



CALIFORNIA

HISTORY OF KEYSTONE CEMETERY

By M. M. Griffith

Maple Spring House, built by Pete Labadie, was kept as a hotel until 1860, when the road built by Atcheson and Rice turned the traffic from Maple Spring Road, the first road above Keystone Ranch. At one time, Keystone Ranch was the end of the road. Beyond that point, pack trains took goods and supplies to the mountains.

In 1876 the Keystone Ranch was owned by Woods and Atcheson. Since the first headstone in Keystone Cemetery is marked to Martha Atcheson 1853, we can assume that these graves were the private burial place of the Atcheson family. Later, as an epidemic of diphtheria caused more need for a community burial ground, the Atcheson family gave the first deed to the ground. At that time, the Railroad Company had deed to all odd sections of land in this part of the county, including Section 19. They sold the land to the Dutra family, who also gave deed to the cemetery.

In 1913 a man named B. L. Jones found that 160 acres of land was open for homestead location and he filed on the 160 acres, which took in parts of several ranches which had been owned by others for many years. This included land owned by Martha M. Clark (later Mrs. Wesley Griffith). She did not have a real title; however, she had paid taxes on the land for 15 or 16 years. In completing his title, Mr. Jones released 40 acres to Mrs. Clark and that included the cemetery. She filed on the land and when the Government gave final title to her and to Mrs. Jones, they gave a joint deed of $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres in the cemetery to Yuba County. A Cemetery Association was formed, which included the region from Stanfield Hill to Oregon Hill in length and 10 miles in width from the Yuba River south. This also took in the burial place used by the pioneer people of this section of Yuba County.

Several local residents at different times took partial care of the burial ground. Lewis Wilder, Frank Page and others were interested. At their deaths, school trustees and Mrs. Clark Griffith kept some record of the place until the Cemetery Association was formed and the Yuba County Supervisors appointed a Board of Trustees, who hired a caretaker. Many improvements were made under this new system, including wells and a sprinkler system. A few years later, Alvin and Ruth Clark, who lived across the road, were appointed caretakers and they continued in this position for a period of twenty years or more until their deaths in October of 1984.

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