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REMEMBERED MEN IN RURAL CEMETERY

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The beautiful hand wrought iron gates of Rural Cemetery swing open like the outside covers of a history book, Within those gates are engraved the names of the leaders and followers, the forceful and the weak, and the good and bad who helped to write the history of a past day. Each has left his mark, even if it is only a scratch on the pages of the story they tell.

To be famous, noted, notorious, distinguished, eminent or illustrious depends on the time, place and circumstances. To be so honored may range from local to international. As we walk along the quiet pathways and read the names, we recall each person accordingly.

Maybe it is George Gordon Belt (1822-1869) who at the age of 27 was appointed the first Alcalde (or Judge of the First Instance) of Stockton under American rule. To him is given credit of establishing a city government in 1850. Another was B. Walker Bours (1817-1895) who in 1849 opened one of the first banks in California in a canvas building on Center Street. Erastus Holden (1813-1885) opened a drug store at El Dorado and Main Streets in 1850, and manufactured a cough syrup advertised and sold throughout the State. For six terms he presided as Mayor and in 1860 was president of one of the four railroads in California at that time.

Valentine Mason Peyton (1821-1905) is the acknowledged founder of the public school system in Stockton which had its beginning in 1852. Benjamin Tunis (1795-1859) won his fame before he came to Stockton in 1849. He was a veteran of the War of 1812, was wounded on the Frigate President, and taken prisoner to Bermuda. Later he became one of the outstanding merchant sea captains out of New York harbor before coming West.

Governor John C. Edwards (1806-1888) was widely known as the eighth governor of Missouri before he arrived in Stockton. He was elected Mayor in 1851. General David F. Douglass (1821-1872) was a member of the Constitutional Convention in Monterey in September 1849, and was the first State Senator for this area. John McMullin (1820-1868) ran away at sixteen and joined Col. Jack Hay in Texas as an Indian fighter. He drove a herd of cattle from Texas to California in 1849 and became the first breeder of fine stock in San Joaquin County. He built Stockton's first theatre.

Lewis Moreing Cutting (1831-1924) as the private secretary of Captain Charles M. Weber, is credited with writing in the reversionary clause in the

park, church, school and other gift deeds of Captain Weber. Pillsbury Hodgkins (1825-1892) was a most unusual person in his day. Two years after arriving in California via Cape Horn, he was employed by the Reynolds Todd Express Company as a rider. He outsmarted many highwaymen and newspaper carriers to the Mother Lode. He detested (and never carried) firearms, spirituous liquors and tobacco. His wits were his best protection and defense.

Turning the pages of history to the Civil War era we learn of men like William Bevin (1824-1875) who in 1854 started a newspaper in Stockton. The Federal Government suppressed his paper in 1862 for his treasonable language as a sympathizer of the Confederacy. Joseph Hawthorn's (1824-1864) story is told by the epitaph "Assassinated because he loved his country and hated treason." He refused to sell his horses to the South guerilla band led by Henry and Mason who bought and stole horses for the Confederate Army. Hawthorn and two of his men were killed trying to protect his livestock. During that time William M. "Pony" Denig (1830-1905) was a pony express rider from San Andreas to the interior mines, with any number of daring experiences.

Judge David S. Terry (1822-1889), the impetuous one, is best known for the famous Broderick-Terry duel in 1859. He came to California in 1849 and was noted as a fire-eating attorney. He stabbed a defendant in a court room melee, beat up a newspaper editor for printing a story he didn't like, and critically wounded a vigilante leader in a street brawl in San Francisco. He was a member of the State Supreme Court from which he resigned after killing Senator Broderick. During the Civil War he returned to Texas as a Lt. Colonel in the Confederate Army. He defended Sarah Althea Hill Sharon (the "Rose of Sharon") in 1885 and battled with Supreme Justice Field who heard the case. In a chance meeting in Lathrop, he was shot by Justice Field's bodyguard. On his monument is engraved "His fame his best epitaph."

His opposite during Civil War days was Reuel Colt Gridley (1829-1870). He volunteered in the Mexican War after which he came to California via the Isthmus in 1852. He was a miner, banker, published a newspaper and ran an express route from Oroville over the Sierras. In 1862 during the Nevada silver strike, he opened a general merchandise store in Austin, Nevada. The wounded on the battlefields needed more personal services. Dr. Bellows of New York, with the aid of 100 influential women, organized the Sanitary Commission. (The International Red Cross founded in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1864 was the result of the good work of this Commission.) Thomas Starr King, who is credited with keeping California in the Union, organized chapters of the Commission in California. A municipal election in Austin, and a bet between Gridley, A Southern Democrat, and the leading Republican, ended in a most unusual way. Gridley lost and to pay his debt carried a sack of flour on his shoulder from Austin to Clinton, about a mile away, with a lot of fanfare. The celebration ended, Gridley proposed the flour be auctioned, with the benefits to go to the Sanitary Commission. It was such a financial success he carried the sack of flour through western Nevada, then into California, and to New York and the East. He paid his own way and each dollar collected was given to the Commission. He collected over \$275,000 which he turned over to his friend King. He came home without funds, to find a ruined business, and physically ill. He left Nevada for a warmer climate, and crossed the Sierras flat on his back in a bed on a buckboard. He settled in Stockton, and died a few years later from his rheumatic ailment. In 1888 the GAR erected a monument in his honor (California Historical Landmark #801). It is said he was one of the greatest unarmed heroes of the Civil War. On the monument is inscribed "The Soldier's Friend", a truly appropriate inscription to a truly great American.

After the War and before the turn of the century, we remember men like - Thomas Cunningham (1838-1900), one of the greatest lawmen of early California. From 1872 to 1899 he was Sheriff of San Joaquin County and played a part in

every major manhunt in the State. He helped to track down men like Vasquez, one of the better known Mexican bandits, and Black Bart who was credited with 28 stage coach robberies. Single handed he captured Antonio Laver who boasted he murdered 20 miners. He put behind bars the brutal Coquimbo and the remnants of the Tejada gang responsible for the Mokelumne Hill massacre. His reputation for courage, together with his kindly and sympathetic treatment of even the most hardened criminals won him wide acclaim.

Lodowick U. Shippee opened an ice cream and confectionary store in Stockton in 1856, and later became a partner in a large grocery store. In 1867 he owned a gravel company and in later years grazed 52,000 sheep, farmed 20,000 acres and produced 10,000 bushels of wheat in 1888. He was recognized as a breeder of fine horses. He served as Mayor of Stockton in 1888. In the 1880's he founded a combined harvester company and was a leader in a company to harness the Mokelumne River for irrigation.

Benjamin Holt (1849-1920) was a partner in the Stockton Wheel Company in 1883 manufacturing street cars, horse harvesters and steam harvesters. (A street car and horse harvester made by Holt are on display in the new Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C.) He perfected and invented the track laying tractor (Caterpillar) used for farm and construction work, and for military tanks dating from World War I, bringing him international recognition.

Alfred W. Dennett (1839-1908) gold mined in California before he invented the quick lunch idea in New York City in 1880. He trained the two brothers who opened the Childs Restaurant chain based on his idea. He was a co-founder of the Florence Crittenden Mission. In 1897 as a midway entrepreneur, he displayed some logs, originated the Lincoln cabin legend, and promoted the Lincoln birth-place memorial (with its controversial logs).

Governor James Budd (1851-1908) was Stockton's only Governor from 1895 to 1899. Smilin' Jim Budd as he was called was everyone's friend and a friend to everyone he met. He came across the plains by covered wagon, graduated with the first class of the University of California in 1873, and was a Congressman in 1882. As Democratic nominee for Governor in 1894, he was told he couldn't win against the State's Republican majority. He toured the State from one end to the other by horse and buggy, campaigning and making friends. He won by a sizeable majority. His was an economy administration remembered for the tax reforms he successfully pushed through the Legislature.

These are but a few of the many hundreds of men buried in Rural Cemetery who for some good reason are long remembered. Now they sleep under stately trees with outstretching arms sheltering over and protecting their last resting place, among relatives and friends.

As we close the gates behind us - the covers to our book of history - we pay a silent tribute to those men who made the West - each having done his small part in his own way - and each being remembered for it.

SOCIETY NEWS

The San Joaquin County Museum office is receiving varied and interesting items, among them such things as a two cylinder Fairbanks-Morse gasoline engine from the old E. E. Morse Ranch, given by Ross Bewley, views of the old Woolman, Missouri, home of Wm. G. Micke, a gift from George Lahmeyer, and a woven wire fence stretcher from Harold Thomas of Escalon. The landscape design for the museum complex has been completed and has been approved by the County Board of Supervisors.