

Evergreen Cemetery

Last Rites For A Graveyard?

By Margaret Koch
Sentinel Staff Writer

An old Kentucky rifleman lies moldering there: Isaac Graham. He ran a still at Natividad, came to Zayante about 1841 to establish California's first power sawmill and took a young wife, who later fled his bed and board.

Benjamin Case, president of California's first temperance society, also is there. So is his wife, Mary, who founded and taught Santa Cruz' first public school in the Case home in 1848.

Nearby lies Loudon Nelson, a former Negro slave. It worried Loudon when Mission Hill school closed temporarily for lack of funds. From his little shoe repair shop he could look up the hill at the empty schoolhouse. When Loudon died he left all he had in the world—an estate of less than \$400—to the school.

Julia Arcan was the first to be buried there—in 1850.

From renegade to reverend, they rest in Evergreen cemetery. And Evergreen, one of the state's oldest Protestant cemeteries, lies today in shameful neglect.

Weeds grow tall.

Tin cans are dumped there.

Bushes take over and pathways disappear.

Headstones rot away—the

wooden ones. Stones are toppled and damaged by periodic waves of vandalism.

Evergreen, which holds the bones of many of Santa Cruz county's founders, is itself crumbling because of years of neglect. Few know the significance of the old cemetery, located on Evergreen street between Harvey West park and the bypass to Mission street.

A handful of citizens has worked faithfully through the years to maintain a partial semblance of order in the growing green chaos. A small non-profit group called the Evergreen Cemetery association is headed by Charles and LaSalle Bachelder.

This group keeps records and has charge of the few endowment funds that have been set up for certain plots. But there is no income to maintain the cemetery in its fitting, historic wholeness.

There are peripatetic efforts at weeding and cleaning around the nearly 900 graves. Various local organizations have donated small amounts of money, pulled weeds, hoed ivy and cut brush, among them the Girl Scouts, Masonic lodge, Union Veterans, World War I Veterans, Santa Cruz High school leaders, Grand Army of the Re-

public, Native Sons and Daughters and Santa Cruz Historical society.

Two years ago, 12 county employees donated time and labor to repair vandalism. The city parks and recreation department has hauled away brush. For years, Miss Annie McCaskill has notarized deeds for plots sold, at Santa Cruz Land Title company, as a personal favor. In 1959 Santa Cruz County bank granted free checking service to the cemetery association.

One woman, Albertina Westfall, spent the last years of her life trying to stir interest in re-

storing the cemetery. Now she is there. She was buried in 1958 near the grave of her father, Seth Blanchard, former sexton for the old burying ground.

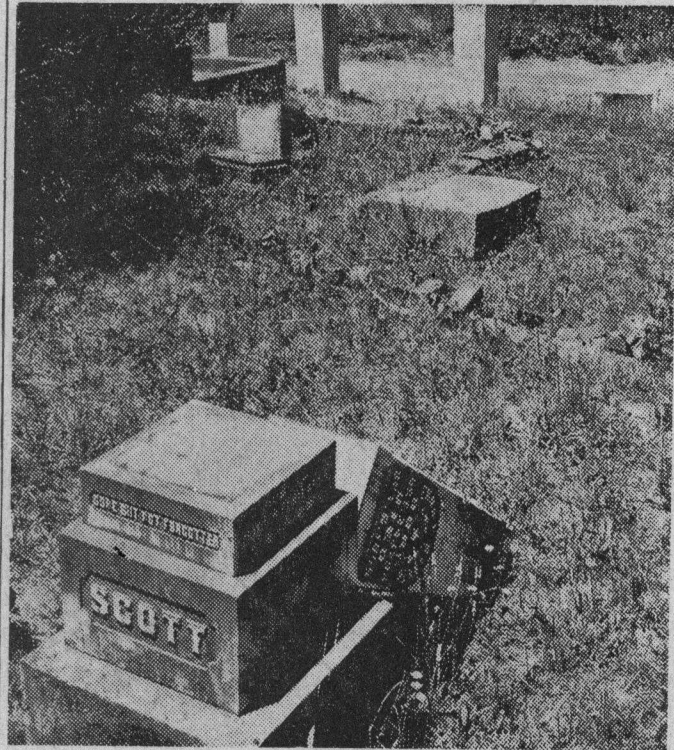
In 1963 the city of Santa Cruz was approached about maintenance of Evergreen. But the city council turned down the request, stating that it could not act because the cemetery is private property, owned by the association and various individuals.

And so the story goes . . . It's a beautiful spot, the old cemetery. It deserves better than its' getting.



YOU ARE DRESSED
FOR ANY OCCASION

Chiapauli's



'Gone But Not Forgotten' the early-day pioneer burying headstone motto fits fate of ground.

County Water Group Moves To Protect Water Sources

Moves to protect local water supplies on a county-wide basis were taken Thursday night by a new county committee.

The county water resources agencies coordinating committee

County public works director Warren Harrison proposed the study as a means of discovering where dams should be built and when.

He was warned that several potential dam sites may be qual-