio Pico property, but Margaret refused. Instead, the family moved to San Francisco while Timothy and son, A. O., built a home at the “Corners”. It is, still standing on Bay Street.

Helen, the youngest daughter, attended school on Portsmouth Square, San Francisco's first school, and became friends with John Swett, its founder.

After two years, Margaret and her young children moved to the "Corners" where the children thrived among early pioneers settling the town that became Irvington. When family and friends got together, the favorite talk was about who had had the hardest time coming to California. Margaret always knew. It was she - always dreaming about returning to Boston. On her tombstone, it is written: "Margaret Williams – A native of Boston."

Margaret has six children; Sarah Pauline Rix, Margaret Lucretia, Timothy Rix, Jr., , A. O. Rix, Edward Kent Rix. and Helen Rix

Eugene H. Stevenson

b. 1877 d. 1930

Plot: Section B; Row 19; Space 80

Eugene H. Stevenson was a local farmer. He was a director for the Alameda County Water District for 16 years, from 1914 to 1930. Eugene, a Centerville native, grew vegetables, sugar beets, and hay on his farm. He leased some of his land to the California Nursery Company. In Newark, Eugene raised cattle and grew hay. Eugene was active in local organizations like the Native Sons of the Golden West and União Portuguesa do Estado da Califórnia (Portuguese Union of the State of California, U.P.E.C.), a Portuguese fraternal organization.

John T. Stevenson

b. 1823 d. 1894

Plot: Section B, Row 19, Space 79

John was born in New York. When he was nine, his family traveled to Buffalo and then Michigan. He came to California in 1852 via Panama and tried his hand at mining. He soon came to Centerville and worked on the Elias Beard ranch until 1864. He had saved enough to purchase 380 acres (what is now American High School and Brookvale Shopping Center), adding acres each year until he had a total of 1,160 acres. He had a dairy and ranching business. John was an Episcopalian and donated the gold cross used at St. James' Episcopal Church. John and Jane had five children, John William, Caroline (Carrie), Eugene, Maxwell, and Harry. John, Eugene and Maxwell continued the family dairy and farming business and were active in the community for many years.

Simeon Stivers

b. Jul. 23, 1826 d. Feb. 7, 1898
Plot: Section B; Row 1; Space 29

Anna Stivers

Plot: Section B; Row 1; Space 29
b. Jan. 5, 1839 d. Jul. 4, 1920

Simeon Stivers was born in Camden, New Jersey. He became an orphan at three years old when his parents went down with a ship at sea. Adopted and raised by his Uncle Earl Marshall and his wife, Letitia; he came to California on the Ship Brooklyn with them.



He worked as carpenter in San Francisco, helping to build the first public school house there. He joined his Uncle Earl at Mission San Jose in 1848. They went to the gold fields soon after the discovery was made public and returned to Mission San Jose with enough gold to purchase land for farms.

Stivers bought 160 acres from John Horner, owner of part of the previous Mission San Jose lands. A lagoon on the property was known as the Tule Pond or the Lagoon until it became identified as Stivers Lagoon.

Simeon met Anna Maria Jones in San Francisco when she was only eight years old. He decided that he would wait for her to grow up so she could be his wife. They were married years later on September 12, 1858 by elder John M. Horner. Simeon and Earl had a prefabricated house shipped in pieces around the Horn and erected for their home near the present Fremont BART Station. Later, Simeon built a large two-story house on his ranch near Mission Boulevard. Simeon carried on general farming and stock raising, cultivating much of his 600-acre ranch.

Julia Rix Straven

b. Aug. 29, 1869 d. Dec. 22, 1933
Plot: Section B, Row 24, Space 31

Charles Shinn has written in his reflections on Irvington, that “the spirit of hospitality was everywhere” and included “suppers, dramatic entertainments, concerts and lectures”. The Irvington Literary and Social Club, was popular during the 1880’s with the young people of the town. Its motto: “Let joy be unconfined! No sleep till morn, when youth and pleasure meet to chase the glowing hours with flying feet” Byron .

Julia Rix, along with her mother, Angie, are often reported as organizers and participants in the events of the community. An accomplished student and dramatist, it appears in the town’s newspaper that Julia performed with other community members at events at the Clark Hall, the Odd Fellows Hall and the Anderson Academy. Julia attended schools in Irvington, and earned a teaching certificate in 1888 from The State Normal School, San Jose. She started her

career as a teacher at the Irvington School with a beginning salary of \$60.00/month during the school year. In 1904 monthly teacher's salaries are said to have been \$72.00 for Women and \$99.00 for men. It was the custom until the Second World War that only unmarried women were allowed employment as teachers to avoid competition with the work of men, who were presumed to be charged with the support of families.

Julia was stylish, fun loving and adventurous. She was a sight to behold riding her spring wagon through the town with laces flowing in the breeze. She met and married Thomas Straven in 1900 and together they set off for the gold rush to the Klondike, an adventure that ended tragically with the death of their baby, Catherine, and abandonment by her new husband. Julia returned to Alameda County and took a position with the Haywards School district, becoming Vice Principle. When her sister Minnie died in childbirth in 1913, Julia became the matriarch of the Rix family. After WW I Julia accompanied a group of Gold Star mothers to visit the graves of fallen American soldiers, including her beloved Lee. Upon retirement she moved to Berkeley, tutoring students from the university, writing poetry and short stories, including scripts for the early movies, inspired by her nephew, Alfred, who had joined the Essanay Studios. (They were mostly rejected.) Julia never remarried. Julia is buried in the Rix family plot in Irvington, along with infant Catherine and twenty members of her family.



Richard Threlfall

b. Nov. 23, 1829 d. Jan. 7, 1905
Plot: Section B; Row 25; Space 12

Helen Celia Threlfall

b. Jun. 25, 1844 d. Sep. 16, 1935
Plot: Section B; Row 24; Space 11

Richard Threlfall came to California in 1852 and settled in Livermore, where he did some farming. He later moved to Irvington, and with his brother, got into the poultry business. He kept his chickens on 75 acres of land. He married Helen Rix, who was the daughter of Timothy Rix. Richard and Helen had four children, Charles, Nellie, Angie, and George.



Captain Calvin Valpey

b. Mar., 1806 d. Sep. 12, 1880

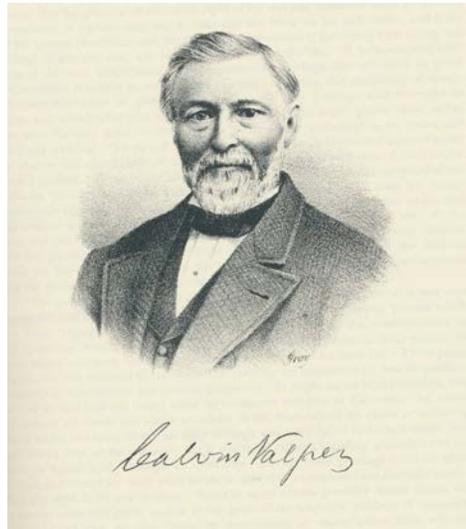
Plot: Section B

Elizabeth Gardner Valpey

b. Jun. 20, 1810 d. Sep. 2, 1901

Plot: Section B; Row 7; Space 44

Captain Calvin Valpey spent most of his life on the sea, starting when he was twelve years old. He married Elizabeth Gardner, the daughter of a sea captain, in 1833. He came to California in 1851, settling in Warm Springs and founded Warm Springs Landing. His wife and children joined him by 1860. He spent twenty years running Warm Springs Landing before he died. Elizabeth Valpey was the first school teacher in Warm Springs. She ran a one-room, 12 foot by 14 foot, schoolhouse with 13 pupils in 1863.



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