

Pioneer SC Cemetery In Mountains Rediscovered

By Margaret Koch
Sentinel Staff Writer

It was easy to imagine a funeral that cool morning.

The fog curled through the trees like gray smoke. The road we traveled was rough in spots, muddy in others; the truck bucked and slithered.

It was a funeral-sort-of-morning. Gray and still. And we were on our way to visit an old "lost" cemetery on Scott's creek, up beyond Swanton.

I first heard about it last fall from John Strohbeen: "There's a man's leg buried up there — might be an interesting story in that," he said.

Now here it was almost summer and we jolted up the road in Warren Baldwin's pickup truck. We had turned off through a gate at the old Seaside school.

The narrow road we followed

was hardly more than two tracks. Baldwin pulled off at a place which looked like a hundred other places: "Here we are," he said. "Don't get into those nettles."

We climbed down the bank, minding the nettles which grew rank and stingery, and came to the edge of Scott's creek. Fools' gold glistened in tiny flakes in the creek sands. We went over

China Fights Old Yellow River Peril

Editor's Note — Now touring Red China, the chief of Southam News Services in Canada is making his dispatches available to The Associated Press. In this one, he reports on one of the great rivers, and great problems, of Communist China, from which U.S. reporters are barred.

By Charles Lynch

On the Yellow River, near Chengchow, China (P). — This place is known as the Golden Gate, and every year 1.6 billion tons of the finest soil in China flow past here, contained in the surging waters of the Huang Ho, otherwise known as the Yellow River.

It is one of the great rivers of the world, and one of the most devilish. The Yellow has been called the scourge of China, even though it nourishes her most productive belt of farmland, where the wheat stands tall as this is written.

To tame the Yellow, the government and people of Red China have been engaged in a 16-year battle of wits, engineering and back-breaking labor that rivals any project ever undertaken by man, and can be likened to the building of the original Great Wall of China.

What they are trying to do is build two new great walls—one on the north bank, barely visible from here across the muddy reaches of the river, and another along this south bank, where the old mud dikes were breached by the Nationalist government in 1938 in a futile attempt to block the Japanese invaders, causing one of the most disastrous floods in Chinese history. The new dikes at this point

stream on a fallen log, through a brand-new barbed wire fence, and stood in a stretch of open pasture.

"The cemetery's up there — at the foot of that big fir tree," Baldwin pointed.

In a minute or two we stood looking down at the grave of Mrs. M. E. Staub. After Baldwin brushed away the leaves and debris we could see by the stone marker that she had been born November 24, 1832 and died in 1866. There was evidence of several other graves; remnants of little white picket fences lay rotted and scattered.

And the leg? Yes, it's there too. But for the story about who lives under the big fir tree in the forgotten burying ground we went to talk to Mrs. Purdy.

Member of a hardy pioneer family, she lives at the end of the rough road we traveled. There is no telephone, no electricity up there; it's like stepping back 100 years in time. The family consists of Mrs. Alberta Purdy; her sister, Mrs. Grace Sandine, and their brother, Alfred Miller. With them for the interview

was Mrs. Agnes (Trumbo) McCrary: Mrs. Staub of the cemetery was her maternal grandfather's first wife.

Mrs. Staub died at Swanton — only it was called Laurel Grove at that time. The busy little lumber settlement changed names several times; on a map of 1889 it was Ingall's Station.

Several children also are buried at the foot of the old tree; no names are available for them.

And it seems that Mr. Harris (no one can remember his first name) lived to brag about being the only man "up the coast" to ever go to the funeral of his own leg. Harris lived in a cabin nearby, according to Mrs. Purdy, in the 1870's. One day he tangled with a grizzly bear and his leg was so badly mangled that it had to be removed. The hardy woodsman recovered and gave the leg decent burial at the base of the big tree.

First of the Purdys to settle in the Swanton backwoods was William Purdy who arrived by sailing ship from Nova Scotia. He operated a store at Davenport Landing until 1876, then

moved to the woods to start lumbering. The original old Purdy home burned in a forest fire of 80 years ago. Mrs. Purdy, her sister and brother live in a home built in 1890 on the same site.

The Millers, Mrs. Purdy's ancestors, came from Scotland to San Francisco "around the Horn" in 1869. One ancestor traded three lots on Third street in San Francisco for 360 acres of timber at Swanton.

Mrs. McCrary's grandfather, Joshua Grinnell, arrived in 1863 via sailing ship. The Staubs crossed the plains in the early 1860's and homesteaded in the Swanton area.

In the century that has passed since, the families have raised their children, made their livings and lived out their lives in the Swanton-Davenport area.

The old cemetery served its purpose in a day when travel was always difficult — and often impossible in winter. It was located originally on the Joseph Bloom property. Today the land is owned by Marie Gianone. Only the giant fir marks the spot.



Mrs. Agnes (Trumbo) McCrary looks up early-day data in an old directory she possesses. Looking on are (from left) Mrs. Purdy; her sister, Mrs. Grace Sandine and their brother, Alfred Miller. Miller holds the barrel of an old Spanish pistol he found on the property. It is inlaid with silver.



Mrs. M. E. Staub was buried here in 1866 in this "lost" cemetery up near Swanton. Warren Baldwin inspects the old grave. ♦ ♦ ♦

X-Ray Unit Schedules Local Sites

The mobile X-ray unit will be in Santa Cruz on Wednesday, June 7, Aptos on Tuesday, June 8, and San Jose on Thursday, June 9.

Tomorrow the mobile X-ray unit will be at Jiffy Shop, 857 Almar Drive, from 10 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. The unit will be set up at the factory. Tuesday, June 8, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Midtown Market, 1000 Midtown Drive, Soquel. Wednesday, June 9, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Aptos Market, 1000 Aptos Drive, Aptos.

X-rays will be taken from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the street plaza.

The mobile unit will return to Santa Cruz until August.

COMING SOON WATCH FOR

er along this south bank, where the old mud dikes were breached by the Nationalist government in 1938 in a futile attempt to block the Japanese invaders, causing one of the most disastrous floods in Chinese history.

The new dikes at this point are more than 100 yards thick, faced with heavy rock masonry to a height of 35 feet above the water, with the upper expanse thickly planted with fruit trees that are a key part of the antierosion campaign along the Yellow.

The dikes are not built flush with the river bed—they project out into the river in a series of quays that are rounded at the outer ends—designed to break the force of the waters and blunt the probing fangs of the river as it tries to continue its lifelong habit of gnawing away at its banks. The river has broken through more than 1500 times in recorded history, and the river itself has changed bed nine times in 3000 years.

When the waters are at their height, later in the summer, more than 200,000 persons will labor on the Yellow River dikes. The normal work force, which toils throughout the year, is somewhat smaller. A sizable work crew is busy here at the moment, moving earth and rocks into position without the aid of any machine larger than a wheelbarrow.

What this means in terms of hard labor is impossible for the Western mind to comprehend. The rock for the dikes is brought by rail from construction projects in the mountains to the west. The work trains move along the top of the dike, and from that point on every stage of the operation is done by the

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Mrs. Alberta Purdy points

out Swanton when it was listed as Gall's Station on this

map of 1889. ♦ ♦ ♦

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