



**MAY 2016**

**VOLUME V, ISSUE II**

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## Memorial Day Observance

Plan to join us for the Cemetery's annual Memorial Day program. We'll honor those who served their country by remembering them on Saturday, May 28 at 11 a.m. The program will be held between the Memorial Chapel and the large Veterans area in the south part of the cemetery. Parking is available on the streets surrounding the cemetery with limited parking inside the grounds.

Though origins of this observance are disputed, Memorial Day probably began as Decoration Day when women decorated graves of Confederate soldiers after the Civil War. It was designated officially as a US holiday in 1971, though many celebrated it long before that. Some consider it to be the unofficial end of the school year and beginning of summer. Veterans buried in the Historic City Cemetery include men and women from nearly all wars in US history, the earliest being veterans of the War of 1812.

This event is co-sponsored by the Old City Cemetery Committee and the Affiliated Veterans Council.





## President's Message

It is spring, one of the busiest times of year in the Historic City Cemetery. The Cemetery's garden events have filled April and May with beauty and many visitors. My thanks to all those volunteers and members who participated, conducting tours and managing events this spring. Adopt-A-Plot and garden volunteers are now beginning to trim and deadhead plants after their spring bloom.

The Old City Cemetery Committee's annual membership meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 18 at 11:30 a.m. near the Fireman's Plot. I urge all members to attend. At this meeting, we will elect Board members, discuss activities during the prior year and plans for the fiscal year beginning in July. This is a great opportunity to meet and talk with your fellow OCCC members and share a light lunch.

Planning will begin soon for this fall's Lantern Tours and we will need lots of support from OCCC members and volunteers. If you are interested in helping plan and produce this event, please call the Visitor's Center 916-448-0811 or email to [doxiechar@outlook.com](mailto:doxiechar@outlook.com)

Connie Bettencourt, President  
Old City Cemetery Committee, Inc.

### UPCOMING SATURDAY HISTORY TOURS

- June 4—Civil Disobedience in the Gilded Age
- July 2—Medical Bag Tour
- July 16—Sacramento History for Kids (4th grade and above)
- August 6—Birth of the Central Pacific Railroad
- September 3—A Dozen Ways to Die: Episode IV
- September 17—Symbolism and Victorian Mourning
- September 24—Special Tour by Old Sacramento Schoolhouse Docents
- October 1—Fire In The Sky—Tales of Sacramento Firefighters
- November 5—History of Sacramento Masons Past & Present

## California Gold Rush Quiz

How well do you know the California Gold Rush? We found a quiz online and learned some facts not generally taught in school. Here are ten questions to test your knowledge of early days in California. We'll start with an easy one:

1. What was the name of the worker who first identified gold flecks in water near a sawmill?

- James W. Marshall
- John Sutter
- John C. Fremont

2. What was the purity of the first gold found during the rush?

- 99%
- 96%
- 94%

3. Where was the first gold rush in American history?

- Alaska
- North Carolina
- California

4. To make his fortune, what product did Levi Strauss sell to miners?

- Tents
- Hats
- Overalls

5. Which type of rock often contained substantial amounts of gold?

- Granite
- Quartz
- Shale

6. In which year did the gold rush hit its peak in terms of production?

- 1856
- 1852
- 1850

7. Roughly how many people turned up in California for the gold rush?

- 1 million
- 500,000
- 300,000

8. By 1860, long after the gold rush's peak, what percentage of the rush-era towns were female?

- About 10%
- About 20%
- About 30%

9. During the peak gold craze, how much might a miner spend for coffee in today's dollars?

- Around \$100/pound
- Around \$50/pound
- Around \$25/pound

10. How long did it take to sail from the East Coast to San Francisco?

- Between five and eight months
- About two months
- The better part of a year

This is just part of a quiz posted on the How Stuff Works website: ([www.howstuffworks.com](http://www.howstuffworks.com)). Check it out.



Answers  
1 a, 2 b, 3 b, 4 c, 5 b, 6 b, 7 c, 8 b, 9 a, 10 a

## Cemetery Artifacts Project

by Judy Eitzen with Rick Roberts

Nothing is permanent, not even a cemetery. One of the primary projects for which funds are raised by the OCCC is for restoration and stabilization of headstones and markers. In this context, the term “restoration” does not mean to restore an item to its original condition; in the cemetery that’s not possible. As defined by historical preservationists, restoration is the act of reconstructing, repairing or renewing. In cemeteries the term includes both preservation and conservation. <sup>(1)</sup>

In prior years, focus of the Restoration Committee, chaired by Rick Roberts, was to fix headstones broken through vandalism or other means. The team, including Royce Ann Burks from Ruhkala Monuments, walks through a section of the cemetery, noting problems and prioritizing repairs. This is done section by section except when safety for visitors and staff require immediate action.

Over several decades - no one knows for sure - broken stones, pieces of stones and decorations were placed in storage in the brick building at the rear of the cemetery. Rick reports there is a code to identify pieces on shelves, but no one is still around who knows it and no records of it have been found. The largest item is an urn about two feet tall with a 12” rod sticking out of the bottom. <sup>(2)</sup> A broken-off cross from the top of a marble headstone is typical of smaller items. With the city’s new organization of cemetery management and status, the City Historian, Marcia Eymann has asked us to prioritize these items before continuing repair of headstones.

To this end, Rick Roberts, with volunteer Pat Frey, is working to identify the artifacts, totaling about 75, and prioritize them to be affixed to stones or returned to their original locations. Thus, slowly working his way through the artifacts, Rick is attempting to locate the origin of each item. <sup>(3)</sup> Pat photographs each one to aid in identification. Each repair in the cemetery must be approved in writing by the City Historian, the City’s Preservation Officer Roberta Deering, and Parks Supervisor Tony Ulep.

Here’s the rub; many items have nothing to indicate their original location. When there is a clue on an artifact, part of a name or date for example, Rick checks the stone cards and burial cards to determine if/when a headstone or marker was placed on the gravesite. <sup>(4)</sup> He also examines the gravesite itself to

determine what is present. In one case, he located a small cross missing from the top of a marble headstone. The headstone was decorated with roses which wound their way up the stone onto the cross originally on top. While there was no identification on the small cross, the headstone happened to be one with which Rick was familiar. When he compared them in person, the cross clearly belongs on that headstone.

Another time, he observed a piece of stone with partial words in the Greek alphabet. Using that clue, he located a stone card describing a headstone inscribed in Greek. Comparing the fragment with the stone gave him the location.

This is a tedious, meticulous task requiring accuracy and patience. After identifying items, Rick and Pat note each one on a cemetery map and organize items geographically in the storage room. Where possible, identified items will be returned to their sites and affixed to stones by the Ruhkala staff. Starting at the southwest corner of the property, Rick will walk through a section of the cemetery with city staff to learn just what has to be done and determine cost.

This is a task which cannot, with limited staff, be undertaken by the City. Funds raised by OCCC and the hard work by Rick, Pat and the Restoration Committee will result in eventual return of as many of these broken items as possible.

- (1) Strangstad, Lynette, *A Graveyard Preservation Primer*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2013, Altamira Press, p. 13
- (2) Steel or iron rods are often used to pin pieces of tall marble and granite structures together. This urn was probably affixed to a monument which was damaged or fell down and only the urn remains.
- (3) The City has restricted access to the storage area; it can only be accessed in the presence of City staff.
- (4) Burial cards were prepared as a WPA project in the 1930’s. Stone cards were done by volunteers in the 1980’s. The front of most stone cards has measurements of the stone, material (granite, marble, etc.), the inscription, placement (facing east or west, e.g.) and location within the plot. It was intended that photographs be attached to the back, but this was not completed. The cards are stored at the Center for Sacramento History with digital copies in the Visitor’s Center..

# Historic Cemetery Resources

by Judy Eitzen

Changes in the administration of the Historic City Cemetery by the City and recent discussions about the planting guidelines are a reminder that support of the Cemetery by the Old City Cemetery Committee's members and volunteers is very important. Many organizations and governmental agencies provide information regarding cemetery preservation—information which may be useful to us as supporters of the cemetery. Here are some websites which may provide useful information for the tasks and volunteer services provided by the Old City Cemetery Committee.

First, of course is the City of Sacramento. The City Council passes ordinances which govern agencies within the city including the cemetery. The city's Preservation Commission has the responsibility to develop and recommend preservation policies to the City Council. Their meetings and plans are archived online at <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/Community-Development/Meetings/Preservation%20Commission>. The Master plan for the cemetery is located on our website: [www.oldcitycemetery.com/images/PDF/SHCC\\_MasterPlan.pdf](http://www.oldcitycemetery.com/images/PDF/SHCC_MasterPlan.pdf) The Center for Sacramento History website, sponsored by both Sacramento city and county, contains links to local historical information and can be found at <http://www.centerforsacramentohistory.org/>

The National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training website includes a page on cemetery conservation; a useful training resource on stone repair and maintenance, iron fences, landscape maintenance, moving stones, locating burials, cleaning stones and projects underway in specific cemeteries. They publish an email newsletter on current projects. <https://www.ncptt.nps.gov/articles/cemetery-conservation/>

National Preservation Institute holds professional training seminars in historic preservation and cultural resource management, including historic cemeteries. <http://www.npi.org/sem-cemet.html> Their mission: educate those involved in the management, preservation, and stewardship of our cultural heritage.

The California Department of Parks and Recreation website has a page on Historic Cemetery Assessment including a video of a workshop held at Bodie State Historic Park. It's a training tool for learning about historic cemetery assessment and evaluation.

A number of historic cemeteries are located inside California State Parks including nearby Sutter Buttes State Park and the Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park.

[http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=24875](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=24875)

On the Library of Congress website is a list of federal laws pertaining to the preservation of historic cemeteries. <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/historical-cemeteries/#usa>

Dedicated individuals have done their own research and posted it online. One such is Lawrence Kestenbaum of Michigan who has listed links to resources on cemetery history and preservation, print references and sites of headstone art and symbolism, burial customs, and cemetery organizations throughout the US. <http://www.potifos.com/cemeteries.html>.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a non-profit in Washington, D.C. dedicated to preserving historic sites throughout the US. While not focused primarily on cemeteries, historic cemeteries are included in their mission. <http://www.preservationnation.org/>

The Sacramento County Cemetery Advisory Commission was established by the County Board of Supervisors in 2001 to advise them of issues related to cemeteries in Sacramento County, specifically preservation, protection and maintenance. They also raise funds, to preserve and designate historic cemeteries within the County. <http://www.coroner.saccounty.net/sccac/Pages/default.aspx> In addition, the Sacramento County Coroner's office maintains the Complete Sacramento County Cemetery List. This list is a work in progress as data on many historical sites are limited or non-existent.

<http://www.coroner.saccounty.net/sccac/Pages/CompleteSacramentoCountyCemeteryList.aspx>

As we are now on the National Register of Historic Places, a check of their website details site conservation criteria. <https://www.nps.gov/nr/>

There are many more resources online and in print pertaining to pioneer cemeteries. Some (not included here) are focused on genealogy. Many links will lead you to additional resources useful to cemetery volunteers. Check them out.

## Early Sacramento Politics

by Judy Eitzen

In this election year it seems fitting to talk about early Sacramento politics and elections, which like the current campaign, were fraught with confrontations, name calling and mud slinging—some of it literal. California was not yet officially a state in April of 1850 when Hardin Bigelow was elected mayor of Sacramento, though it would become so later that year.

California had been won from Mexico with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in March of 1848. (Would Mexico have been so quick to sign if they knew of the impact of the discovery of Gold a few weeks earlier?) Most US states begin as territories while their population grows—60,000 seemingly the magic number for statehood. When the treaty was signed, California seemed a typical, slow-growing would-be territory. However, California grew from fewer than 8,000 in 1848<sup>(1)</sup> to some 93,000 by 1850, so statehood was granted September 9, 1850 before California had been officially declared a territory. Legislation was rushed through to encourage miners to the gold fields and as a result of the Compromise of 1850, settling disputes after the Mexican War, further defining slavery in the south and establishing California as a slave-free state.

Even before it was official, however, Sacramento found it necessary to establish some form of local government. In fact, Sacramento became the first incorporated city in the state. Citizens approved a city charter in 1849 which was recognized by the new state legislature the following year. The city council selected the first two mayors, William Stephen Hamilton and Major General Albert Maver Winn. In April, 1850 Sacramento held an election for Mayor which was won by Hardin Bigelow. All three reside in Sacramento's Historic City Cemetery and each has a story to tell.

William S. Hamilton lost his father, Alexander Hamilton in the infamous duel, as a small boy. He received military training at West Point and served in various militias during several Indian wars. He settled in Wisconsin Territory to work in lead mining in the early '40's and served as a delegate to the US Congress. Disappointed at having lost an election in 1848, Hamilton came west looking for gold in 1849,

quickly involving himself in local politics. Though he stated regret for moving to "this miserable hole"<sup>(2)</sup>, he became Sacramento's first appointed mayor, serving just three weeks. And though the cause of his death is recorded as cholera, he died some two weeks before cholera arrived in Sacramento. He is considered the Cemetery's most restless resident, having been moved at least three times before being placed in his current location in Hamilton Square. He died just one month after California became a state.<sup>(3)</sup>

Albert Maver Winn served in various militias and arrived in California in May of 1849, settling in Sacramento in June of that year, and almost immediately becoming active in civic affairs. Winn was chosen City Council President in August, and thus became Mayor. He was an eclectic politician, a proponent of small business, labor reform and organized local government. Community minded, he was a Mason who belonged to several fraternal and community groups. He founded the Sons of the American Revolution and the Native Sons of the Golden West, organized the Sacramento Odd Fellows General Relief Committee and was instrumental in the establishment of Grace Church (later St. Paul's) the first Episcopal church in Sacramento. He served as mayor until the election of 1850.

Hardin Bigelow originated in three different locales, depending on your source. Cemetery records state his birthplace as New York, newspaper articles give his home as Michigan, while genealogical records show his birthplace as Vermont. While it's true he owned property in both New York and Michigan, it seems he was born in Vermont, moved to New York as a small child and was raised there. He came to California after living in Michigan and has the distinction of being Sacramento's first elected mayor.

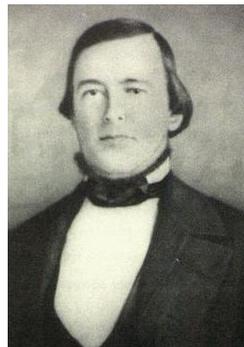
He arrived in California on the SS California among others who had heard of the gold strike, though Bigelow set out from New York prior to learning of the discovery. He tried gold mining for a while, but like others, found it was not all as easy as he thought. He ran for the state legislature and lost.

*(Continued on page 7)*

(Continued from page 6)

Having spent some time in the Mississippi River delta, he recognized Sacramento as a flood plain and urged local officials to build levees against future floods. Most laughed at him and called him a fool. Sacramento flooded in January of 1850 because no one took him seriously. In March, when flood waters again threatened, Bigelow, at his own expense, hired a number of Chinese and other laborers to build a five-foot levee along the Sacramento River. They filled in every low spot from the community of Sutterville to the confluence of the American River and the city did not flood that March. Suddenly a hero, he found that of the four political parties that published slates for local office, three of them had Bigelow's name a candidate for Mayor. In gratitude the citizens of Sacramento elected Bigelow Mayor in April of 1850.<sup>(4)</sup>

The primary local issue the summer of 1850 was a land dispute. The question was, did Sutter's Mexican Land Grant confer ownership of all the property? Or, was any of this land public domain and thus available for the taking? Limited dwelling places for the influx of immigrants led many to build shacks on vacant lots in Sacramento. In May, a squatter was legally charged with unlawful occupation which led other settlers to rally behind him. The Sacramento Bee's James McClatchy and others supported the settlers against the land monopoly that stifled immigration to the city. Bigelow, the City Council, and the County Sheriff were determined to drive out the squatters and preserve the property rights of landowners. Some settlers, including James McClatchy were arrested and housed in a brig on the Sacramento River. Bigelow, fearing a jail break, mobilized a military force to counteract the large number of men gathering near the river. The result could have been predicted. It ended with Bigelow



Top: Hardin Bigelow  
Middle: Albert Winn  
Bottom: William Hamilton

taking three bullets and J. W. Woodland the City Assessor, Joseph Maloney leader of the squatters plus two civilian bystanders dead.

At this point, General Winn re-enters the story. As an officer in the California State Militia, Winn ordered some 500 militiamen to Sacramento and declared martial law until the matter could be resolved. The ownership issue was eventually settled in federal court, though it took several years and was costly to landowners who were required to prove their legal rights to property.

Bigelow was unable to resume his duties as mayor and moved to San Francisco to recover. He died the following autumn, having contracted cholera.

- (1) Population figures published at the time did not include Native Americans who totaled about 150,000 in 1848.
- (2) Gara, Larry. ed., William S. Hamilton on the Wisconsin Frontier, *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Autumn, 1957
- (3) Note that not all lists of early mayors in Sacramento include Hamilton; his appointment may have been honorary.
- (4) Local political parties nominating Bigelow that year: No Organization, Democrat, and Rancho parties. Bigelow insisted on running as an independent candidate.



**Old City Cemetery  
Committee, Inc.**

1000 Broadway  
Sacramento, CA 95818  
916-448-0811

*Mission Statement*

*To join hands with the community to restore, beautify, preserve and protect the Historic City Cemetery, while maintaining access by descendants of the deceased, and to provide educational services to all visitors to the Historic City Cemetery of Sacramento.*

We're On the Web  
[www.oldcitycemetery.com](http://www.oldcitycemetery.com)



**ANNUAL  
MEMBERS MEETING  
JUNE 18**



Join us at the Fireman's Plot Area on Saturday, June 18, 2016 at 11 o'clock for the Old City Cemetery Committee annual members meeting.

We will elect members for the Board of Directors and hear about activities during the last year and learn of plans for the fiscal year beginning July first. It's a great opportunity to meet with your fellow members and share a light lunch.