Irvington Memorial Cemetery

Walking Tour

Cemetery of the Pioneers

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
MUSEUM of LOCAL HISTORY

Acknowledgements

These biographies were written by Jim Griffin, Barbara Baxter, Kelsey Camello, Patricia Schaffarczyk, Wally Betchart, Dianne Holmes and Timothy Swenson, with additional material provided by the archives of 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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Brief History of the Cemetery

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", likely 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 build 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.

Joshua Chadbourne

b. 1873 d. 1959
Buried at Chapel of the Chimes

Joshua Chadbourne Elementary School, dedicated in 1960, was named after Joshua Francis Chadbourne. He was born in 1873 and his parents were Andrew Jackson Chadbourne and Rachael A. Chadbourne, both buried in Irvington Memorial Cemetery.

The Chadbourne family came to Irvington from Maine in 1868. Andrew Chadbourne (Joshua's father) was a rancher and businessman in the Irvington and Warm Springs areas. Young Joshua helped his father plant and care for the apricot orchard. It was 80 acres located near Driscoll Road. He married Margaret Rix, the daughter of Timothy Rix, Irvington's first post master. Their only son, Edward, married Margaret Overacker. The Chadbournes lived in their ranch house that was located close to where Chandbourne School is located.

In the early 1900s Joshua was interested in mechanical things, especially cars. He opened the first garage between San Jose and Oakland. This attracted dealers and buyers of cars, and Irvington became an auto center in 1909. He sold many kinds of cars—Dodge, Jefferey, Rambler, Mitchell, and the EMF Studebaker. He joked that EMF stood for "every morning fix 'em." He continued the auto business until 1928 when he was 55 years old. After giving up his auto business, Joshua went to work on his apricot orchard. It was quite a large operation—one of the biggest in the area. At times, as many as 200 people worked there, cutting, sulphuring, and drying cots. When their son was old enough, he helped with the family business. Joshua worked on the farm where he worked until a few months before he died in 1959. He was 86 years old. His wife Margaret, at the age of 90, attended the dedication of Chadbourne School, named in honor of her late husband, Joshua.

Barclay De Tully Clough
b. July 24, 1822 d. March 6, 1886
Plot: Section B; Row 25; Space 66

Jane Palen Clough
b. 1836 d. 1916
Plot: Section B; Row 25; Space 66

Helen Clough Ford
b. Dec. 8, 1869 d. April 28, 1956
Plot: Section B; Row 25; Space 64

William H. Ford
b. March 30, 1865 d. May 12, 1938
Plot: Section B; Row 25; Space 64

Jane Palen Clough

Barclay De Tully Clough grew up in New York and in 1850, he came to California via the Isthmus of Panama. He bought a fruit orchard along Alameda Creek in 1866 where he pioneered an almond nursery. In February of 1865, Mr. Clough married Jane Palen. The Cloughs built a two-story house on their farm of 51 acres where their only daughter, Helen, was born in 1869. Mr. Clough was one of the first trustees of Niles School and held that office until he died in 1886, at the age of 64.

After the death of her husband, Jane owned and managed the farm property. As the farm owner, she worked with neighbors to service adequate water for irrigation. She also helped found the Niles Congregational Church and faithfully served there until she died in 1918.

William H. Ford was born in New York in 1865, and came by train to Niles around 1888. He worked for the Cloughs where he became acquainted with Helen Clough. They were married in 1891. They served as directors for the Niles Free Library Association and at times kept it alive. Their love for the library culminated in their gift of the Jane R. Clough Memorial Library in 1928. The gravel business that the Fords owned was very profitable, and they were very generous with their earnings, donating to the Niles Boy Scout House, Ford Hall at the Niles Congregational Church, and the Niles Library.

Helen and William Ford

Helen Clough Ford lived in the house where she was born for her entire life. She was a member of the Health Center Board, The Toyon Branch of the Children's Hospital, and the Washington Township

Welfare Club. She helped write the 1094 book about the history of Washington Township. Helen Clough Ford died in 1956 at the age of 86 and was remembered as a philanthropist and cultural leader in the community.

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.

Rev. Judge Durham
b. Aug 7, 1839 d. June 15, 1914
Plot: Section B; Row 21; Space 5

Elvira Jane Durham
b. Aug. 7, 1839 d. Dec 1, 1911
Plot: Section B; Row 21; Space 4

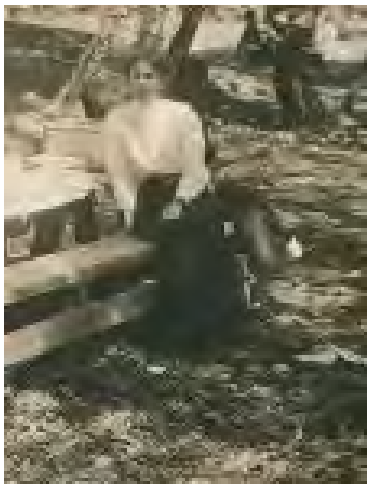
Judge Haley Durham
b. April 1, 1871 d. Jan 21, 1958
Plot: Section B; Row 22; Row 4

Mabel Clair Durham
b. June 18, 1887 d. Nov 12, 1978
Plot: Section B; Row 22; Space 5

Judge Haley Durham

The Rev. Judge Durham, originally from Ohio, was President of Pierce Christian College in Colusa County, California. He then came to Irvington to be a professor at Washington College. He helped establish the Christian Church in Irvington. Rev. Durham bought land on both sides of what is now Osgood Road. Rev. Durham married Elvira Jane "Vera" Whitman in 1862. They had four children: Elda, William Whitman, Mary, and Judge Haley. One Sunday in 1914, the Rev. Durham was killed in a train accident. He was returning home from a preaching engagement at Clay Station on the Ione Road. He was 78 years old.

Dr. Judge Haley Durham, the son of Rev. Durham, was born in Abingdon, Illinois on April 1, 1871. He married Mabel Clair of Grass Valley in 1912. When he graduated from the University of California Dental School, he wrote, “I knew but little—the public knew less.” Dr. Durham was the dentist in Irvington for more than 50 years.



Mabel Clair Durham

Dr. Durham set up his office in the Ford Building on the corner of Washington Blvd. and the road to San Jose, later named Fremont Blvd. He was in that building for 57 years. Dr. Durham retired in 1942. He and his wife had 2 children: son Judge Milton Durham and daughter Mildred Elvira Durham. The family lived on Durham Road (now Osgood). Judge Milton Durham died October 7, 1938 when he was 21 years old. Mildred later married Ken Foster and died September 27, 1953, at the age of 40. Both children predeceased their parents.

Dr. Durham served as a trustee of the Irvington School District from 1916 to 1932. He was active in the Irvington Community Church. Dr. Durham belonged to the Chamber of Commerce and the Masons. In 1950, he was one of the five commissioners for the Irvington Sanitary District. In 1954, Dr. Durham closed his dental practice after 57 years at the same location. He was 83. In 1959, Durham Elementary School was built in Irvington, named after Dr. Durham.

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.

Frederick (upper left), Henry (lower middle), Ellen (lower right)

James Emerson
b. 1821 d. 1886
Plot: Section B; Row 15; Space 32

Anna Dorathea Emerson
b. 1832 d. 1907
Plot: Section B; Row 15; Space 31

James Emerson was born October 25, 1821, in England. In 1851, he sailed to the United States and landed in New Orleans. Eventually he got to Illinois where he farmed until 1853. He then joined a wagon train and crossed the plains to California along with Robert and John Blacow and Herman Eggers. After working on Mr. Blacow's farm, he leased land from Lyman Beard and farmed until late in 1857. He then purchased land and farmed until 1868. He sold that land and purchased 70 acres, about one and a half miles from Centerville where he farmed and raised fruit trees.

In 1862, he married Miss Anna Dorathea Eggers. They had 7 children: Nellie Emerson, Annie Emerson, Louisa Emerson, Julia Emerson Dusterberry, Alice Emerson Overacker, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and George I Emerson.

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 Haywards (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 l 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 ll, 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.

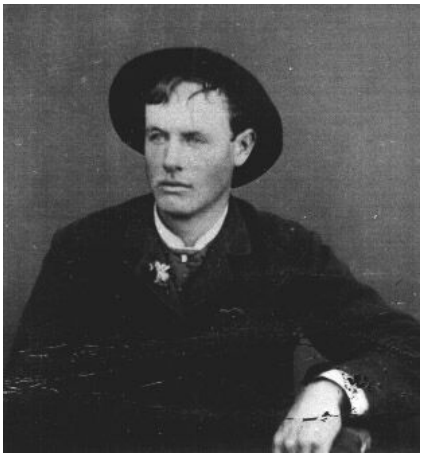
Mary lived an active life in the white house at the corner of Bay Street and Chapel Way, until her death in 1988. Teaching herself to speak French after the passing of her husband, because she had heard that having two languages was like having two souls, she took on Chinese when she was 80, eventually 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 a 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 Grammar 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 California 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 1870s, 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.

Ebenezer Haley
b. March 1, 1801 d. Dec 7, 1897
Plot: Section

Mary Lee Scott Haley
b. Feb 1809 d. Jan. 25, 1893
Plot: Section

Caleb Scott Haley
b. Feb. 16, 1833 d. Feb. 8, 1907
Plot: Section B; Row 15; Space 62

William Wallace Haley
b. March 31, 1840 d. June 18, 1920
Plot: Section B; Row 15, Space 61

Ebenezer Haley Sr. was born in Nova Scotia on March 11, 1801. He married Mary Lee Scott in 1824, and they had 5 sons and 3 daughters. Among his children were Caleb Scott Haley, Jonathan E. Haley, and W.W. Haley, and they all owned farms within Alameda County. Upon hearing the news of the discovery of gold in California, Ebenezer left his native land of Nova Scotia and sailed to California on November 22, 1849, in the brig of the Mary Jane. He arrived in May 1850, and immediately began work in the mines. Unable to make a fortune in the mines, Mr. Haley moved to Washington Township in 1852, and engaged in farming there until May 1855. He returned to Nova Scotia for a few months to sell his property and move his family to California. In November 1855, he settled on his farm in California and resided there with his wife and children. He died in 1897, at the age of 96, loved and respected by all for his kindness, integrity, and upright character.

Ebenezer and his sons Caleb and William owned all of the property on the north side of Mayhew's Landing Road nearly to the Patterson Ranch. They were instrumental in the development of Washington Township.

William Haley was born in 1840, and when he was 15, he left Nova Scotia and came to California. He helped his father by working on the farm, and he was also a sheep herder. He later bought land next to his father's farm. He married Anna Maria Cameron in 1896, and continued to live on the farm. His wife was ill, so he gave up farming and moved to Centerville. She later died and left him with 4 children. Since he was not living on his farm, he decided to subdivide it. Through the center of the land, he laid out a road that became known as Haley Road. It is this road that now connects the streets Mayhew's Landing Road and Jarvis Avenue. He later purchased a hardware store, naming it W.W. Haley and Co.

Caleb Haley was born in 1833, in Nova Scotia. At the age of 14, he left home to be a sailor, but came back to run the family farm when his dad sailed to California. In 1852, Caleb came to Washington Township to his father's farm. He then bought land with his father. He returned to Nova Scotia and married Annie Barclay and brought her to the family farm. He bought a house and moved it to the family farm. The house was beautifully finished and their farm was in Thompson and West's 1878 Historical Atlas of Alameda County. Caleb was a leader in the Centerville Episcopal Church and an active Mason. When he died, flags were flown at half-mast. Annie continued her church and charity work after his death.

Charles Horner

b. Nov. 11, 1868 d. Dec. 1, 1917
Plot: Section B; Row 25; Space 29

Charles returned from Hawaii to live in Irvington; his "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.

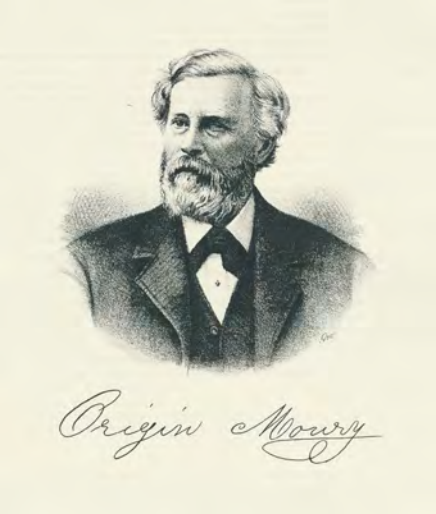
Hugh Edward Mosher
b. Jul. 21, 1844 d. May 9, 1937
Plot: Section B; Row 13; Space 32

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 was 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 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" with lumber shipped around the Horn, where he had also acquired land grant property between Bay Street and Fremont Boulevard down to the cemetery. 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, 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, 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 adventurists 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 and 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 still stands on Bay Street. Helen, the youngest daughter, attended school at 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 had 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 family from 1880s

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 1880s 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.

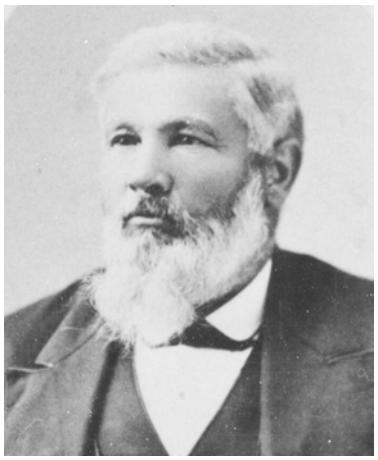
Julia was stylish, fun loving and adventurous. She was a sight to behold riding her spring wagon through the town with laces flowing in the breeze. She met and married Thomas Straven in 1900, and together they set off for the gold rush to the Klondike, an adventure that ended tragically with the death 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

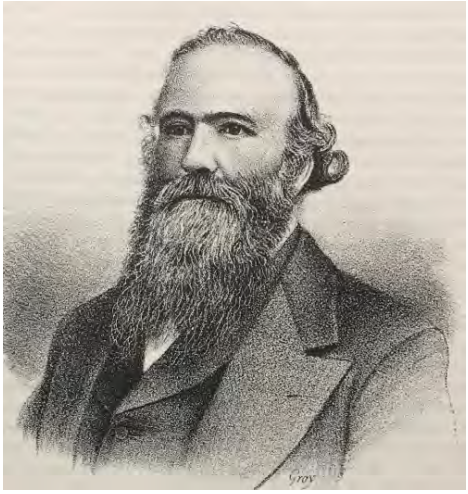
Helen Celia Threlfall

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.

William Tyson
b. Sept 5, 1820 d. July 1, 1878
Plot: Section B; Row 6; Space 13



Emmeline Tyson
b. Sept. 12, 1828 d. April 13, 1911
Plot: Section B; Row 19; Space 72

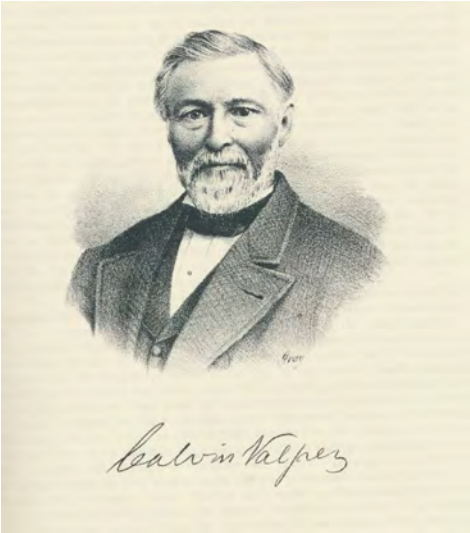
William Tyson was born in the Cumberland area of England. His mother died when he was 13 years old. Before he was 21, Tyson was apprenticed to a wagon-maker and carpenter, and he became very skilled at both. At the age of 21, he came to the United States and married Emmeline Morrison in 1847. With their infant son and Emmeline's brother, Perry Morrison, they joined a wagon train of 19 wagons that was headed for California. Their son, William Perry Tyson, died before they reached Sacramento.

The Tysons spent a year mining and running a boarding house in the gold country; however, they were not successful in their endeavor. Emmaline's brother invited them to join him in Mission San Jose to farm. William farmed and built temporary housing, and their second son, William Henry Tyson was born November 2, 1850. He was the first white child whose birth was recorded in the Niles area. William Tyson bought 200 acres and his brother-in-law Perry Morrison bought an adjoining 200 acres. Together they eventually owned the land from the area where the Fremont BART station is all the way to the hills. The crops were good and the Tysons prospered.

Since William was such a skilled carpenter, he built their house at the end of Tyson Rd, not far from Tyson Lagoon. It was a large house with a veranda all around the second floor. He built double parlors downstairs and had seven bedrooms upstairs. He also made most of the furniture. Because he was such a skilled carpenter, only the chimney was damaged in the 1868 earthquake that ruined so many buildings in the area. The Tysons had 10 children. When William Tyson died, Emmeline gave each child 10 acres of the original farm.

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

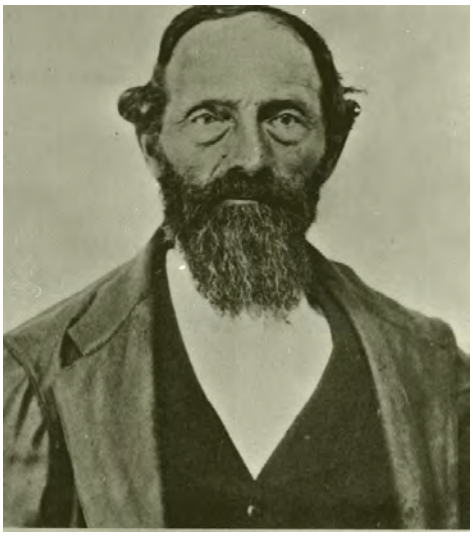


Captain Calvin Valpey spent most of his life on the sea, starting when he was twelve years old. He married Elizabeth Gardner, the daughter of a sea captain, in 1833. He came to California in 1851, settling in Warm Springs and founded Warm Springs Landing. His wife and children joined him by 1860. He 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.

George Massy Walters
b. 1820 d. 1893

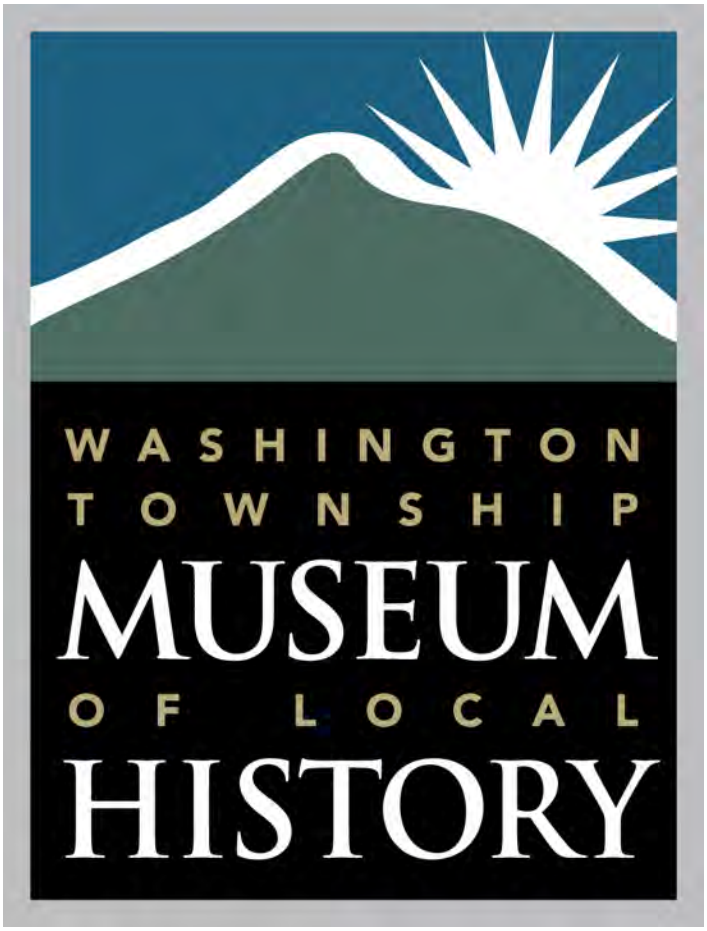
Fannie A Walters
b. Feb. 1, 1823 d. Sept. 12, 1903
Plot: Section B; Row 15; Space 26

In 1820, George M. Walters was born in Reading, Pennsylvania. He came to California and settled in this area in the early 1850s. Walters was a successful farmer and landowner. He owned 132 acres of farmland at Washington Corners along what is now Fremont Blvd. He and his wife donated the little park at Five Corners where the flagpole and monument are now located. They lived in a large farm house immediately south of the brick building on the corner. When the house was torn down, the owners donated the marble fireplace to be installed in the Old Library. In 1968, the fireplace was placed in the enlarged office of the principal.



Mr. Walters married Fannie and they had two daughters. The first daughter died at a very young age. The second daughter, Ida B. Walters, married a Mr. Cash. At Irvington Cemetery you see the large monument with “Cash” on one side of it and “Walters” on the back side.

George Walters was one of 3 men who served as trustee on the original public school board in the area now known as the Irvington District. In 196, a junior high school was named in honor of George Massy Walters.



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