

Voices of the Heart: Memorial Poems from the Diphtheria Epidemic of 1876-78

By Phil Reader

(Compiled, and with an introduction, by Phil Reader)



*Monument to Cora Drew -
Watsonville Pioneer Cemetery*

To the memory of Miss Cora E. Drew (1864-1877)

I first met Cora on a dark, rainy night during the month of December, 1992, when her name jumped out at me from a microfilmed page of the April 26, 1877 issue of the old Watsonville Pajaronian. It was affixed to the bottom of an eleven stanza poem, the words of which inspired me to begin this collection.

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PREFACE

Perhaps the most ignored aspect of local history has been the health history of our community. It is an important field of study in that it provides a unique glimpse into the daily mechanisms of our predecessors. On a much larger level, medical researchers have probed national and international trends in vitality and well-being from a historical point of view in order to better understand the methodology behind the spread of a contagion. Genealogists, because they research people -not events, have long appreciated this prospective and have been able to draw correlations which extend from generation to generation. Certain gene pools are more susceptible to a given disease strain than are others. It "runs in the family", so to speak. Being aware of this family susceptibility, of course, makes it easier to take the necessary steps leading to prevention and cure.

This rule also pertains to society in general and various racial and social groupings in particular, the classic examples being the prevalence of Sickle Cell Anemia among those of Negro origins and the advent of the AIDS virus among those practicing certain lifestyles. A detailed examination into the past of a community can reveal events precipitating a health disaster. What were the sanitation conditions of the time? Or what were the personal hygiene habits of the citizenry?

We are all aware of the role plagues and epidemics have played in world history. The much storied "Black Death" or Bubonic Plague of medieval days has profoundly affected all of the historical epochs which have followed in its wake. This reoccurring scourge in both the oriental and occidental worlds literally changed the course of human history by "thinning out" the population and, in the long run, probably saved more lives than it took by easing the burden upon the world's future food supply. Deprivation, malnutrition, and starvation are widespread enough in our contemporary world with its staggering population levels but the statistics on hunger related deaths would be absolutely appalling had this natural "thinning" not occurred so long ago.

However, on a personal level, the sorrow resulting from these "plague deaths" was devastating. But, at the very least, it can be said they were a shared sorrow. It was an experience held common in many households, therefore the mourning was communal and, to some small degree, the grief was diminished. But people tend to deal with the anguish of human mortality in a variety of ways. Some will meet it head on by quickly burying their dead, putting the dirges behind them, and getting back to the business of living. While others submerge themselves in religious ritual, taking comfort in the thought of an afterlife in a Heaven, Nirvana, or Valhalla.

Still another method is to verbalize the grief by putting pen to paper and expressing the emotions that are felt. These mourners have produced countless reams of poetry memorializing their loved ones and thereby relieving their own sadness. It is this last group of "mourners" that are the subject of this study - The poets and poetesses of death.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of Santa Cruz County and the central coast area there have been an irregularly occurring series of plagues and epidemics. Documented evidence lists at least half a dozen before the advent of statehood.

Recorded history of the Monterey Bay region begins with the coastal explorations of the Spaniard Sebastian Vizcaino in 1602, but it would be another one hundred and sixty-six years before we learn any details of life in the area that would one day be called California. The push into the territory was led by the Franciscan padres, under the leadership of Junipero Serra, in search of converts to Christianity. They were followed closely by Spanish civil and military authorities, who's quest was of a more material nature.

These newcomers found living here a race of stone age people, strong, vital, healthy and existing in an ancient state of harmony with their environment. Their style of living had left them relatively free from the ravages of highly contagious diseases. However, the coming of the Spanish to the shores of California would quickly change all of this.

The Franciscans in their zeal to save the mortal souls of these indigenous peoples endangered their very existence. At Mission Santa Cruz, founded in 1792, the local Ohlone Indian tribes were collected into the confines of the newly established mission and exposed to the Spartan rigors of Spanish Catholicism. A new

settled, non-migratory way of life was forced upon them. They were clustered together in an unfamiliar close proximity to one another and their dietary habits were radically altered.

These mission Indians soon suffered from a multiplicity of "imported" European diseases against which their systems produced no natural anti-bodies. Foremost amongst these were Smallpox, Influenza, and Syphilis, as well as the common cold and the childhood diseases of Diphtheria, Mumps, Chicken pox, and Measles. The result being the almost total annihilation of the local tribes of California aborigines within the first two decades after their Christianization. The lack of preparations for, or protection against the ravages of these afflictions, on the part of the padres, borders upon the verge of genocide.

The advent of the nineteenth century brought an influx of immigrants to Pueblo de Branciforte, located on a hill overlooking the San Lorenzo River and one of only three pueblos in Alta California. These first settlers found life on the isolated Spanish frontier to be both harsh and demanding. Communications with the outside world were quite limited in nature and this ongoing isolation from so many of life's necessities put their health at risk on a number of occasions. Physicians and their medical knowledge were, of course, unheard of and the citizenry was left to the mercy of contagion and pestilence.

Although written records from this time period are only fragmentary, there are several which deal with the health history of the Villa. One in particular is of significant importance however. In the Branciforte Archives is document #507, dated December 19, 1833. It gives advice to the citizens of the pueblo on how to handle a potential "Cholera Morbus" epidemic then rampant in Mexico. The scourge, unknowingly conveyed aboard ship and on overland wagon trains, swept northward, arriving in Alta California during the early spring of 1834. It filtered into the pueblos and ranchos carrying away hundreds of Californios and Indians before it ran its deadly course.

In the century and a half since the American conquest of California in 1846, there have been four "major" epidemics of note which have had profound consequences in Santa Cruz county. (But this is in no way to infer that these were the only ones.)

The first and perhaps the most devastating to the general populous occurred during the late fall and early winter of 1868. The disease was the much dreaded Smallpox and the first diagnosed cases of it occurred among the impoverished Spanish residents of San Juan Bautista. Local newspapers reported that the pestilence was spreading rapidly and by mid-November, 1868, there were more than one hundred and twenty known cases in the infected district with more being reported daily. The death toll in the first week of the epidemic was set at twenty-three.

The stage coach lines which serviced the area canceled all of their runs and a cry went out for help. The roads leading in and out of this little mission town were barricaded in an attempt to localize the malady. Collections were taken up in nearby cities in order to help alleviate the suffering.

A campaign in Santa Cruz county raised almost two hundred dollars in one weekend. The funds were used to purchase serum in order to inoculate those in the area not already afflicted with the pox. Two young Irishmen, who would later loom large in the history of Watsonville, braved the ravages of the disease and delivered the much needed serum to San Juan. These two "home town" heroes were Matt Tarpy and Patrick McAllister.

All attempts to contain the illness were without success, however, when cases began to appear in Watsonville and Whisky Hill. (Now Freedom) By the 25th of November, the death toll in Watsonville stood at eleven,

among that number being a teacher and town constable. On the 27th, a group of Santa Cruz residents rode out to Aptos and demolished the bridge on the Watsonville Road. After posting a guard at the ruins to prevent anyone from entering Santa Cruz from the east and south, they scurried back to town and waited. But these quarantine measures were also useless and the only lasting effect of this rash action was to create a rift between the citizens of both cities.

Two days later the plague was raging in Santa Cruz to such a degree that the county supervisors issued a medical alert and created, for the first time, a board of Health, appointing Dr. C.S. Anderson as Health Officer. The new board established a "Pest House" and inaugurated a daily route for a "death wagon" to convey the afflicted to the hospital for treatment. Instruction at the public schools were suspended for the remainder of the term and the local press published widely the latest remedies available for home use as well as methods to prevent the spread of Smallpox.

Thanks to such measures the pestilence began to subside throughout the county during the first two weeks of December and by the new year, the Board of Health could declare the epidemic at an end. The exact number of those who succumbed to Small Pox during that winter will never be known, but cemeteries in the Monterey Bay area abound in headstones bearing dates from this period. It appears that the fatality rate from the disease was, as usual, highest among children.

During the twentieth century, Santa Cruz county has experienced two significant epidemics, or actually pandemics- worldwide outbreaks of a communicable contagion - the first which occurred in 1918, while World War I was raging on the European continent. It was the outbreak of the so called Spanish Flu. In reality, however, it was the most virulent form of a series of strains of Influenza which had tormented the world for a forty year period of time between the 1880s and 1920s. Prior to 1918, the most devastating, an attack of "la Grippe" or "old Grip", had occurred in 1890-91 claiming many thousands of victims across the nation.

In Santa Cruz, the Spanish Flu, with its haunting images of frightened people wearing the infamous gauze masks over their faces, began in October, 1918, when soldiers returning home from basic training carried the pestilence with them. It reached a zenith during the month of December, as dozens of new cases were reported on a daily basis. Striking hardest at the very young and very old, there were well over a hundred flu related deaths reported among these age groups. Death resulted not from the Influenza itself, but from Pneumonia which quite often developed following a case of flu.

Various quarantine methods were enacted; schools had to be closed, restaurants and saloons were shut down, most social activities were canceled, and by the early spring of 1919, this blight passed from the scene. In all "the Flu" would cost over thirty million lives worldwide.

The second major plague, more contemporaneous, was the Poliomyelitis or Infantile Paralysis outbreaks of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Its peak year in Santa Cruz county was 1952, when the isolation wards at all local hospitals were reported to be overcrowded from the many Polio cases which sprang forth during the summer of that year. The bulk of the local casualties were youngsters between the ages of five and fifteen. Dozens died of the malignancy while many more were paralyzed for life.

In 1954, a researcher from the University of Pittsburgh developed the first practical immunization against Polio. His name was Dr. Jonas Salk and the famous vaccine which now bears his name was quickly pronounced totally effective and has led to the complete eradication of this disease.

All of the above mentioned epidemics struck hard at society as a whole, but, as mentioned earlier, generally speaking, there were most lethal to young children and the elderly. Youngsters are susceptible because their immune systems are not yet fully developed while those of advanced age experience a breakdown of the protective mechanisms in the human body. In both instances, individuals involved are rendered extremely vulnerable to the onslaught of viruses.

Some afflictions, however, are classed as childhood diseases exclusively. From a historical point of view the most prevalent and mortal of these is Diphtheria and it has emerged from time to time to exact a heavy toll in misery and death from the very young.

The Diphtheria bacillus produces a toxin of great virulence which is highly contagious. It strikes at the throat, causing swelling and thereby obstructing both breathing and respiration. It is accompanied by headaches and a soaring fever. An attack is usually a week in duration and, during the nineteenth century, commonly ended in death.

A major outbreak of the disease occurred throughout California during the two year period between the summers of 1876 and 1878. This run of Diphtheria took place in an era when childhood mortality was already high, so the advent of such a noxious pestilence only darkened the picture and brought more sorrow to the families in Santa Cruz county. Across the years a random case of the disease was expected to appear and claim an occasional victim. But no one was ready for the onslaught which was about to befall the population.

During the entire year of 1875, there was but one death attributable to Diphtheria. It occurred on October 22, when fourteen year old John B. Cole, son of J.A. and Survina Cole died at his parents home in Santa Cruz. Young John would later prove to be the first of three Cole children to perish during the epidemic. The slow pace continued on into 1876 with only three deaths registered to the disease. But with the advent of summer, these figures jumped and by the end of the year there was an average of seven Diphtheria related deaths a month.

It was during this time that a new and most tragic phenomenon came into play - that of multiple deaths per family. Because the pestilence was so virulent and highly contagious, it would strike hard at a household and, in some instances, completely depopulate a family of its children.

Such was the case of Alfred and Sarah Hinds of Santa Cruz. Hinds was a prominent businessman with a socially active wife. But utter calamity befell their small family when, between thanksgiving and Christmas of 1876, all four of their infant children died of the malady. Also suffering a great loss was longtime Santa Cruz house painter Otis Longley and his wife Matilda, a daughter of pioneer Adna Hecox. The Longley's lost a son and two daughters within a period of two weeks. Stage coach driver Henry Whinery watched two of his children die in as many days. Meanwhile in the Pajaro Valley, the farm family of James and Naomi Blankenship lost the first of three children.

In all, this first year of the plague witnessed a total of thirty-nine fatalities due to Diphtheria. By year's end the county officials and local medical specialists were beginning to realize that the whole population was at risk when word of a state wide epidemic filtered in from other affected areas. But they were slow in taking any type of concerted action.

The high mortality rate continued on into 1877 and reached crisis proportions during the month of June, when, in the city of Santa Cruz alone, there was one death every other day. Hardly any family in the county was spared the agony of losing a child.

In February, Duncan McPherson, editor of the Santa Cruz Sentinel, lost his eldest son, Alexander. That same month witnessed Irish immigrants, Thomas and Kate Handley burying three of their children. Philipp Frank, a steward at the county hospital, inadvertently brought the disease home - a move which would cost him a daughter and two sons.

The infirmity swept through the lumber camps and lime quarries near Felton, decimating family after family. Two of the hardest hit were those of Alexander McDonald, who, in June, lost four children under the age of eight. During the same month, railroad section hand, Michael Cantwell and his wife Catherine mourned the passing of a son and daughter.

Diphtheria also laid waste to the hamlet of Corralitos in the Pajaro Valley, robbing the district of its children. John and Elmina Bradshaw watched four of their youngsters die, while William and Sophia Drew lost two, including the couple's beloved daughter Cora Elizabeth Drew.

The toll in human misery was crushing as the epidemic raged on, claiming one hundred and six children in 1877. But the community was also on the move, adjourning the schools while refurbishing and enlarging the hospital. The flow of information from health officials into the homes of the citizenry was facilitated by an eager and willing local press. Long standing problems of sewage disposal and sanitation endeavors were dealt with at last as the people of Santa Cruz county closed ranks against the pestilence which was plundering them of their young.

The rate of death remained high for the first two months of 1878, but the number gradually began to diminish as the health and sanitation measures began to take effect. By July, Diphtheria deaths were down to pre-contagion levels with the last death attributed to the epidemic coming on September 30, 1878, when Mary Alice Hall of Soquel succumbed to the disease.

During the two years of the plague there was at least one hundred and seventy-five known fatalities as a result of Diphtheria. Because there were so many deaths and funerals in such a relatively short period of time, and because the mourning was almost constant, a vast number of families chose to bury their youngsters without the usual amount of ceremony and public notice. These facts make it obvious that the true mortality figures for this epidemic will never be known.

The nature and extent of the pestilence did, however, have a number of long lasting effects on the community. As mentioned earlier, the county did enlarge its medical facility to include ten more beds and a local doctor was hired to tend to the inmates, where as before the physician in attendance had been there strictly on a voluntary basis.

The Board of Public Health was given a broad range of power in order to allow it to take action during a declared emergency. Local legislation was passed granting the board the discretionary authority of the law to enforce these actions. Prior to this time, little or no attention had been given to county wide sanitation and waste disposal. The local press decried the metropolitan areas of Santa Cruz and Watsonville as "vast Cesspools" where raw sewage had been allowed to flow freely down the main streets.

In the city of Santa Cruz, this waste did congregate in several huge pools on Front Street and from there drain ran into the San Lorenzo River. At times the stench had been so putrid that residents had to cover their faces with handkerchiefs when passing through the area. At Watsonville, the sewage ran down Main and Rodriguez Streets before entering the Pajaro River near the bridge.

The coming of the epidemic forced the authorities in both cities to address this important question. At issue here was not only how to properly drain the city, but also how to control the overflow from privies. A series of public works projects were initiated, the object of which was to replace the old crude system of drainage with a new large volume reinforced pipe and cistern system. Although it would take several years to complete the project, it did indeed prove to be successful and held up nicely until the turn of the century.

In order to deal with the septic tank problem, the Common Councils (or City Councils) in both town passed ordinances mandating the use of the disinfectants lye and chlorine in "outhouses" and authorized the hiring of a health officer who's job it would be to regularly inspect dwellings and streets. He was also granted the necessary power to enforce rigid compliance with the sanitation laws.

Another institution greatly affected by the plague was the school system. During the late 1870s, the general population of Santa Cruz county rose significantly, but school censuses, taken annually, show that the number of students enrolled at local schools actually declined as much as five percent as a result of the epidemic. For a decade afterwards classes were smaller as was the number of graduating students. School revenues were down and the educational system as a whole suffered.

The Diphtheria epidemic of 1876-78 was by no means the last outbreak of the disease. Santa Cruz county would experience another sizable attack of the contagion during the winter of 1882, but it would strike with nowhere near the severity. Several others would follow later in the decade before an immunizing anti-toxin would be developed in the 1890s putting an end forever to this destructive malady.

VOICES OF THE HEART: MEMORIAL POEMS

The following collection of "verse" appeared in the local press during the Diphtheria epidemic of the late 1870s. They were abstracted from the *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, the *Santa Cruz Courier-Item*, the *Santa Cruz Local Item*, and the *Watsonville Pajaronian*. Those were the only journals which were being published in the county at the time and it is obvious that the different editors were eager to reproduce these efforts. The various editorial staffs at these publications understood full well the personal importance of the works being forwarded to them, this is especially true in the case of Duncan McPherson at the *Sentinel*, who had lost a son to the scourge.

These poems, pseudo-poems, and memorials, usually appended to a death notice in the newspaper, were the literary manifestations of deeply felt sorrow. They are glibly written, reeking with pathos and religious imagery, and, in many cases, largely devoid of any literary form. But style was never the important factor to the authors of this doggerel, it was the emotional content. An attempt to reach out, share the sorrow, and perhaps find some latent meaning in the death of a child. This reason alone does indeed make them worthy of study.

In all cases, the original spelling, punctuation, and structure have been faithfully reproduced.

For Addie Mehwalt, Age 2 Years, 7 months

Alex and Mary Mehwalt, a young Santa Cruz couple, were so devastated by the death of their daughter that they found it necessary to move away from the area to contain their grief. They left behind one of the most beautiful poems in this collection.

"Oh, sweet be thy sleep in the land of the dead;
For our dear little angel we sorrow.
The spring shall return to thy low, narrow bed,
Like the beam of the day-star tomorrow.

Oh, still we behold thee, lovely in death,
Reclined on the lap of thy mother;
When the tears trickled bright, the short, stifled breath
Told how dear you were to each other.

My child, you are gone to the hole of thy rest,
Where suffering no longer can harm you;
Where the songs of the good, the hymns of the blest,
Through an endless existence shall charm you."

For Moses Meder Hoyt, Age 7 years, 7 months

Written for Moses Meder Hoyt Jr. the only son of a Davenport businessman and grandson of Santa Cruz pioneer Moses Meder.

"We miss him for the good that he has wrought us,
And for the good that yet remained in store.
We miss him for the lessons that he has taught us,
We miss his presence, yet we mourn him more."

For Amy Bennett, Age 11 years, 8 months

Mansell V. Bennett, son of the much-fabled "Widow" Bennett, and his life Mary were working at their mill in the Santa Cruz mountains when their oldest daughter died of Diphtheria. The loving parents interrupted their mourning long enough to compose this short poem.

"Let the dead and the beautiful rest,
Make her grave 'neath the willow by the stream,
Where wind-harps will whisper o'er the blest,
Like the song of some angel in our dream."

For Mattie Lorenzen, 7 years, 8 months

German immigrants, Lorenz and Maria Lorenzen kept a small hotel on Main Street in Watsonville and were quite active in school and community affairs. During the plague, they lost one of their four daughters.

"In the Memory of Mattie"

"One sweet flower had drooped and faded,
One sweet youthful voice has fled,
One fair brow the grave has shaded,
Our dear loved one now is dead.

She has gone to Heaven before us,
But she turns and waves her hand,
Pointing to the glories o'er us,
In that happy spirit land."

For Elizabeth Jane Comstock, Age 14 years, 1 month

Civil War veteran Harvey Comstock and his wife Alta came west to California following his enlistment in the Union Army. They were the parents of four children, all of whom would die before reaching adulthood. One child, a daughter, died of Diphtheria in 1876 and the others during an outbreak of influenza ten years later. The Comstocks sent these poems to the Sentinel along with the announcement of their daughter's death.

"Blossomed in higher life!".

This is what the spirit said,
Then she read upon the page
That 'The damsel lieth dead.'

Death is not in the Summer land;
Think of this, oh, mother dear,
And although, we miss the form
Know I still am with you here,

In and out, I come and go,
Standing often by your side;
Darling mother, grieve not so
For I have not really died,

More alive than e're before,
Able more to help and bless,
I still hear your tearful words,
You must feel my fond caress.

All the promise you saw
In my budding womanhood,
Summer land will quite fulfill;
Mother, God is truly good."

"Weep no more the damsel lives,
And her heart is pained with tears;
Home shall brighten as before
By her help in coming years."

Death Notice for the Santa Cruz Sentinel

COMSTOCK - In Santa Cruz, June 13th, 1876. Jennie E, the only Daughter of L. H. and H. A. Comstock, aged 14 years, 1 month, and 11 days.

"A few days ago the subject of the above notice, was the life and light of a happy home. Every day, all day long, she was the sweet source of joy to her parents, and the solace of their lives. Everything sterling in character and a amiable in disposition, was exhibited in her actions, and shone with a steady lustre in her deportment. Those who knew her the best will grieve that the King of Terrors should have culled so fair a blossom from life's garden. When the aged tree whose branches are torn, and whose roots are loosened by the storms of time is stricken to the earth, we may remember sorrowfully the days when it gave us shelter, but we cannot deeply mourn so natural an went. But, when the fair young sapling just springing into buoyant, graceful, and exuberant vigor, is blasted by the frost, we bow our heads in sorrow and mourn for what "might have been." So must we mourn the untimely departure of the fair flower that has so suddenly been transplanted to the upper garden. The friends of the bereaved household will deeply deplore the irreparable loss it has suffered. Slight indeed, in the acute moments, will be the consolation derived from such condolences. May the afflicted ones gather strength from the same arm that struck the blow, and glean hope from the reflection that in a few short summers they may again clasp the sweet flower thus hastily removed from their loving grasp.

For Ella Louisa Gray, Age 5 months, 10 days

From her home in Santa Cruz, Emma Gray wrote this poem to the memory of her infant daughter, Ella, who died on November 3, 1877.

"Vainly will thy mother seek thee,
Vacant is thy cradle bed:
Lovely Ella, in the cold grave
Low is laid thy little head."

For Harry F. Whinery, (Age 5 years, 9 months) and Martha Whinery (Age 7 years, 5 months)

Henry Whinery, who drove the stage coach between San Jose and Santa Cruz, saw two of his children die of Diphtheria on December 6, 1876. He and his wife Amelia included this poem with their obituaries.

"Quiet the little feet that trod
So merrily the floor
The little hands that clasped my neck
Will clasp my neck no more.
Ah! Children mine and yet not mine

For a few years were given
And then recalled to draw my heart,
Nearer to God and Heaven."

For Alexander McPherson, Age 5 years, 11 months

The families of Duncan McPherson, longtime editor of the Santa Cruz Sentinel, and his wife Amelia Hinds were struck hard by the Diphtheria scourge. The McPhersons lost their eldest son, while Amelia's brother Alfred, saw his entire brood of four little ones, two boys and two girls, carried away by the disease. In his grief, McPherson published this long poem for his beloved son.

"The air is full of farewell for the dying,
and mourning for the dead;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted.

Let us be patient! These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But often times celestial Benedictions
Assist this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through mists and vapors,
Amid these earthly damps;
What seems to us but sad funerals tapers
May be Heaven's distant lamps.

There is no death! What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of life erysiar,
Whose portal is called death.

He is not dead - the child of our affections,
But gone into the school
Where he no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
He lives, whom we call dead."

For Edward M. Reed, Age 12 years, 11 months

On February 18, 1876, the Watsonville Pajaronian carried this poem, written for young Edward Reed, who had died five days earlier.

"Sleeping, only sleeping,
Free from care and pain;
Let us cease our weeping,
He will rise again.

Sleeping, sweetly sleeping,
In his mossy bed.
While the flower are blooming,
Where we gently tread."

For Lena Heath, Age 10 years, 6 months

Lucien and Julia Heath, owners of a Hardware Store on Pacific Avenue in Santa Cruz, published this poem following the death of their daughter, Lena on July 19, 1876.

"Early, bright, transient,
Chaste as the morning dew,
She sparkled, was exhaled,
And went to heaven.

None knew her but to love;
None named her but to praise
Death lies on her like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower in all the fold."

For George Charles Haun, Age 3 months, 15 days

The tiny village of Corralitos suffered greatly during the Diphtheria epidemic, witnessing the death of a large number of its children. George Haun, an employee at the paper mill, lost his infant son and namesake George Jr., after previously burying two small daughters, Franka and Hattie.

"Child of the spheres invisible beyond,
Thy image fair we hold within our hearts.

Darling, our souls go out in love for thee.
Sweet flower, unfolding in that higher birth.

But thou are gone in all thy babyhood's grave,
To bloom in the beautiful summer lands.

A gentle star beam stole o'er our path.
We see no more for thy dear presence here.

Bright star that faded from our mortal sight,
Until the morning of thy life had fled.

We lift the veil that hides the golden strand,
And let us view our Franka, Hattie, and babe so dear."

For Cora J. Longley (Age 3 years, 2 months), Alonzo Warren Longley (Age 4 years, 8 months), and Luella C. Longley (Age 3 years, 2 months)

In the fall of 1876, Diphtheria struck hard claiming dozens of tiny victims including three children of Otis and Matilda (Hecox) Longley. With the passing of each casket they penned a short verse of remembrance.

For Cora J. Longley

"A lovely bud, so soft and fair,
Called hence by early doom;
Just sent to show how sweet a flower
In paradise could bloom."

For Alonzo Warren Longley

"Oh, Mother! Tell my sister dear
And brother too;
While living on that lower sphere
Yet ever keep Heaven in view.
And tell my father that his son,
Heir to all heavenly joys,
Will meet him when his race is run,
In his home beyond the skies.

The birds sing sweetly round my grave,
Sweetly they sing to thee.
Sweet-scented flowers there you leave,
With bitter tears for me.
'tis but my body 'neath the sod,
I've reached a better haven.
My precious soul has gone to God.
Mother! My home is in Heaven."

For Luella C. Longley

"Thus have the angels gathered
Another fair flower home
Through the casket so loved has faded,
The jewel to Heaven has flown.

Gone, ere her soul had learned
The weight of years of sin,

With truer, tenderer love than ours,
God called thee home to him."

For May Isabella Miller, Age 1 year, 10 months

Cephas Miller, a gold rush pioneer from Canada, and his wife Mary Longley were living at the Grover's Mill lumber camp when Diphtheria took their daughter Isabella. In her memory, Mary authored the following poem.

"Open wide the golden gate
That leads to the shining shore,
Our lassie has suffered in passing through
But her troubles now are o're.

Weep not for me my parents dear
because I died so young.
The fewer years, the fewer sins,
God's will it must be done."

For Roselia Boomer

George Boomer, the former city marshal of Santa Cruz, and wife Barbara were another couple who left town in sorrow following the death of a child during the epidemic. Before departing, they left this poem at the Santa Cruz Sentinel.

"Sweet angel! Babe,
Thou wert not long given,
Here on earth to dwell,
But called from earth to Heaven;
It's well, It's well, It's well.

There safely moored,
A11 dangers o'er.
My little barge shall stand,
There sorrow shall cross
My Rosie's path no more,
In that thrice happy land.

Adieu, dear lamb,
Till next we meet,
Round God's dear throne above
We will cast our crown,
Beneath his feet,
And praise our Savior's love."

For Kate Handley (Age 7 years, 5 months), Mary Agnes Handley (Age 5 years, 7 months), Lizzie Handley (Age 3 years, 7 months), and John Bernard Handley (Age 1 year, 3 months)

Thomas and Kate Handley, impoverished immigrants from Ireland, lost four children to Diphtheria during the early months of 1877. The bereaved parents composed memorial poems to their little ones.

For Kate Handley

"Dearest Katie, thou hath now left us,
And thy loss we deeply feel;
But t'is God who hath bereft us;
He can all our sorrows heal.

Open wide the silvery gates,
That lead to the heavenly shore;
Our dear Katie suffered in passing through,
But her sufferings now are o'er."

For Mary Agnes Handley

"Dear Agnes, Thou were not formed for living here,
For thou were kindred for the sky;
Yet we held thee all so dear,
We though thou wert not formed to die.

For Lizzie Handley

Sweet Lizzie was but as a smile
Which glistened into a tear,
Seen but a little while
But, oh, How loved, how dear.

For John Bernard Handley

To us for sixteen anxious months,
Little Bernard's infant smile was given,
And then he bade farewell to earth,
And went to live in Heaven.

For Dock Franklyn Cole (Age 1 year, 7 months) and Edwin Monroe Cole (Age 7 years, 1 month)

James H. Cole, a Santa Cruz teamster, and his wife Survina lost two children to Diphtheria during the summer of 1877. For each child they wrote a small poem.

For Dock Franklyn Cole

"Weep not for those whom the will of the tomb
In life's happy morning hath hid from our eyes.
Ere sin throw a blight on the spirit's young bloom,
Or earth had prepared what was born of the skies."

For Edwin Monroe Cole

"We'll miss our Eddie when we gather
Around our blazing hearth at night
With pleasant talk of years to come
Those years our fancies frame,
Ah, he had a home that bears another name."

For Hannah Josephine Butler, Age 4 years, 3 months

Joseph and Hannah Butler, a Santa Cruz farm couple, had one daughter, whom they named after themselves, calling her Hannah Josephine Butler. She died March 3, 1877.

"She is not dead, this child of our affection,
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection
And Christ himself, doth rule."

For Joseph Silvester Turner, Age 8 months, 2 days

John and Annie Turner were among the countless number of Irish immigrants who fled their homeland to escape the great famine of the 1840s. They made their way to Santa Cruz where they took up farming at Blackburn Gulch. They lost a son to Diphtheria in 1876.

"Our Babe"

"Ah! little bud, too pure to grow
In such a world as this.
He is gone, gone to bloom
Beyond the tomb,
Where all is beauty, all is bliss.

Sweet babe, tranquil be thy rest -
Our early loved and early lost,
Submit our heart; 'tis god's behest."

For George Maxwell, Age 9 years

John and Ella Maxwell of Watsonville watched helplessly as their son George died of Diphtheria during the late summer of 1877. The anguished mother took leave of her beloved son in the following fashion.

"Mother's darling boy has gone to rest. Oh, what a wealth of comfort in those bright lustrous eyes. He cannot speak, He cannot cheer with gentle words my listening ears; oh, Georgie, I must bid farewell."

"It is hard to give you up
But we must drink the bitter cup
For our Lord has willed it so."
M.C.M.

For Harry Ambrose, Age 7 years, 6 months

On August 4, 1877, the following death notice appeared in the Santa Cruz Sentinel.

"FRASER - In Felton, July 1, Harry Ambrose, the oldest child of Angus and Carrie Fraser, aged 7 years, 6 months, and 2 days."

Appended to the notice was a paragraph obviously authored by the aggrieved parents.

"Our dear little Harry was taken sick with Diphtheria on the 20th of June. On the Sunday night following, he sank very low, and about four o'clock on the following morning he said, "Papa, I think I will die." His papa replied, "Harry, I think you will," and then asked him if there was any one he wished to see. He replied "Edie," his little sister. His papa then asked him if he had any little to say before he died. He said, "Yes," and then repeated his morning prayer. He then said, "Mamma, which is the best place - Heaven or Earth?" to which she replied, "Heaven, for good little boys." He seemed pleased and dropped off to sleep - Alas! the sleep of death. During the week our hopes for him were revived at times. On July 1st came the final struggle, and after a few hours of suffering he died at 6 o'clock P.M."

CORA E. DREW: POETESS OF THE PLAGUE

It can rightfully be said that Cora Drew was a young lady of exceptional courage and insight, and she would prove it beyond the shadow of a doubt during that desolate spring in 1877.

Her parents were Wallace and Sophia Drew, both natives of Canaan, Somerset County, Maine, who had come west in 1862 shortly after their marriage. The section of Maine from which they hailed was a lumbering region, so, naturally enough, upon arrival in California they settled in a similar district - the Santa Cruz mountains above the town of Gilroy. The young couple remained there for twelve years while Wallace worked in the woods. Meanwhile Sophia Drew gave birth to four children, a son and three daughters, of whom Cora, born April 6, 1864, was the eldest.

During the spring of 1874, the family moved to the village of Corralitos in Santa Cruz county where Wallace had been offered the position of foreman at the Ford and Sanborn Shingle Mill. Cora entered the Corralitos School, where records show that she was always in the upper ten percent of her class. She was, by all accounts, a bright and precocious child.

At the time, the mountain village was a small, tight knit community, where all activities centered around life at the numerous saw mills which were scattered throughout the nearby mountains. The families of these woodsmen shared collectively the rigors of existence in the often crude timber camps. They pulled together, helping one another through times of trial, but never was life more trying than during the spring and summer of 1877, when the dreaded Diphtheria swept through the settlements striking down countless children.

Physicians from Watsonville had to be called in to minister to the young victims. Among those quick to respond were Doctors Martin and Irelan.

One of the first to be stricken by the disease was Cora Drew, who was now on the verge of her thirteenth birthday. In a matter of hours, her breathing became much labored as a high temperature raged within her body. The two doctors were immediately summoned to her bedside and attended her with great patience.

For days, Cora hung on tenaciously as her system began to deteriorate. The soaring fever caused her to lose all of her hair and finally rendered her totally blind. Yet she refused to give up and slowly began to rally. Although greatly weakened and bedridden, Cora was soon smiling widely and talking incessantly about her upcoming birthday.

Meanwhile in other homes located around Corralitos, the pestilence was taking a heavy toll. On March 9th, in nearby Grizzly Flat, Wesley Tucker, a co-worker of Wallace Drew, lost his two year daughter Susie to Diphtheria. When told of the tragedy, Cora asked for a pen and sheaf of paper and wrote a short memorial poem to the child which she sent to the grief stricken parents. The Tuckers were so moved by the emotions conveyed by the verse that they forwarded it to the *Watsonville Pajaronian*, who published it with young Susie's obituary.

This was the first of several poems which Cora Drew wrote, from her bedside, about the many casualties of the epidemic that spring. A few would find their way into print.

On March 23, her one year old brother, Wallace Drew Jr. was taken ill and died within a matter of hours. To help herself and her parents manage the sorrow of their loss, and to better come to grips with her own continuing malady, Cora composed a long eleven stanza ballad to the memory of her brother. It is an impressive work, heavy with sentiment but at the same time filled with the optimism of youth and a strong belief in the future. Upon reading it, one cannot help but to be taken by the haunting imagery and poetic beauty of the final three verses.

The spring season dragged slowly by for the citizens of Corralitos, with the schools shut down and the saw mills running only on a part time basis. The death toll mounted and the grieving continued unabated.

During the first week of May, Cora's condition, for which the doctors held out so much hope, began to worsen and finally on May 14, 1877, she slipped into a coma and died. She was just 13 years old. The next day, her anguished parents, followed by a cortege of friends and neighbors, bore her body to Watsonville and buried her in a grave next to that of their infant son at the Odd Fellows Cemetery.

In time the pestilence passed out of Corralitos and life in the lumber camps slipped back towards normalcy, but it had exacted a heavy price. Prior to the plague, there had been twenty children enrolled at the tiny Corralitos School, but at the opening of school that fall there were only twelve students left. Eight of the children had succumbed to the disease.

The following year, the Drew family moved on to Felton, in the San Lorenzo Valley, where Wallace opened a livery stable and was later elected Constable of the district. In a manner befitting the situation, the citizens of Corralitos took it upon themselves to see that a bouquet of fresh flowers always marked the spot where Cora Drew, the poetess of the plague, was buried.

When notice of Cora's death appeared in the *Watsonville Pajaronian* , the following letter, signed simply "a friend" was appended to it.

"With sentiments that sadden the soul, we do offer tribute to the memory of her whose unexpected demise has brought desolation and grief to the hearts of fond and devoted parents and a circle of tenderly devoted friends. With cautious tread do we invade the sanctuary of private sorrow, still we cannot forebear a gentle utterance of profound appreciation of the childlike virtues of the lamented deceased, and our sincere sympathy with those who more directly feel the loss. Rarely have we met one like her, whose gentle nature and feminine graces, more deeply won for her the abiding love of parents, relatives and friends. To these we tender, in this hour of their anguish, our heart-felt condolences. May the time and memory, and the Christian hope, soothe and solace them, and especially may they, upon whose hearts and love one had impressed a living idea of all that in life is poetic, beautiful and true, find sweet solace in the precious thought that what is their loss is her gain. Sad commentary this upon life and its vain promises. In the weary pilgrimage, along the path of all, are to be found green mounds and broken shrines, where a thousand hopes have been wasted into ashes and shadows even which we would not forget. Loved and lamented one! While the tears of affliction shall ever moisten the sod that covers thee, may the dews of Heaven refresh thy mortal spirit!"

Also appearing with Cora's obituary was a short poem written by her parents.

"Cora darling, though you have left us,
And your loss we deeply feel,
But 'tis God that has bereft us,
And he can all our sorrows heal."

POEMS BY CORA E. DREW

The first memorial poem by Cora Drew to find its way into print appeared in the *Watsonville Pajaronian* on March 16, 1877. It was written for Susie Tucker, the one year old daughter of her neighbors, William and Elizabeth Tucker.

"Sleep little Susie, Sleep!
Not in thy cradle bed,
Not on thy mother's breast,
But with the quiet dead.

Yes, with the angels blest
Susie, thy form will be,
And many weary one
Would glad lie down with thee."

Her longest and finest effort, written upon the death of her young brother, Wallace Jr., appeared in both the *Watsonville Pajaronian* and the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* during the first week of April, 1877. It contains several stanzas of exceptional poetic imagery as well as a maturity of insight into the nature of life that is developed

far beyond the capacity of most youngsters her age. The piece also reveals much about her own suffering and her brave personal optimism.

"Dear brother, how we miss you
How we dreaded to have you go,
To an unknown world above us,
and leave us here in tears and woe.

Mother says that now in Heaven,
She believes her loved one dwells.
And the spirits of our dear ones,
help to guide us here below.

And, if that is so, darling brother,
Guide your erring sisters, feet,
Guide us in paths of truth and virtue,
That we may noble women make.

And, dear brother, if it is in thy power,
To intercede for those dear friends
That stood beside my bed of pain,
Trying to relieve my suffering
And bring me back to health again.

I would that God might bless them,
Here in this world below,
And in that heaven so pure and bright
His goodness ever know.

And Dr. Martin and Dr. Irelan, too
Who strove so hard to save me,
From death's cold embrace,
Sometimes, it seems, that death,
With skill and practice fought.

But those dear doctors
Who worked both night and day,
Against the grim destroyer that was
Eating my life away.

I would that God might bless them,
And I will bless them too,
For life seems very fair to me,
I'm thirteen years old today;
And if you were here dear brother,
How happy I would be.

But I know it would be madness,
For us to wish you back,
To suffer, oh! to suffer,
As you did here on earth.
For hours you suffered everything,
Till death did you relieve,
Oh! we could not wish you back,
To suffer death again.

But may thy dear hand lead me,
Through life's uncertain race
And bring me to thy holy hills,
And to thy dwelling place."

Cora's final poem, written just a few days before her death on May 14, 1877, can be found in the *Watsonville Pajaronian*. It is, in some respects, different from others which she composed in that it is polished in its poetics and emotionally more profound. The theme of the piece exposes an overwhelming sense of impending doom in her outlook.

"I see my life before me,
Like paintings on the wall.
The faces of my loved ones,
Creep slowly down Heaven's hall.

Oh God, In thy mighty wisdom,
Protect me if you may.
Into thy bright and holy kingdom,
Please welcome me today.
My life on earth, so deep in pain
And sorrow's cup so full,
Yet I would welcome it again

To eternity's brief lull."



Monument to Cora Drew - Watsonville Pioneer Cemetery

MEMORIAL ROLL

List of Children who Died in the Diphtheria Epidemic

After the name of the child who died is the date of death, followed by the child's age.

Ahlers,

John, July 8, 1877, 7 months

Allen,

Annie, June 7, 1876, 19 months

Amaya,

Abalardo, August 17, 1877, 8 years

Bailey,

Lewis H., May 15, 1877, 3 years

Bailly,

James A., January 16, 1878, 7 years

Battersby,

Mary E., February 4, 1878, 1 year

Bennett,

Amy, October 10, 1877, 11 years

Bennett,

Frankie W., January 2, 1878, 4 months

Blaisdell,

Charles C., April 26, 1877, 4 years

Blankenship,

Isabella, October 21, 1876, 11 years

James F., December 9, 1878, 6 years

John C., March 4, 1877, 8 years

Bockius,

Frank, November 15, 1877, 15 years

Boomer,

Roseila H., April 13, 1878, 1 year

Wanso J., October 28, 1877, 9 years

Bradshaw,

Emma F., July 28, 1877, 3 years

Hattie, July 26, 1877, 4 years

John F., July 28, 1877, 8 years

Sarah A., August 3, 1877, 6 years

Briody,

Mary E., May 9, 1877, 6 years

Brown,

Johnny, December 19, 1877, 5 years

Butler,

Hannah J., March 3, 1878, 4 years

Cantwell,

Mary H., June 22, 1877, 12 years

Michael, June 6, 1877, 10 years

Castro,

Vensave, November 30, 1877, 3 years

Clark,

Carleton, January 1, 1878, 5 years

Minnie C., December 24, 1877, 11 years

Cole,

Dock F., June 30, 1877, 1 year

Edwin G.H., August 16, 1877, 7 years

John B, October 22, 1875, 10 years

Colegrove,

Harrie G., October 6, 1877, 7 months



Monument to the Bradshaw Children - Watsonville Pioneer Cemetery

Comstock,

Jennie E., June 13, 1876, 14 years

Conover,

Lottie, July 13, 1876, 17 months

Cummings,

Henrietta, May 27, 1877, 4 years

Davis,

Lulu B., September 16, 1877, 10 years

DeCray,

Clara, April 20, 1877, 19 years

Delaney,

William, February 21, 1878, 3 years

Demetry,

Child of Geo., January 21, 1878, Infant

Dodge,

Kitty, November 14, 1877, 7 months

Dreher,

Hinnie, April 17, 1878, 19 years

Drew,

Cora E., May 14, 1877, 13 years

Wallace, March 22, 1877, 1 year

Duncan,

Susie L., June 23, 1877, 22 months

Erickson,

Christopher, July 25, 1877, 8 years

Mary, July 17, 1877, 5 years

Estrada,

Jose H., February 20, 1878, 7 years

Fleisig,

*Son of John, January 24, 1878, 8 months [sic] **

Folger,

Edward, August 29, 1876

Foreman,

Mabel, July 14, 1877, 2 years

Frank,

Matilda, July 14, 1876, 10 months

Salomon, August 13, 1877, 7 days

Moses, August 16, 1877, 4 years

Frazer,

Harry A., July 1, 1877, 7 years

Frazier,

Hattie, September 21, 1877

Garcelon,

Child of C., August 11, 1876, 6 months

Garcia,

Refugio, August 12, 1876, 7 years

Gardner,

Willard, August 2, 1877, 8 years

Garratt,

Alice H., April 3, 1877, 18 years

Gray,

Ella L., November 3, 1877, 5 months

Grover,

Lizzie, February 16, 1878

Grover,

Son of S.F., September 13, 1876

Hackett,

Ruth B., February 24, 1877, 5 years

Hall,

Mary A., September 30, 1878, 5 years

Handley,

John B., February 4, 1877, 1 year

Katie, March 24, 1877, 8 years

Lizzie, February 22, 1877, 3 years

Mary A., February 28, 1877, 2 years

Harris,

James A., February 15, 1877, 1 year

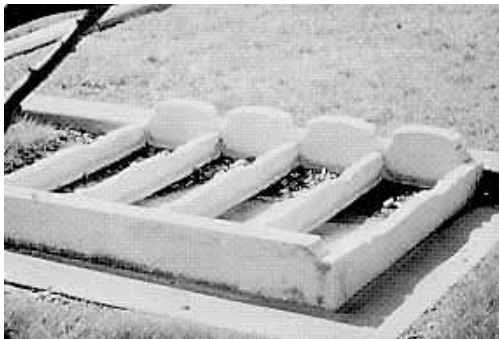
William H., February 19, 1877, 3 years

Haun,

Charlie, April 1, 1877, 3 months

Heath,

Lina, July 19, 1876



Monument to the Four Children of Alfred and Sara Hinds - Santa Cruz Memorial Park

Hinds,

Aimee L., December 25, 1876, 4 years

Ethel R., December 5, 1876, 5 years

Laurent, November 28, 1878, 3 years

Rupert L., December 21, 1876, 8 months

Hoff,

C. Leon, March 31, 1877, 8 years

Hollister,

Jesse W., December 15, 1877, 9 years

Holt,

Cecelia G., October 17, 1876, 13 months

John W., January 1, 1876, 5 years

Howard,

Willie, July 8, 1877, 6 years

Hoyt,

Moses Meder, September 19, 1876, 7 years

Hughes,

Tracy, July 31, 1876, 10 months

Hunt,

H.C., 5 years

Henry H., July 24, 1877, 6 years

Zula, January 8, 1878, 5 years

Jackson,

Edward H., January 14, 1877, 2 years

Jarvis,

William A., April 20, 1877, 12 years

Jewell,

Georgie P., December 9, 1877, 10 years

Jones,

Franklyn, H. November 23, 1876, 3 years

Kaye,

Daisy, July 16, 1878, 2 years

Joseph H., July 25, 1878, 8 years

Kellogg,

Child of Geo., June 1877

Kenville,

Solomon, January 7, 1878, 4 years

Kimball,

Mary, January 6, 1878, 5 years

Ruth R., June 19, 1877, 3 years

King,

Willie, June 2, 1877, 8 years

Kirk,

May 29, 1876

Kirvan,

William H., November 19, 1877, 6 months

Kunitz,

Emma L., June 30, 1877, 1 year

Lewis,

Maggie, October 19, 1876, 5 months

Liebrandt,

Walter H., August 2, 1877, 1 year

Longley,

Alonzo W., October 16, 1876, 6 years

Cora J., October 11, 1876, 3 years

Luella, November 10, 1876, 4 years

Lorenzen,

Hattie, December 25, 1877, 7 years

Lynch,

Samuel J. Jr., November 14, 1877, 3 years

Majors,

Mary J., February 1, 1878, 2 years

Marden,

Alva, November 27, 1876, 16 years

Marquez,

Eduard, November 18, 1877, 2 years

Martin,

Berry, September 17, 1877, 7 years

Maxwell,

George, August 13, 1877, 9 years

McDonald,

Asa, June 8, 1877, 8 years

Clara, June 14, 1877, 2 years

Della, June 23, 1877, 4 years

Flora, June 23, 1877, 7 years

McPherson,

Alexander, February 20, 1877, 5 years

Mehwalt,

Addie, April 15, 1876, 2 years

Menasco,

Mabel, July 30, 1876, 3 months

Meyer,

Katie K., February 17, 1878, 4 years

Miller,

Emma, June 10, 1878, 15 years

Mary I., December 11, 1876, 2 years

Milliken,

Charles R., September 9, 1877, 5 months

Morton,

Son of Asa, March 4, 1877

Murphy,

Richard E., May 21, 1877, 9 months

Myer,

Kitty E., February 17, 1878, 4 years

Neumann,

Edna A., February 25, 1878, 1 year

Nugent,

John J., November 2, 1877, 9 months

Passion,

Nicholas, July 20, 1877, 4 months

Patten,

Josephine, October 4, 1877, 4 years

Patterson,

Elizabeth A., October 11, 1876, 5 months

Pepin,

Matilda, January 22, 1878, 17 years

Pierce,

Harvey, June 19, 1876, 4 months

Quinn,

Son of Patrick, December 26, 1878

Ray,

Lizzie G., Hay 19, 1878, 2 years

Reed,

Edward H., February 12, 1876, 12 years

Son of D.W., August 2, 1876, 7 months

Royce,

Leonard, November 3, 1877, 2 years

Sayles,

Hattie, February 5, 1877, 5 years

Schell,

Matilda, December 18, 1877, 15 months

Schwartz,

Marksey, November 7, 1877, 7 years

Scott,

Nancy, January 10, 1878, 2 years

Senate,

Bob, June 27, 1877, 6 years

Shelby,

Lizzle, January 31, 1877, 11 years

Silveria,

Antonio, February 14, 1878, 8 months

Simms,

Wade, September 25, 1877, 11 months

Sloan,

Charles W., January 21, 1877, 6 years

Clarence J., January 22, 1877, 2 years

Smith,

Daughter of C., June 18, 1877, 6 years

Georgie E., December 12, 1877, 3 years

Steen,

Amy, December 1, 1877, 14 years

Stow,

Clara B., October 5, 1877, 2 years

Stratford,

Evylyn, August 13, 1876, 6 years

Struve,

Emma, September 21, 1876, 7 months

Tanner,

Child of Mr., June 1877

Therwachter,

Charlie, January 28, 1878, 3 years

Tucker,

Abbie F., July 9, 1877, 6 weeks

Susie, March 9, 1877, 2 years

Tufts,

Henry, April 30, 1877, 2 years

Rufus, May 29, 1877, 3 years

Warren, 2 years

Turner,

Joseph S., December 3, 1876, 8 months

Vasquez,

Rose L., November 5, 1876, 6 years

Wagner,

Lena, October 9, 1877, 2 years

Weeks,

George A., October 19, 1877, 7 years

Wente,

Ann, August 3, 1876, 1 month

Werner,

Child of C.F., December 1, 1877, 3 months

Whinery,

Harry R., December 6, 1876, 5 years

Martha E., December 8, 1876, 7 years

White,

High L., July 13, 1877, 3 years

Wiley,

Maggie, February 2, 1877, 17 years

Wimken,

Annie, December 7, 1877, 9 years

Young,

Bertie H., December 4, 1877, 4 years

Footnotes

*Other sources indicate that the child's name was Jacob and that the date of death and father's name given here are incorrect. From "Between the Redwoods and the Bay" by George J. Fogelson (SC Museum of Art and History, 2017): "Isaac Fleisig (1852-1919) married Sarah Horwitz (1854-1936) in New York in 1873. They left Brooklyn two months after the birth of their son Harry on September 16, 1873, and settled in Soquel by 1874. Tragedy struck when their infant son Jacob died in Soquel the following year. He is among the first burials at the cemetery. His grave reads 'Infant Fleisig, son of I. & S. Fleisig, died January 26, 1878, aged 5 months.'

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