

In this month's exhibit, the purpose is not to single out individuals for special recognition, but rather to pause in tribute to all of El Cajon's early settlers as we glimpse at available historical sketches of some of their final resting places here in the Valley.

Included here are the stories of:

The El Cajon Cemetery.

The Private Cemetery at Flinn Springs.

The graves of Steven Brayton and Thomas L. Treat, who were buried on the Brayton Ranch, the location of which is now designated as Monument Hill in Hillsdale area south of El Cajon.

The information for this exhibit of "Historical Sketches of Early Cemeteries and Burial Places in the greater El Cajon Valley" has been compiled by Hazel Sperry, and the material was obtained from early issues of the El Cajon Valley News; Once-A-Week Newspapers - 1899; This Was Yesterday - Part III by Julia Flinn De Frate; and from the following persons: Mr. Rexford Hall, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Roether, Mr. John Amundson, Mr. & Mrs. Earl Ireby, Sr., Mr. Alvin Brayton, Mr. & Mrs. Schuyler Hawes, Mr. Norman Hawley, Mrs. Harold Ross, Mrs. Gus J. Anderson, Mrs. Frank Bosco, Mrs. Edwin H. Law, and Mrs. John Malzahn.

HISTORY OF THE EL CAJON CEMETERY

Compiled by Hazel Sperry

Whenever and wherever pioneers have established themselves on new frontiers, they have soon been confronted with the problem of having to prepare a place in which to lay to rest certain of their loved ones.

Before 1903, at which time the El Cajon Cemetery was officially incorporated, the nearest official cemetery was in San Diego; but certain of the families here had chosen or found it necessary to bury their dead in private graves nearer home. And so El Cajon Cemetery had come into being a number of years before its official incorporation. The exact year is not known but the oldest tombstone bears the date 1889.

El Cajon Cemetery - 6.4 acres in size - is nestled among the low lying hills along Dehesa Road - just north of the intersection of Dehesa Road and Vista Grande Road - about four miles southeast of El Cajon. The land was purchased from D. S. Bascom and John G. Burgess for \$225.

The oldest tombstone inscription is that of Mariah F. Hall who died in the year 1889 - age 81 years. Mariah F. Hall and her husband, John Rombold Hall were the parents of Jessie P. R. Hall who, with his wife, Charlotte brought their family to El Cajon early in the year 1886. They purchased forty acres along the present Madison Avenue where the Madison Avenue Elementary School now stands. There they established their ranch and after harvesting one crop of wheat they planted their acreage to raisin grapes and assorted fruit trees. Jessie P. R. Hall and Charlotte A. Hall were the parents of ten children. And so, with the ten children, parents, and grandparents, the Hall household was a lively, busy place. In an early issue of El Cajon's "Once-A-Week" newspaper there was a column headed "Peculiar Features of the Valley" in which appeared the following: "There is a certain house near the center of the Valley of but ten rooms which contains twelve Halls. Although some of the Halls are quite small as might be supposed, a few are large and handsome." The home which they built is still standing and is now owned by Mr. & Mrs. Albert L. Van Zanten. The children of the Jessie P. R. Hall family were Wilson D. (who established the W. D. Hall Co.), Marie Elizabeth, Julian D., Samuel C., Jessie R., Burdette C., Rosa L., Mary J., Arthur N., and Helen Hall.

The second oldest tombstone inscription is that of John R. Hall, Mariah's husband, who died two years later in 1891.

Other members of the Hall family who were laid to rest in the El Cajon Cemetery were Burdette Hall - 1899 - age 24; Rosa Hall - 1902 - age 22; Mary Hall - 1903 - age 15; Fannie Miller Hall (wife of Julian D. Hall) - 1902 - age 29 years; Charlotte Hall (wife of J. P. R. Hall) - 1848-1919; Jessie P. R. Hall - 1847-1929; Marie E. Hall - 1891-1936; Wilson D. Hall - 1868-1951; Florence E. Hall (wife of W. D. Hall) - 1869-1953.

Two markers of the J. S. Bascom family are inscribed as Glendora E. Bascom, wife of D. S. Bascom, 1869-1908; and Glenn W. Bascom, 1896-1900. D. S. Bascom owned the El Cajon Meat Market in El Cajon in the "Early Days".

The Weddle family marker reads: Harry H. Weddle, 1872-1963 and Sybil C. Weddle, 1880-1966. The Weddle property originally consisted of more

than 700 acres and was the property now occupied by the Singing Hills Golf Course, Country Club, Lodge, etc. in Dehesa Valley. The Weddle home was built in 1884. Besides being a cattle ranch they had a large acreage in olives, and their olive grove was considered one of the very finest. Too, they had some acreage planted to alfalfa.

Another early inscription is that of Lula Hess Asher, wife of J. M. Asher, Jr., 1878-1904. J. M. Asher, Jr. was one of the seven children of J. M. Asher, Sr. and Sarah Asher who purchased about forty acres here in El Cajon in 1879 and developed "Castle Rock Ranch" which soon will become the home of Sears Roebuck's El Cajon store and the new shopping center on Fletcher Parkway near Johnson Ave. J. M. Asher, Jr. whom they called "Jay" enjoyed quite a musical career during his life time. Accounts in early El Cajon newspapers indicate that this musical interest and talent was also shared by Miss Lula Hess who became his bride but who died at the early age of 26.

Still another marker reads Anna A. Johnson, 1820-1904. Miss Johnson had a beautiful home and 64 acres of vineyard and orchard along the south slope of El Cajon Valley. Miss Johnson's place was located just west of Dr. C. M. Johnson's ranch on the south side of Chase Avenue and west of Johnson Avenue. An item in El Cajon Valley News, February 13, 1897 stated - "Miss Anna Johnson celebrated her 77th birthday February 1st by a very pleasant little family dinner at her delightful home. Miss Johnson is wonderfully preserved and the amount of work she accomplishes is a marvel to all".

Another marker is that of Alice Christine Grube, wife of Rev. C. Howard Grube - 1872-1911. Rev. Grube was the pastor of the El Cajon Presbyterian Church from 1910-1913.

A group of markers for the Paterson family are for Harry Paterson, 1853-1938; Fred N. Paterson, 1858-1943 and his wife, Sarah H. Paterson, 1864-1947; and Guy W. Paterson 1887-1947. The Paterson brothers lived on Pepper Drive. Fred Paterson purchased the Edward Judson place on the north side of Pepper Drive at the intersection of First Street and Pepper Drive, and Harry Paterson's place was across the street on the southeast corner of Pepper Drive and First Street.

The Fred Paterson place had been developed by Edward Judson in the early 1890's - and that home (built by Edward Judson) is still standing and is now owned by Richard E. Mills of El Cajon. The ranch was planted to oranges and is one of the few old orange groves in the Valley which is still being maintained as such. Each year recently, when the navel oranges are ripe, Mrs. Mills has sent a box of oranges to members of the Judson family who reside at Claremont Manor in Claremont, California. Marjorie Judson (recently deceased), one of the daughters of Edward Judson, spent some years as a missionary to China. An excerpt from Valley News 1893 says - "Miss Kate Sessions visited the Valley last Thursday to design the ornamental planting on Mr. Judson's new ranch."

And so, up and down the rows of graves this writer walked - pausing at each headstone - noting names and dates - and realizing how very many interesting stories about "Early Days in El Cajon" might be told if stones could talk.

Other family names were those of Bearsley, Chambers, Small, Florida, Lyons, McCann, Arnold, Garcia, Collier, Romero, Cuevas, Nunez, Cota,

Villavicencio, Bottroff, Ruis, Perhab, Bush, Hampel, Sheppard, Logan, Wilks, Hughes, Quintenar, Christenson, Severyns, Marquez, Barnes, Smith and Cornelius.

The Cornelius marker was a more recent one. The inscription was Father - Barney Cornelius 1879-1966 and Mother - Dollie B. Cornelius, 1886-1960. Barney Cornelius came to El Cajon in 1916 and developed a 15 acre ranch at Lexington and Anza Street where the family lived until 1925 when they moved to La Cresta. He was the original subdivider of La Cresta. They had six sons and one daughter. One of the sons is John Cornelius, principal of the El Cajon High School.

The list of markers mentioned is far from complete. Among the older markers, many of the inscriptions were difficult to read; and the large number of new markers with dates of 1967 and 1968 were astonishingly numerous.

After a brief resume of the history of the cemetery, the writer will endeavor to tell you of the interesting plans for the future development of this "old - new cemetery".

In the original old gray cloth-bound minute book (still preserved) appear the records of all of the official transactions.

At the time of the incorporation of the El Cajon Cemetery in 1903, Mr. R. L. Clingman, a rancher, was elected its first president. He served only a short time, resigning November 16, 1904, when he retired and returned to his former home in Chicago. Mr. J. P. R. Hall who was on the first Board of Directors was then named as president to replace Mr. Clingman. J. P. R. Hall served as president from 1904 to 1909. Then Mr. Albert Brower, El Cajon's druggist, was elected to the post; but apparently Mr. Hall was back in the position again in 1911.

When Marie E. Hall, a spinster who had been teaching school in Chico, California, returned to El Cajon to care for her aging parents, Mr. & Mrs. J. P. R. Hall - she became the secretary of the cemetery association and began to tidy up the records. There were a number of years when the cemetery had been used chiefly by the Spanish, Mexican and Indian members of the community.

In 1929, W. D. Hall was named president and he conducted the business of the cemetery until 1949 when his son, Rex Hall, took over that responsibility.

In 1959, when fifty years had passed since the time of the incorporation, Rex Hall had to renew the charter for the cemetery.

At present (1968) Mr. Rexford Hall is president of the association. Mr. Charles Roether is vice-president and his wife, Iola Hall Roether is the secretary. Also there is a board of directors. A full time sexton or manager, Mr. John Amundson, has been employed. Mr. Amundson has also been elected to the board of directors.

As a result of these efforts to preserve and revitalize the old cemetery, a strong new interest in it has been shown by the people of the greater El Cajon Valley.

Many new graves are in evidence. The cemetery has been resurveyed and the property has been enclosed by a new chain link fence. Vacant land has been plowed as a first step in further development. There are plans to

change the cemetery road slightly and "Babyland" will occupy the oval space formed by the "turn around". A pile of large boulders will become a garden with places for Ash urns. Lawns and shrubs are to be planted. It is also hoped that many of the grave markers can be laid down flat to allow for easier maintenance of the lawn.

The El Cajon Cemetery is termed "A Special Care Cemetery". This means that it is a non profit organization and that all money paid for lots and services is used for the upkeep and maintenance of the cemetery.

In three little booklets - This Was Yesterday - Parts I, II, and III - written by Julia Flinn De Frate - she tells the story of the lives of her maternal grandparents, The Julian Ames family, and her paternal grandparents, The William Flinn family, both of whom were among the very earliest white settlers in El Cajon Valley. The Julian Ames family moved to the "La Canada De Los Cochis Ranch" in 1859; and in 1865 the William Flinn family established their ranch, "La Vinita", just four miles distant along the same Los Cochis Creek and in the shadow of a mountain which the Indians called Montebanna (meaning "Sleeping Woman"). The area was soon referred to as Flinn Valley and now is called Flinn Springs. (Let us keep in mind that the old El Cajon Rancho extended eastward from El Cajon to beyond Flinn Springs.)

In Part III of "This Was Yesterday" - pages 12 and 13 and pages 28 - 33, Julia Flinn De Frate tells the story of the private cemetery on the old Flinn Ranch which became the final resting place for at least fifty persons who had lived and died near the Flinn Ranch. She tells that later, with the passing of time and the changing of ownership of the land, the Flinn Cemetery was almost forgotten. Then in 1950, she began to restore the Flinn Springs Cemetery as a monument to her grandfather and grandmother Flinn and the other pioneers who were buried there.

At the time of this writing (April 1968), with the Flinn Ranch having long been divided into smaller pieces of land, this little private cemetery remains - serenely nestled among the oaks and near the creek bed in the backyard garden of the Gus J. Anderson family on Highway 80 at Flinn Springs.

MONUMENT HILL

Monument Hill and Brayton Way are two parallel roads which take off to the north from Chase Avenue just a short distance west of the junction of Chase Ave. and Jamacha Road. The roads haven't had official names for too many years. Brayton Way is shown on the latest maps. Monument Hill doesn't seem to have quite "made the grade" yet as far as maps are concerned. However, each road leads to an interesting historic spot in connection with early life in El Cajon.

Mr. & Mrs. Earl Irely Sr. chose the name Brayton Way when the driveway from Chase Avenue to their home became a street. Their home was originally the old two story Brayton home which was built in 1889 by the grandparents of Alvin L. Brayton of Oakland, California. Alvin Brayton (now 86 years of age) and his wife return each year for a brief visit to the old ranch which once had been home to him, his parents, grandparents, and great grandparents. Alvin Brayton's father's name was Ernest R. Brayton. His grandfather's name was Edwin Brayton and his great grandfather's name was Steven Brayton.

Grandfather Edwin Brayton owned 320 acres of land west of Jamacha Road which extended both north and south of the present E. Chase Avenue. Ernest Brayton, his son, owned 120 acres on the east side of Jamacha Road in the same area. Mr. Alvin Brayton says he is quite sure that the land was government land before his father and grandfather "took it up" in the year 1882. (In the early days "Taking up land" was a very common expression for acquiring land by homesteading.)

Also living with grandfather and grandmother Brayton were their two fathers (the great grandfathers of Alvin Brayton). The two great grandfathers were Steven Brayton and Thomas L. Treat. Steven Brayton passed away in 1884 and Thomas L. Treat in 1887. They were both buried there on the ranch at the foot of a huge granite boulder about 10 feet high which serves as the headstone and into which is cemented a rectangular white marble marker. Steven Brayton was born March 17, 1797 - died 1884 - age 87. Thomas L. Treat was born in 1795 - died 1887 - age 92. A huge pepper tree shades the area.

The grandparents who built the house lived in it until grandmother Brayton passed away in 1898. After that grandfather Brayton lived there off and on until his death in Ukiah, Mendocino County in 1908. He was brought to Mt. Hope Cemetery for burial.

So very many years have passed since then but the large pepper tree and the huge granite boulder headstone which mark the spot of the Brayton and Treat graves still stands seemingly untouched by time - and now having been incorporated into the garden setting of the Frank Bosco family. And the road leading off E. Chase Avenue to this spot has been proudly named "Monument Hill" by them and their neighbors.