

THE HISTORY OF CENTREVILLE

CHAPTER 1

1850 to 1859

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* **BIOS** *

George A Lloyd & Frank Pepe / John Miers Horner / Robert Blacow / John J. Riser / Charles Breyfogle / Captain George W. Bond / Reverend William Wallace Brier / Charles Hilton / Howard Overacker / James Beazell / William H. Coombs / James Allen Trefry / Chauncy & Charlotte Cornell / Luther Osgood / Dr. James M. Selfridge / Charles Kelsey / Herman Eggers / James Hawley / Dr. Benjamin F. Bucknell / William Wales / Andrew J. McLeod / Henry Dusterberry / Edward Niehaus / Garrett Norris / William Barry / (Capt.) Jotham S. Marston / Samuel I. Marston / Calvin J. Stevens / James Lewis / Jacob Salz / Daniel H. Beck / William Milton

George A Lloyd & Frank Pepe:

Credit given to the first settlers in Centreville was first mentioned by M.W. Wood in his 1883 book and later expounded upon by the ladies of the Country Club in their 1904 history:

"The first men to locate within the limits of the present town, early in 1850, were George Lloyd, an Englishman, and Frank Pepe, an Italian. Mr. Lloyd brought his family with him, and for a time lived in a blue tent. Here he served refreshments to the weary traveler who passed his way. At one time he had a gate across the road, presumably to delay the passer-by and call his attention to the wayside retreat. He afterwards built a good frame house, which was still in use as a part of the residence of Mr. Benjamin Mickle. Frank Pepe worked for George Lloyd for a time, but afterward bought a ranch near Jarvis' Landing, which he subsequently sold to C. S. Haley."

George Lloyd also gave freely to the little town of Centreville. In 1853 he gave a 2.5 acre lot to house the new Presbyterian Church which was to be built in 1855. In September 1858 he deeded property to the town to be used as a cemetery to replace the one that had been lost to time.

In February 1857 George Lloyd and a man named Charles Kempster got into a shooting affray. At one time in the early 1850's there had been a teacher in Centreville by the name Kempster, but I could not determine whether Kempster the teacher was the same man involved in the attempted shooting of George Lloyd. Now

follows the shooting affray between Lloyd and Kempster as related in the newspapers:

"One Kempster deliberately walked into the yard at the residence of Mr. G.A. Lloyd and accused him of having circulated reports derogatory to his (Kempster's) character, and (he) was answered in the affirmative. Without further ceremony, Kempster drew from beneath his cloak a revolver and shot at Lloyd when within three feet of his person; but fortunately the pistol was thrown up by his hand and the shot passed over. Lloyd then rushed past Kempster towards the house, but before he gained thirty feet, the latter discharged two more shots at him without effect. By this time Lloyd gained the whereabouts of his double barreled shotgun loaded with snipe-shot and returning with it, leveled it at Kempster, while Kempster leveled the pistol and shot at him a fourth time. The latter shot was without effect and he received from Lloyd the contents of a shotgun in the face (shooting away an eye of Kempster's). Wheeling about to beat a retreat, Kempster received the contents of the second barrel in the back. Kempster was led off the field by a person whom he had invited to witness the affair."

It was not until February 1858 that Charles Kempster was apprehended in Northern California and taken to jail in San Leandro. In May 1858 the trial began and it was then revealed what had started the shooting affray. It appears that George Lloyd had accused Kempster of adultery with his wife. When Kempster questioned Lloyd and Lloyd admitted in the affirmative he had started the rumor the shooting began.

On May 22, 1858 the jury found Kempster guilty of assault with a deadly weapon. Lloyd, a man of impeccable character, was not charged.

Frank Pepe, who was Lloyd's associate in 1850, was born in Italy circa 1825. He married an Irish woman named Mary Anne and they had a son, Vincent, who was born in 1869. Frank moved out of Centreville and bought 85 acres of farmland adjacent to Jarvis Landing. He later sold this to C.S. Haley, who had accumulated large property holdings north of Newark.

John Miers Horner:

The two gentlemen above are given credit for being first in Centreville and there is no doubt that they were early settlers. Another gentlemen of note had preceded Lloyd & Pepe to Washington Township and Centreville. This man was John Miers Horner of New Jersey, who had arrived in San Francisco (then known as Yerba Buena) on July 31, 1846 aboard the ship Brooklyn with a group of several hundred Mormons. Horner became a farmer on the ex-Mission lands in the late 1840's and struggled mightily to fence his lands from the predation of the cattle that roamed the lands freely. By 1849 he was making a profit from his farming venture about the ex-mission property. He built a home in today's Irvington, becoming one of the earliest resident of that town.

In 1850 John Horner was joined by his brother William and for the year 1850 their gross sales from their operation neared \$150,000. They bought some land west of New Haven (Alvarado) and created the little town of Union City. He improved the landing the padres of the Mission had used to trade with Yankee whalers who would row up the Alameda Creek in their long boats to trade for fresh vegetables and fruit. This landing became known as the Union City Landing and here John Horner would build a dock on the Alameda Creek with warehouses for commercial goods.

But John Horner also helped build Centreville. He, like other farmers of the era, created a maze of small farm roads over his properties and these farm roads met at

Centreville where he had built storage sheds and repair shops for his farm equipment. He also built a Mormon Chapel in Centreville prior to 1850, which he generously lent out to the Presbyterian and Methodist parishes of Centreville. John Horner also laid out the first cemetery in Centreville, but after several years it was lost to a fire which destroyed the wooden markers.

John bought a little steamship, the Union, and in September 1861 he started a steamship service from Union City to San Francisco, going to San Francisco on one day and then returning to Union City the following day. The steamer made three round trips a week, but did not run on the Sabbath. In October 1851 John Horner first scheduled stage line that served San Francisco, Union City, Centreville, the Mission San Jose, and the pueblo at San Jose.



John Horner built this landing in 1851 at the place where the Mission Padres used to trade with Yankee whalers before the coming of the Europeans. Horner built the landing, which he used in conjunction with a stage line through to the Mission and City of San Jose. Later this landing would be used by Capt. Benson and Capt. Barron.

After a very successful year of farming in 1851 John sent William back to New Jersey to bring the entire Horner Family (except one brother) to Washington Township. In 1852 William Horner returned from New Jersey with the entire Horner family, including Stacy and Sarah Horner, mother and father to the Horner family. They all settled in Washington Township and were all included in the Santa Clara County 1852 census. Included with the family was Joseph Ralph, husband to Fanetta Horner Ralph, the older sister of John Horner. The Ralph's settled in Alvarado and John Ralph Jr., grandson of Joseph Ralph, retired from his general merchandising store in Alvarado in 1950. Stacy Horner went on to build one of the first houses in Centreville according to Joseph E. Baker in his book, *Past & Present of Alameda County* published in 1914.

In 1853 John Horner built his celebrated steam powered flour mill in Union City for which he won a prize for producing the best flour milled in California as judged by a group of New York merchants. This earned Horner a silver goblet as prize. When Horner's fortunes began to dwindle after the potato glut of 1852 John sold the mill, which eventually ended up in the hands of Calvin J. Stevens in 1859. Stevens, who later would open a general store in Alvarado, would open a general merchandising store in Centreville before finally locating to Livermore.

John Horner's exploits in Washington Township garnered him two nicknames, "The Father of Union City," and "California's First Farmer." The financial panic of 1857 severely hurt John Horner's operation and in 1879 he relocated to Hawaii with his family. There he enjoyed some success in the cane sugar industry. John died in Hawaii on May 14, 1907.

From the ladies at the Country Club in their book *The History of Washington Township* we get the following description of Centreville's first school:

"In 1850, Mr. John M. Horner built a school house on the lot now occupied by the United States Hotel. The first teacher was Mr. Harvey Green, and after him a Mr. Kempster taught, and a Miss Longfellow from New England. Here the children gathered, some of them walking two and three miles from the scattered homes in the valley."

From one of the pupils we have this account of those early school days from the same book:

"We, my sister, two cousins, and I, started early in the morning, and cheerfully walked the three long miles of lonely road, with the tall mustard growing high above our heads on either side. The school house was a small, plain, unpainted building, with homemade desks and benches for the older pupils. Not yet arrived at the dignity of a desk. I sat on one of the benches ranged around the sides of the room, and with others of like size and age dangled my feet from nine to four o'clock. At recess the older boys carried benches out to what is now the Presbyterian Church yard, and turning them upside down, coasted down the grass-covered banks of the old dry creek channel. Our teacher was Mr. Kempster. The first public school house was built back of the Crosby place, as the old residents say, "near the lagoon." This lagoon was merely a depression, connected with the present lagoon near Irvington by a swale, which in winter allowed the water to run from the larger to the smaller lagoon. Later the school house was moved to the corner of the Overacker place, where it was used until the present school house was built; the old one was then moved into town, where it is in use as a cyclery. The following is a partial list of the early instructors: Mrs. Jonathan Mayhew, Judge Stephen Nye, Frederick Dann, Frederick Campbell, Kirke Brier and many others."

Robert Blacow:

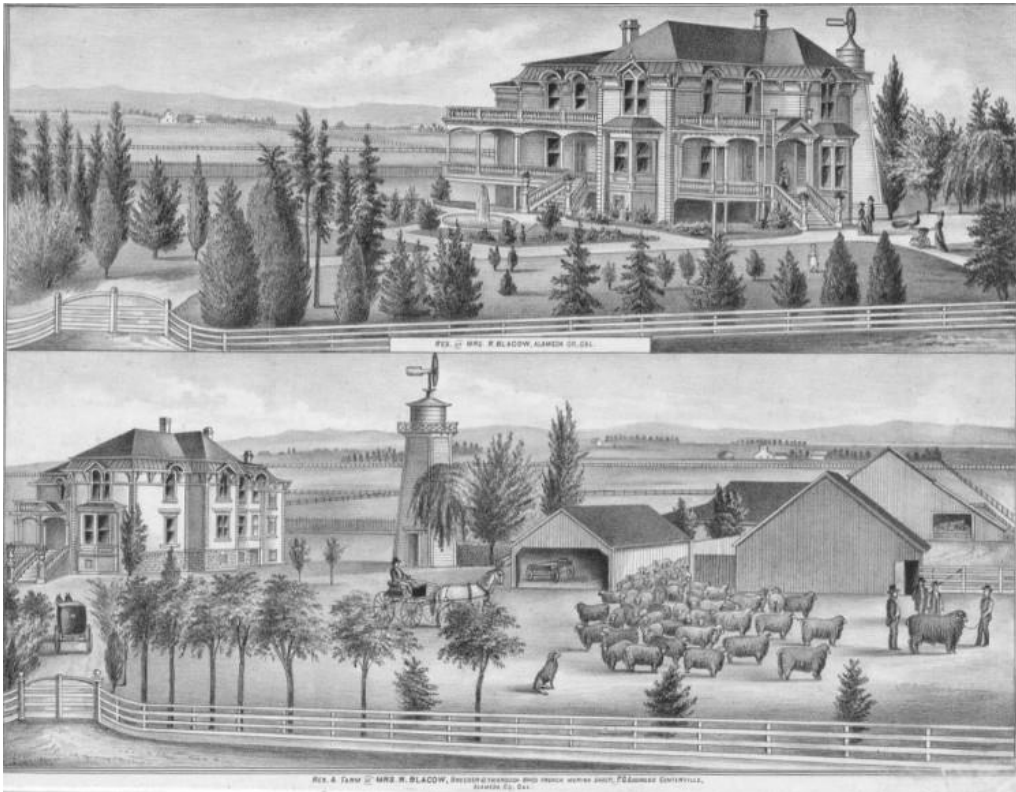
Robert Blacow arrived in Centreville in 1851 and was joined by his brother John. Together they put the name "Centreville" on the map. Robert Blacow was born in Kirkham, Lancashire England on December 6, 1814 where he remained until 1839 when he immigrated to the U.S. Robert settled in Centreville with his family and was joined by his brother John and wife Sophia. They both took to stock raising and then breeding fine livestock. In October 1859 the brothers took their stock to the Alameda County Fair where they walked away with eight awards for their cattle.

The Blacow brothers were progressive husbandry men, always looking to improve their blood line. In May 1860 the Blacow brothers took some of their fine Durham cows to Petaluma to be serviced by the valuable short-horn bull "Sir George" for \$600. But the Blacow's felt this was a small price to pay for improving their blood line. The Blacow's fine stock of short horns and Durham stock commanded good prices when offered for sale and any stock from the "Blacow blood line" were looked upon favorably by buyers.

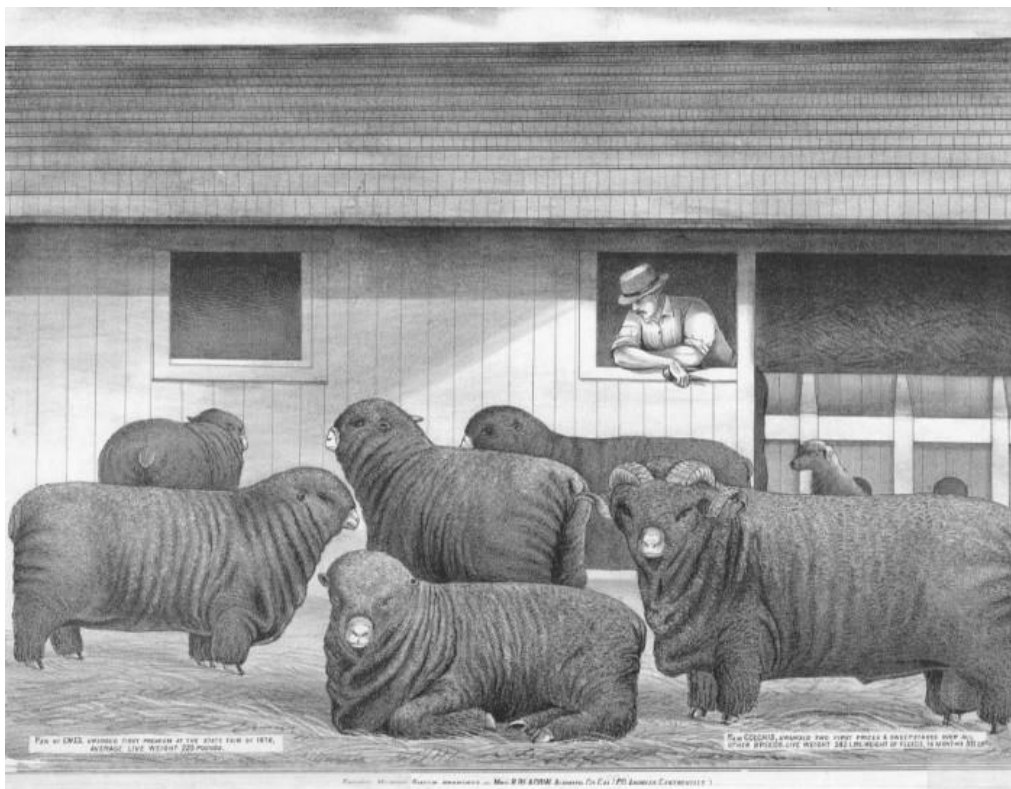
In 1871 the Blacow brothers again gained fame for their breeding of fine French Merino sheep. The original of his flock was a selection from the Rambouillet flock of France, and was brought to this State by J. D. Patterson, who expressed the opinion that they have largely improved in his (Mr. Blacow's) hands. Again any stock of French Merino sheep for sale by the Blacow brothers was looked upon favorably by buyers.

Unfortunately the business suffered a bit of a setback when Robert Blacow died on December 22, 1873. He left his wife Helen C. and children: William, Ellis, Mary,

Alfred, Frank, Edwin & Emma (twins), and Lincoln. Robert was a member of the Alameda Lodge #167 of Centreville Masons and also a member of the Washington Township Pioneers Association.



This is the residence and farm of Mrs. Robert Blacow from the 1878 Thompson & West Atlas.



These are the French Merino sheep of Mrs. Robert Blacow from the Thompson & West Atlas of 1878.

But Helen Blacow remained undaunted. She took over her husband's business and acquitted herself nicely with the help of her husband's foreman James Robert. In September 1879 Mrs. Blacow exhibited her French Merino sheep at the California State Fair. Mrs. Blacow took all seven prizes, there being no other winners in the French Merino sheep category other than Mrs. Blacow.

James Roberts was the ranch foreman for Robert Blacow, and he continued in this position after his death for Mrs. Blacow. He would eventually become owner of Robert Blacow's stock. In April 1889 there was a notice of a public sale of 79 rams, 280 ewes, and 180 lambs, which had an appraised value of \$9,195. The flock was identified as originally having been imported from by J.D. Patterson of Syracuse NY who sold it to Robert Blacow of Centreville. The owner of the stock was identified as James Roberts of Irvington, the former foreman for Robert Blacow. Mr. Roberts had passed away and the sale was part of his estate.

On October 10, 1896 Mrs. Helen C. (Deoring) Blacow passed away.

John J. Riser

Another early arriver in Centreville was John J. Riser, who was said to have arrived in Centreville in late 1851 or early 1852. John had married Miss Helen R. Allen of New York on December 25, 1848. The family eventually numbered six children: Catharine (Kittie), George C, Charles W., May Belle, Franklin A., and Helen R. Their daughter Helen died at the age of ten years. In October 1854 he acquired an 85-acre farm in Centreville on the west side of Blacow Road between Central and Thornton Avenues. Here he farmed until his retirement. His life had been successful and he became a capitalist after his farming days were done.

John Riser joined with William M. Liston, Charles Kelsey, William Barry, and Nathaniel Babb to call for a pioneer's meeting to take place at Centreville on Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 30, 1876) to discuss planning a Pioneer Society for early Washington Township pioneers. All who were in the township prior to 1853, ladies as well as gentlemen, were invited to be present.

Helen R. Riser died in Centreville on March 20, 1903. After the death of his wife John went to live with his oldest daughter Kittie (Catherine) and her husband William Yates. Here John Riser passed away on March 16, 1910.

Charles Breyfogle:

Charles and Joshua Breyfogle, from Lockhart, New York, joined the thousands of '49ers' rushing into California. The pair headed west with a train of saddle and draft horses and two wagons in the spring of 1849. They teamed up with other pioneers in Columbus Ohio and continued their long journey to the California goldfields. They reached Sacramento on August 14, 1849 and they soon began searching for gold on the Butte Creek and Chico River. They had some good fortune near Marysville California and by December 1850 Charles Breyfogle returned to New York with \$20,000.

In 1851 Charles returned to California and settled in Centreville. The ladies of the Country Club of Washington Township wrote in the history of Breyfogle:

"C. C. Breyfogle, one of the first county assessors, built the house that is now the Chadbourne home"

At the first court of Sessions of Alameda County held on June 3, 1853 C.C. Breyfogle was named supervisor of the 1st Road District, which encompassed two miles on either side of the road from Union City to Mission San Jose.

October 2, 1854 John Travis and S. H. Robinson were elected Associate Justices, while, at the same time, Assessor Goucher resigned and was succeeded by Charles W. Breyfogle.

The election returns of September 14, 1857 found that Charles Breyfogle was the winner of the office of Treasurer for the Alameda County.

William Halley in his "*Centennial Yearbook of Alameda County*"

"Rumors having become rife charging that all was not right in the Treasurer's office, a committee, consisting of Jonathan Mayhew and Sam. M. Davis, was appointed by the Board of Supervisors, to examine that officer's books, when it was discovered that his accounts showed defalcations in the office amounting to \$8,107.37. The wonder was what the Treasurer, Mr. Breyfogle, had done with the money; but when it is remembered that gambling was a prevalent vice among men, there ought to have been no great wonder how the money was squandered. Of course the county, possessing sufficient security, ultimately sustained no loss in funds."

On August 16, 1859 Alameda County officials demanded that Breyfogle deliver the keys to the treasury to them. He refused and continued to refuse until the hounding became unbearable upon which Breyfogle admitted his guilt and delivered the keys. When opened the treasury was empty. Breyfogle was arrested and jailed and in 1861. It appears he was found guilty although some accounts of his later life say he was quickly exonerated, and one account says he was pardoned by Governor Stanford.

The loss was eventually made good by the sureties, but not before lawsuits was made to make the treasury good. The efforts of the sureties to dodge their responsibility eventually cost them \$12,000 instead of the \$8,107 due to court costs, attorney fees and interest.

Charles had his fill of public office and he went to Nevada to hunt for gold. His experiences were varied and lengthy. If you wish to continue the story of Charles Breyfogle go the final article in this Chapter titled "The Lost Breyfogle Mine."

Captain George W. Bond:

Captain George W. Bond came to Centreville in 1852. He built one of the first homes in Centreville, contemporary with the home of Stacy Horner (father of John Horner). The Bond home was built across the street from the Stacy Horner home on the corners of the Newark and Oakland Roads (Thornton Avenue and Fremont Blvd).

Capt. Bond was born in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia on July 19, 1804, and at an early age took to the sea. He married Miss Francis Carter of Cheshire England in 1832. He tried settling down after marriage, but he soon returned to the sea faring life and in 1847 he lost his wife at home while he was sailing to West Africa. He then sailed for San Francisco in 1850 and in 1851 settled for a bit in Washington Township near Vallejo Mills.

In the spring of 1852 Capt. Bond went to the mines on the north fork of the American River, but returned in a few months. He opened the first store in Centreville, which offered for sale the curious combination of whisky, boots, and

codfish. The building was a little "ten by twelve" cabin, where later Captain Bond would build his home. In 1854 it was reported that Capt. Bond went into store-keeping again nearly opposite the Newark road, this time with his childhood friend Captain Valpey. From October 18, 1858 to November 12, 1861 Capt. Bond was the Postmaster for the town of Centreville.

After 1861 he was engaged in various occupations with the late Captain Calvin Valpey, purchasing in the latter year a part of Agua Caliente Rancho, on which Captain Valpey resided until his death, but Capt. Bond continuing to reside on his property at Centreville, engaged in various occupations, and holding for several years the offices of Justice of the Peace and Notary Public. In the year 1882 he, with his son Charles, purchased the well-known William Y. Horner Rancho, where they then resided, the Captain having rented his property at Centreville.

Captain George Bond was married at Neston Church, Cheshire, England, on the 28th day of August, 1832, his wife dying on the 20th day of April, 1847, leaving Captain Bond with five children: Eliza, Sarah, Charles; Maria, and Annie. Captain George W. Bond died on December 14, 1892.

Reverend William Wallace Brier:

Rev. Brier was born in Dayton Ohio on November 6, 1821 and was married to Elizabeth Naylor Brier of Indiana, who was born on August 20, 1830. They were married circa 1849. They would have five children: Lizzie, Mary, Carrie, William Jr., and Louisa.

In 1850 they took a ship to the Isthmus of Panama on their way to California. In August 1850 while in Panama several passengers from the Columbus Ohio perished from the journey. The Rev. William Brier held services over their earthly remains.

September 1850 the Rev. W.W. Brier was preaching in Marysville in the Court House. In the summer of 1852, he moved to the Mission of San Jose. His health had been broken by over-work for eighteen months, while he planted the church of Marysville. Mr. Brier, with his wife and child, lived in the Mission a few months where he taught the first public school for which funds were drawn from Santa Clara County, for Alameda County, as yet, had no existence.

In 1852 Rev. Brier came to Centreville and preached in the little chapel that John Horner had built for Mormon worshippers. John Horner generously lent out his chapel to the Methodists and Presbyterians every other week on Sunday mornings. John would then preach his sermon on Sunday afternoons. It was reported that John Horner preached the Mormon faith to thirty or forty people on Sunday afternoons, while Mr. Brier had twelve to fifteen hearers in the morning.

In the month of May, 1853 W.W. Brier was elected superintendent of schools for the new Alameda County.

In June of 1853 the interest in church services had so increased in Centreville that, on request, the following persons were organized into a Presbyterian church: Charles Hilton, Elizabeth A. Brier, Hannah Breyfogle, Chancey Cornell, Charlotte Cornell, Charles Kelsey, Mary C. Kelsey, Eliza Beard, and Dr. J. M. Selfridge. This church was called the Alameda Presbyterian Church, after the name of the creek. The Rev. William Brier was chosen pastor and Charles Hilton was chosen and ordained Elder.

On October 14, 1860 the new Presbyterian Church was built in Marysville, the first place the Rev. W.W. Brier preached his first sermon in California. One of his contemporaries took the podium to tell of his first view of Rev. Brier's Holy abode:

"It was in April 1851. Our brother, Rev. W.W. Brier invited us to his pulpit, a shabby desk in a forlorn and unfinished court House. A mere shell rather than a house. We remember how it was out of the city then, in the prairie where men went out a gunning, and how, in the midst of a sermon, some careless gunner gave the congregation the contents of his fowling piece through the window. Times have changed since then, greatly changed."

Rev. Brier would attend many Presbyterian Synods, moderating and leading many of them. His talents were much in demand and on February 12, 1871 in Laddsville (Livermore) at a meeting held in a school house he organized the First Presbyterian Church of that town. Rev. Brier had been preaching there for semimonthly for several months under direction of the Board of Home Missions.

The Rev. William W. Brier would pass away on June 3, 1887. Elizabeth Naylor Brier would pass away on January 16, 1920.

Charles Hilton:

Charles Hilton came to Centreville in 1852 where he was in business with James Beazell in the first blacksmith shop in Centreville. Here Charles was the wheelwright for the shop.

In June of 1853 the citizens of Centreville felt the need for a church and the following persons got together to organize a Presbyterian church. A meeting was held and the following people started the Centreville Presbyterian Church: Charles Hilton, Elizabeth A. Brier, Hannah Breyfogle, Chancey Cornell, Charlotte Cornell, Charles Kelsey, Mary C. Kelsey, Eliza Beard, and Dr. J. M. Selfridge. This church was called the Alameda Presbyterian Church, after the name of the creek. William Brier was chosen pastor and Charles Hilton was chosen and ordained Elder.

In September, 1858, on land given by George Lloyd, the Pioneer Cemetery of Centreville was founded, although burials had been made in it before then. The first trustees were: Charles Kelsey, Erastus Johnson, Charles Hilton, Dr. J. M. Selfridge and James Hawley.

On April 5, 1865 Charles Hilton died at the age of 42 years.

Howard & Dora Overacker:

Howard Overacker came to Centreville in November 1852 from his boyhood home of Sharon Michigan with a stopover at the gold country for six months. He stayed in Centreville until 1855 when he visited his boyhood home and returned with a young wife and his brother Michael J. Overacker who became his partner in farming operations.

In 1860 he revisited the home of his youth, taking with him his wife and child, and then returned to California in April of the same year. On arrival he purchased a farm of two hundred and sixty acres, situated about half a mile northeast of Centreville, where he extensively engaged in fruit-raising; his elegant residence was erected in 1867.

Here is where Howard Overacker made his home with his wife Miss Dora (Deborah) Monroe, a native of New York, whom he married in Jones County Iowa on January 28, 1856. They had the following family: Fleda (now Mrs. John A. Bunting), Howard, Jr., Kate, Elizabeth, and Michael Justice.



Howard was a leading farmer in the Washington Township area, and in this area alone his exploits are noteworthy. But Howard Overacker went beyond that, besides taking the lead with other key farmers in the township, he also took the lead in directing the county forward.

The County Board of Supervisors was organized on March 9, 1855, replacing the old Court of Sessions that had been the County's lead body since its initial meeting on June 5, 1853 at Alvarado. In 1862 Howard Overacker was elected County Supervisor, an office he held until 1866. In 1871 he was again elected, and continued to hold that position until 1880 when he was succeeded by Henry Dusterberry, also a resident of Centreville.

The year following being elected to the Board of Supervisors Alameda Lodge No. 167, F. and A. M., was organized on September 9, 1863. The order erected Masonic Hall on the Niles Road on a lot given by Howard Overacker. The lower floor was used for a banquet room, and the second floor had a pleasant lodge room and different anterooms.

In October 1868 *The Sacramento Daily Union* printed this article of the harrowing experience of Howard Overacker that nearly cost him life:

"Howard Overacker, in company with his brother and two friends, went on a hunting trip last week in the hills about fifty miles south of Gilroy. While in a rough bush place the men became separated for a time, Overacker being alone. Hearing a rustling in the bush behind him he turned around and saw a grizzly bear almost upon him. So sudden was the attack that before he could bring his gun to bear on the bruin, it was knocked from his hand by the infuriated brute and he was thrown to the earth without any means of defense and mangled his limbs and shoulder in a terrible manner before his comrades could come to his aid. The bear dragged him a considerable distance before his companions discovered him. The injured man had to be carried three or four miles before any habitation could be reached, and he was very weak from loss of blood. He now lies in a very critical condition, but it is hoped that his injuries may not prove fatal."

Howard, did of course, recover from this terrible incident and he continued forward with taking care of his family, his farm, the township, and the county. On May 17, 1871 Howard was one the group that included W. W. Brier, William Whidden, John Whipple, John L. Stevens, John L. Beard, Ebenezer H. Dyer, Samuel I. Marston, and B. D. T. Clough that incorporated the Washington & Murray Township Water Company. The company was formed to stop the Spring Valley Water Co. from building a dam and diverting water from the Alameda Creek to the people of San Francisco. After two years of negotiation a compromise was reached and Spring Valley was allowed to go forward.

On November 18, 1873 a group of farmers from Washington Township organized the Centreville Grange #120. Charter members included: Robert Blacow, B.D.T. Clough, Emeline Tyson, E.T. Randall, F.B. Granger (Alvarado), Comfort Healey, John Proctor, Nathaniel Babb, E. Niehaus, Rufus Denmark, Mary Denmark, A.S. Clark, William Healey, John Lowrie, Howard Overacker, Michael J. Overacker, and Mrs. C. Overacker.

In 1880 Howard would relinquish his seat on the Board of Supervisors to pursue pursuits closer to home. Besides his farm he was a member of the Centreville Grange, and a member of the Centreville School Board, a seat he gave up in 1901. In 1891 he was elected an officer the Farmer's Alliance.

Mrs. Dora Overacker:

Mrs. Dora Overacker, as true of any great pioneering family, also contributed heavily to the betterment of her community. In May 1871 the local St. James Sewing Society met at the home of Mrs. Overacker and continued to meet there for the next 20 years. For the first 18 years the society was led by Mrs. Overacker, who turned the gavel over to Mrs. Mosher in 1869. Mrs. Overacker had for years proved a wise, efficient, and beloved official.

In August 1892 a group of ladies from Centreville gathered together to right a wrong. The Centreville Town Hall, which had been founded by the donation of private funds, had fallen into private hands that was not controlled by the public, nor was it used for the good of the public. The good ladies of Centreville banded together to win back the Town Hall. The directors for the Ladies Town Hall Association of Centreville that were chosen: Mary Gregory, Dora Overacker, Louise Overacker, Susan S. Milton, Caroline P. Simpson, Laura Beck, Hester Trefry, and Mary Matheson.

Centreville also had a chapter of the "Good Citizens Club." Dora Overacker was active in this organization and in a meeting held in August 1896 she was chosen as one of the three delegates to the annual county convention along with Mrs. Mary C. Allen, and Mrs. Clara Patterson.

The Overacker's were also known for their hospitality and gala parties. In April 1898 they gave a church social at their home that was attended by nearly 100 people. The large rooms were taxed to the fullest extent and all enjoyed themselves. The young people played games, then music was enjoyed by all. Miss Evelyn Bunting and Harry Salz charmed them with instrumental music; Allen Borst, Roy Denny, and Miss Amy Gregory gave vocal selections, G. Scoville of Stanford University gave several violin selections accompanied by the voice of Miss Gregory. This was followed by a farce, "April Fool" in which Clyde Smith and Harold Rogers distinguished themselves as the two noisy boys.

The Overacker's followed this up the following year with a Halloween special. A Christian Endeavor "Ghost Social" was given at Overacker's and was considered a rousing success. The grounds in front of the house were decorated by pumpkins and Japanese lanterns, which was a beautiful sight from the road. As the guests entered the house they were met by five ghosts, who silently conducted them to the dressing rooms. The program was as follows: Music: Miss Evelyn Bunting; Recitation: Muriel Plummer; Band: The Seven Shades; Recitation: Bessie Reisinger; Music: Harold Rogers. After this came games and refreshments.

Howard Overacker, who born on November 21, 1828, passed away on May 22, 1911. Mrs. Deborah Overacker was born on November 14, 1834, passed away on August 29, 1923.

James Bezell:

James Bezell came to California in July, 1852 and settled in Washington Township where he started the first blacksmith shop in Centreville. He subsequently moved to Irvington, where he carried on business as a member of the manufacturing firm of Bezell, Crowell & Rix. Several years later he established a branch of the business in the new town of Livermore, where he would settle permanently, gaining success in his business and the esteem of his neighbors. On the retirement of Mr. Neal from the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, in 1874, Mr. Bezell was elected as his replacement for his seat for Murray Township. He was then elected State Senator in 1875 and resigned the position of Supervisor. James Bezell was born circa 1830 in Pennsylvania. He was married to Ms. Cora Veirs and had two children, Blanche and Mabel. He passed away in Livermore on August 23, 1892.

William H. Coombs:

William H. Coombs came to Centreville in 1852 and built a home that was later the home of Mrs. James Emerson. In May 1853 William Coombs was elected as the first District Attorney for Alameda County. The County seat then was at Alvarado and on June 3, 1853 at the first Court of Sessions for Alameda County Mr. Coombs, the District Attorney elect, produced his license as attorney and counselor at law, and was duly admitted to practice in open court.

Very little has been found for William H Coombs. The only other information I could locate on him came from Noble Hamilton, Oakland Judge, who had married the daughter of Capt. J.S. Marston of Alvarado. He also had a law office in Alvarado in 1853. Judge Hamilton's recollection of William Coombs:

"Mr. Coombs, known as "Black Hawk Coombs," was the first District Attorney; Captain J.S. Marston was the first County Treasurer, and Andrew H. Broder, called "Tom Snooks," was the first Sheriff, whose duty it was to also collect taxes."

Judge Hamilton also shared a story of when he was a lawyer trying cases at the Alameda County Court House in San Leandro with fellow lawyer Wm. Coombs.

"Sol Hopkins, a one armed man residing at Alvarado, was Justice of the Peace, and as a sample of how justice was administered in those days, I will relate an incident that occurred in his court in 1873. Hamilton & Coombs, lawyers, had their office in one corner of the room used for a district courtroom and in important cases also by the Justice of the Peace. There was a case being tried before Judge Hopkins and a jury. Hamilton & Coombs were on one side and W.C. Pease on the other side. In the midst of the trial a box of champagne, sent to Hamilton & Coombs by J.J. Vallejo, who had just received news of the

granting of his patent (legalizing his Mexican Land Grant), was brought into the courtroom.

The Justice immediately adjourned court for five minutes, as he said, for the purpose of ascertaining what the basket contained, thereupon it was opened and one half of the bottles were disposed of, the court, jury, parties, witnesses and attorneys on both sides of the case assisting in the operation, after which the case proceeded. A reasonable time having elapsed, another adjournment was had, when the remaining bottles were sampled, and disposed of as before. It is needless to say that Hamilton & Coombs won the case."

Unfortunately, nothing else could be found for this colorful lawyer.

James Allen Trefry:

J.A. Trefry was first known in Washington Township as Capt. J.A. Trefry, Master of the steamboat "Union" for John Horner at the Union City Landing. Capt. Trefry was the third Master of the "Union" after it was initially berthed at Union City. Capt. J.A. Trefry took command of the little steamboat on Jan 29, 1853 and commanded her until July 10, 1854 when the Union made her last trip from San Francisco to Union City under the agency of John Horner. On February 6, 1855 the Union again made her trips from San Francisco to Union City under Capt. Charles Thorn February 6, 1855 under the agency of Spang & Blake for several months and then the Union was sold and made some trips from San Francisco to Alviso in San Clara County.

J.A. Trefry was born in Nova Scotia in June 1828. His wife Hester was born in New York in 1848. They show children, Ella, Lotta, and Elizabeth and a son William.

The ladies of the country club noted that:

"Captain James R. Trefry came to the township at an early day and was captain of the steamer "Union," which ran from Alvarado (Union City) to San Francisco and other points. He built one of the first houses in Centreville and was constable for many years and a terror to evil doers. He has a fund of interesting reminiscences of pioneer days; in 1902 he moved to Newark where he still resides."

Between the times James Trefry left the steamer Union and before he became Constable in 1870, he spent some years as a farmer in Centreville. By 1870 he had been voted Constable for the Centreville District, it would be a calling he followed for some twenty years. But these were not his only duties he performed for the people of Centreville. In 1883 he was appointed road overseer for the Centreville District and then he was appointed Centreville Poundmaster on May 1, 1888.

Constable Trefry was shot and severely wounded on April 18, 1892 at Centreville by H. Compton that occurred in a dispute over a cow of Compton's, which Trefry had impounded. Compton immediately afterward started toward Niles where he worked, but though the country was scoured by constables and Deputy Sheriff's, he could not be found. It was believed that, as he appeared a little demented, he may have killed himself. It is said he had a son in the Stockton Asylum.

On September 25, 1893 Deputy Sheriff James A. Trefry of Centreville shot and instantly killed an Indian whom he was bringing to the County Jail at 4:30 p.m. Trefry had the Indian in custody on a commitment made out by the Justice of the Peace. The Indian had been sentenced to serve thirty days in the County Jail, and Trefry was bringing the fellow to prison in a buggy when the prisoner became unruly

and made a violent attack on the officer. The Indian tried to get at Trefry's pistol, and in the fierce struggle that followed for the possession of the weapon both men were thrown out of the buggy onto the ground. The fight was there renewed in earnest, and the Indian got the pistol, leveled it at the officer and was about to fire when by a quick move Trefry turned it on the prisoner, who shot himself through the heart. The wounded man died instantly. Coroner Evers was notified and took charge of the body. J.A. Trefry had been an officer of the peace for nearly twenty years. He had acted as constable and Deputy Sheriff and has a high reputation for bravery and reliability.

In January 1895, S.B. Vandevort defeated J.A. Trefry by 3 votes (365 to 362) for the position of Constable for Centreville.

James A. Trefry passed away on October 3, 1910. He was a member of the Centreville Grange, No. 120; the Alameda Lodge No. 167, F. and A.M.; he was a charter member of Centreville Council No.34, I.O.C.F.; and he was one of the founding members of the Washington Township Pioneer Society of that included Charles Kelsey, John Riser, E. Ross, E. Munyan, E. Niehaus, C. C. Scott, W. H. Cockefair, D. C. Bane, G. W. Bond, and William Barry.

Chauncy & Charlotte Cornell:

Chauncy and Charlotte Cornell first appear in Centreville in June 1853 when locals of Centreville, including Chauncy and Charlotte, came together to establish the Presbyterian Church in Centreville. Chauncy was from New York and was born circa 1814, and Charlotte was born in England circa 1818.

After the establishment of the Presbyterian Church Charlotte noticed that there were no or very sporadic church services held for the citizens of Alvarado. Charlotte began a campaign in Alvarado to found a Presbyterian Church. Through her untiring efforts a Presbyterian Church was established in Alvarado and was dedicated in 1860. For her efforts the church was known as "Charlottes Temple."

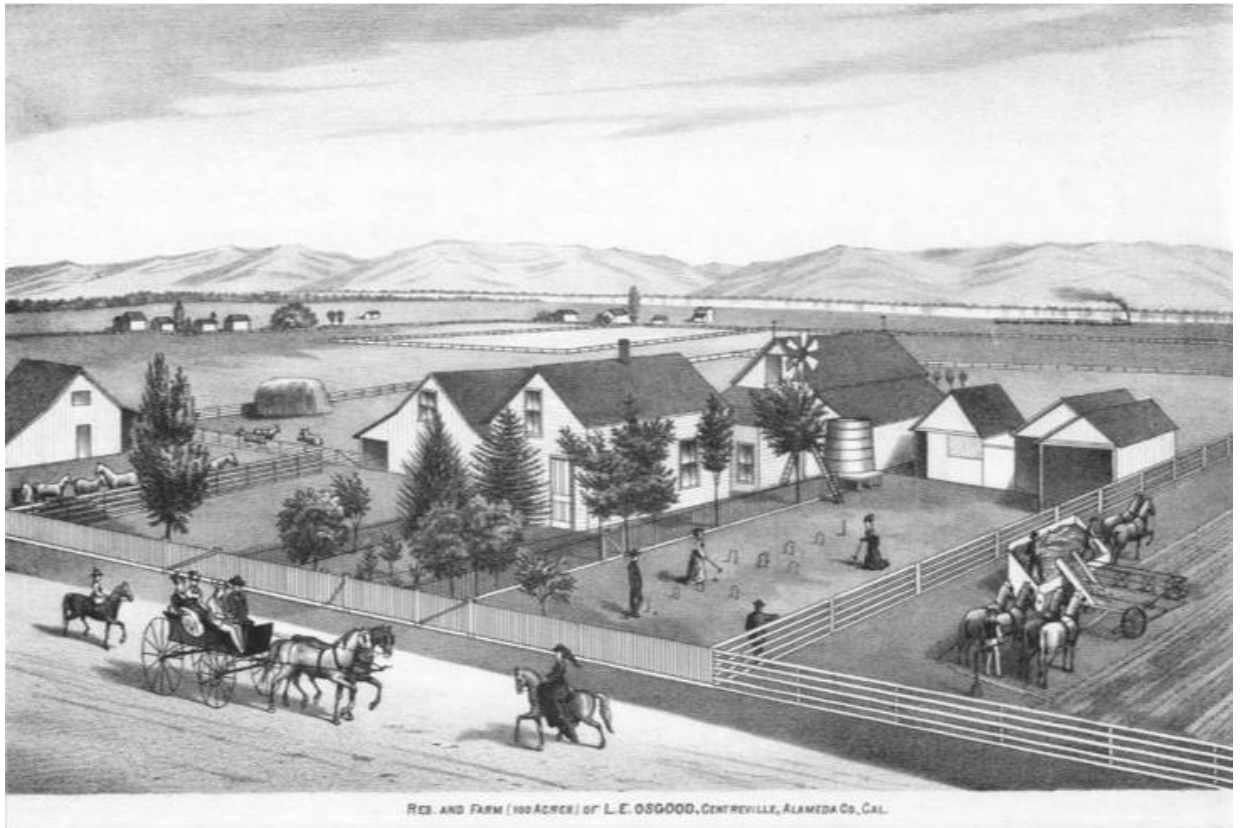
Circa 1863 the Cornell's moved to San Francisco where Chauncy became employed by the Spring Valley Water Co. While in Centreville Chauncy had been a merchant.

Luther Osgood:

Luther Osgood was born at Blue Hill, Maine on June 17, 1831. In November, 1852 he sailed from New York on his way to California. On the Isthmus the poetry of travel commenced to wear away. Half of the journey across was performed on foot; however, the Pacific shore was attained, and thence taking passage on the Golden Gate, the city of San Francisco was reached December 17, 1852. In January, 1853, Mr. Osgood came to Centreville, found employment with a Mr. Torrey for one year, and subsequently found various occupations in different places until November, 1857, when he returned to the scenes of his youth in the State of Maine, married, and in the following May returned to the Golden State. Coming to Alameda County at this time, 1858, he located on the place to which he had come in 1853, situated at today's Mowry and Blacow Roads, which comprised one hundred acres. In 1874 he purchased the Morgan Ranch, adjoining his property.

In 1880 he transferred his residence to Washington Corners (Irvington), where he purchased of Judge A. M. Crane the property on the San Jose road, on which he now resides. In the fall of 1875, Mr. Osgood was elected to the office of Township Assessor was chosen to fill that position for no less than four terms. He is a charter member of the Washington Township Pioneer Association, and has been its Treasurer

ever since organization. Married in Blue Hill, February 7, 1858 to Miss Sarah P. Hinckley, a native of Maine, by whom he has had a family of two children: Annie E. (deceased), and Blanche A. The twenty-fifth anniversary of their marriage was duly celebrated February 7, 1883.



The farm of Luther Osgood

Dr. James M. Selfridge:

James M. Selfridge was born in New York State circa 1823. In 1850 James was attending medical school in Fayette, Seneca County, New York. His wife Elizabeth was also born in New York circa 1826. They had four children that I could locate: Mary born circa 1855, Arthur circa 1858 and twins born Centreville in 1863, a boy and a girl. Their first two children were born in New York.

From the "*The History of Washington Township*," by the ladies of Country Club comes this description of Dr. Selfridge

"Dr. J. M. Selfridge was the first physician to take up a regular practice in the township. His practice was large, and he was one of the familiar features of the time as he rode about the country in his sulky, visiting the sick. He was prominent in church and school work, and was ever ready with a helping hand for those who needed assistance or encouragement."

Dr. Selfridge first appears in Centreville in June 1853 when he joined local townspeople in organizing the Presbyterian Church. After the church was erected Dr. Selfridge remained active in the Presbyterian Church. On October 1, 1862 the Synod of Alta California met in San Francisco. Attending the synod from Centreville were Rev. W.W. Brier and Dr. Selfridge, Elder. In 1858 to 1860 Dr. Selfridge was the coroner for Alameda County.

The present cemetery was laid out in September, 1858, on land given by G. A. Lloyd, although burials had been made in it before then. The first trustees were: Charles Kelsey, Erastus Johnson, Charles Hilton, Dr. J. M. Selfridge and James Hawley. Many old settlers are buried within these quiet borders whose names are familiar to those now living some of them have borne prominent parts in the history of this part of the State.

In October 1868 a strong earthquake struck the East Bay with tremendous damage done at various places. The Presbyterian Church was so badly damaged that it had to be rebuilt. C.J. Stevens' store fell, and Milton's hotel slid from it's under pinning's. All over the valley, chimneys fell or were twisted completely around. The back part of Dr. Selfridge's house, which was built of concrete, was thrown down. The family then moved to Oakland, where the Dr. Selfridge had relocated some two years before.

Charles Kelsey:

Charles Kelsey first appears in Centreville in June 1853 when he, and his wife Mary joined local townspeople in organizing the Presbyterian Church.

Charles Kelsey was born in Connecticut circa 1807. His wife Mary was also born in Connecticut circa 1806. They had one son, Noah, born circa 1845 also in Connecticut. By 1850 Charles had come to California where he located in El Dorado County where he was mining for gold. At this time he gave his net worth at \$10,000.

The Kelsey's had a farm on what would be today's Peralta Blvd just about midway between Centreville and Niles. The Alameda Creek flowed on the back side of their property and the highway of the early settlers from San Antonio (East Oakland) to San Jose followed the most direct route practicable through the Alameda Valley. From a ford of Alameda Creek, just back of the Kelsey place, trails led across the country to the embarcaderos along the Bay.

As stated above the Kelsey's were instrumental in organizing the Centreville Presbyterian Church in June 1853. On February 24, 1855, Charles Kelsey was elected a trustee of the Presbyterian Church along with J. A. Mayhew, Jesse Beard, Henry Clark, and Chauncey Cornell. Immediate measures were then taken to build a house of worship; the preacher acting as solicitor of funds and superintendent of work. The effort was successful, and on January 27, 1856, the brick church twenty-four by forty-four was dedicated, at a cost of \$3,300.

The present cemetery was laid out in September, 1858, on land given by G. A. Lloyd, although burials had been made in it before then. The first trustees were: Charles Kelsey, Erastus Johnson, Chas. Hilton, Dr. J. M. Selfridge and James Hawley. Many old settlers are buried within these quiet borders whose names are familiar to those now living—some of them have borne prominent parts in the history of this part of the State. The names inscribed on the old tombstones bring up many a picture and memory of bygone days.

On November 30, 1876 the Pioneer Association of Washington Township was planned at a meeting held on Thanksgiving Day in Centreville. The organization of this association was first suggested by William Barry and W. Morris Liston. The meeting was held on Thanksgiving Day, November 30th, at Centreville, the following persons being present: Charles Kelsey, John J. Riser, J.A. Trefry, E. Ross, E. Munyan, E. Niehaus, C.C. Scott, Wm Cockefair, D.C. Bane, G.W. Bond, and William Barry.

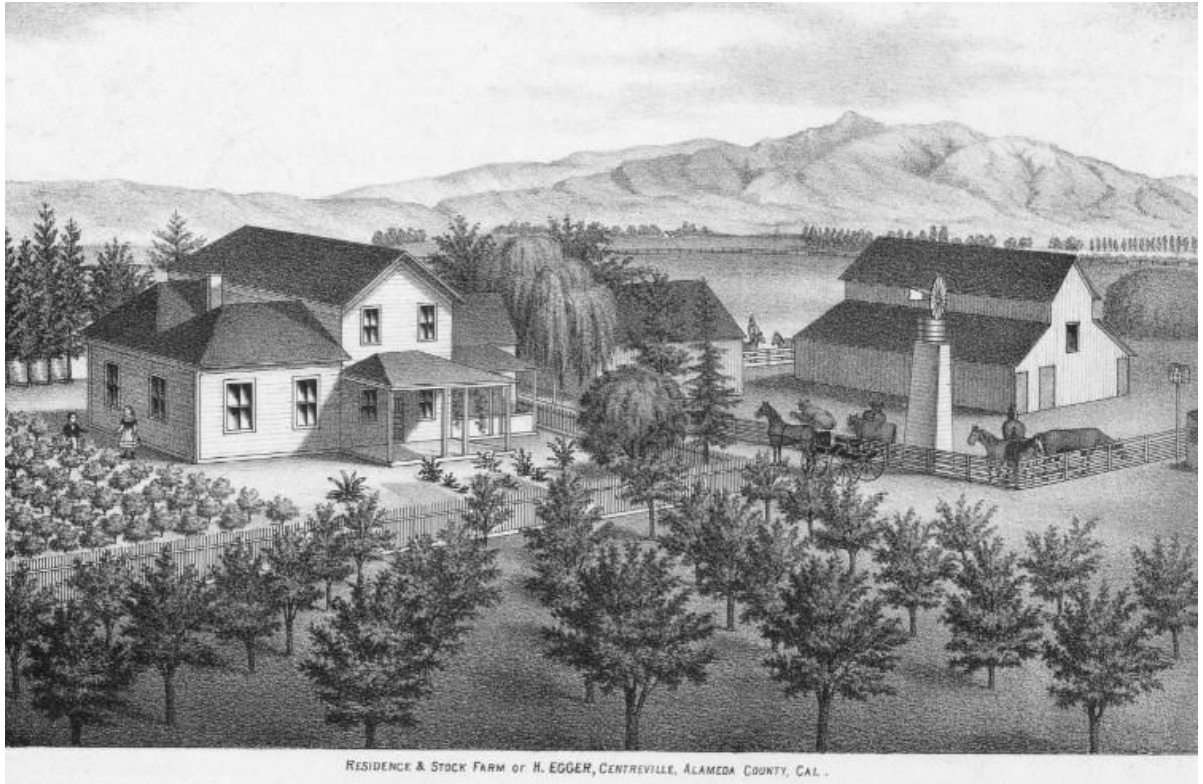
Charles Kelsey suffered a grievous loss on July 9, 1874 when a fire broke out on a stack of hay on his property. It burnt about 700 sacks of barley lying nearby, a fine

driving horse, and a saddle horse. The fire occurred because of the carelessness of two boys, who were out hunting and allowed the wads from their guns to remain burning near a stack of hay. The boys were fined \$10 each for trespassing.

On January 24, 1867 Mrs. Mary C. Kelsey passed away her 64th year. I could not locate a date of passing for Charles Kelsey.

Herman Eggers:

Herman Eggers was born in Germany on April 19, 1823. At sixteen years of age he started his training to become a bricklayer and in 1844 he immigrated to the United States. He first settled in Perry County, Missouri, where he passed the winter of 1844-45, and then in the spring moved to St. Louis, where he worked at his trade for a time.



The Herman Eggers home from the Thompson & West Atlas of 1878

In 1853 Herman crossed the plains to California and arrived October 21st, settling at once on his present farm, which comprised one hundred and ten acres. His farm was located on today's Blacow Road between Central Avenue and Mowry Road. He married Miss Mary Durreng in St. Louis in 1852. Mary Durreng was a native of Germany, and couple had the following children: Louis H., Matilda, Andrew F., Alice, and Helen.

James Hawley:

Mrs. Hettie Hawley / Miss Charlotte Hawley / Miss Emily Hawley / Miss Clara Hawley / Miss Elizabeth Hawley / Edwin Hawley / Miss Hettie Mae Hawley

James Hawley was born in Birmingham, England on September 14, 1822. He came to the U.S. in 1825 and spent the early part of his life in New York and New Jersey.



A close up of the Hawley family showing James and wife Betty, and daughters Mrs. Emily Hawley Ingalls, Mrs. Loretta Hawley Volmer, and Mrs. Charlotte Hawley Whipple. The photo above was taken from the book, "Images of America, Union City," by Timothy Swenson.

In 1845 he married Hettie Munn who was born in 1822. Coming west in 1849 he eventually ended up on the old Bell Ranch (the Alameda Creek at Decoto Road) in 1850. He then built a home in Mission San Jose and sent for his family. Eventually they moved to the Alvarado-Centreville Road near Beard Road in the Alviso District. There being no school near there James and some citizens living near him organized the Alviso Grammar School District, and erected the Alviso Grammar School, which Mr. Hawley helped build.

James farmed near Beard Road but he also supplemented his income with his carpentry skills. He also supplemented his income by becoming the road overseer for the Alviso district circa 1880.

James was an Odd Fellow since the age of 21 years. In November 1859 he joined several other Alvaradan's and became a charter member of Crusade Lodge No. 93, IOOF of Alvarado. Several years later he helped build the new IOOF Hall on Smith and Vallejo Streets in downtown Alvarado. Mr. Hawley was also a member of the Republican Party in Alvarado.

In the early 1880's James Hawley became part of an ill-fated venture, which cost several Washington Township men their lives. An expedition to Alaska for gold left Centreville in June, 1882. It was organized by John Lowrie and Samuel Marston, and several other members of the company from the township. They reached their destination and located their mine, which gave promise of being very rich. Leaving part of the company there for the winter, Mr. Lowrie and Mr. Marston started for home with a load of ore, expecting to return to the mine in the spring. Soon after their departure from St. Michaels heavy storms arose, and the vessel was never after heard from. The following year James Hawley and others, who had remained at the mines through the winter, returned, but the company was never reorganized.

James was described as "a man of sterling character, honest, upright in business and a kind, accommodating neighbor." Hettie maintained an active interest in social affairs and charitable concerns. They were married 61 years. James Hawley passed away on February 8, 1906 at the age of 83 years. He had been a proud member of the Odd Fellows in the U.S. for over 62 years. His beloved Hettie followed him to the other side on July 11, 1911. Hettie and James had six children, five daughters and one son.

Mrs. Hettie Munn Hawley:

Hettie Munn Hawley was one of the earliest members of the Alvarado Presbyterian Church but transferred to the Centreville Presbyterian Church in 1892. She was also a charter member of the Alvarado Rebekah Lodge.

Miss Charlotte Hawley:

Charlotte Hawley married Charles Whipple. Their children included James Whipple who became a star football player at UC Berkeley, mining engineer, and the husband of Laura Thane.

Miss Emily Hawley:

Emily Hawley married John Ingalls, son of Benjamin Ingalls, who erected the first sugar mill in Alvarado. He was described as the only son-in-law who was not a local pioneer by the Hawley's. However he was the secretary of the Cypress Cemetery Association formed in 1873. Emily was a member of the 1853 class held in the mission adobe.

Miss Clara Hawley:

Clara Hawley married George Patterson, the largest landowner in the area that included the present Ardenwood Historic Farm. Their children were Henry and William. Clara married the Rev. William Layson after George died. Clara became a community benefactor and noted social hostess. She wrote a booklet in 1907 entitled, "The Hawley's in the United States."

Miss Elizabeth Hawley:

Elizabeth Hawley married John Lyman Beard and they raised six children. They lived in Warm Springs before establishing their home by the Alviso School. John was chosen a state senator in 1896.

Edwin Hawley:

Edwin Hawley, the only son, married Belle Coulter and their son was named James.

Miss Hettie May Hawley:

The youngest daughter, Hettie May, named after her mother, remained the only single Hawley.

Dr. Benjamin F. Bucknell:

Dr. Bucknell was born in the town of Hiram, Maine, in the month of October 1821. His father died when he was five years of age, and his mother was left to care for him and three sisters. Young Benjamin was sent to live with his mother's sister and husband, a farmer living in an adjoining town. His uncle worked the young Benjamin hard during the summers, but did send him off to school during the winter months.

Suffering from ill health, he entered Dartmouth College and graduated in 1846. Mr. Bucknell took up the practice of medicine in his native town and being ambitious he took on an ever-increasing amount of clientele. His health began to fail him again, so

he took in a young physician to help carry his load. But a hemorrhage of the lungs forced him to seek a gentler climate than his native Maine.

Accompanied by his wife and a sister he set sail for California on the brig *Agate*. During the voyage his health seemed somewhat restored and on April 24, 1851 they reached San Francisco. He began practicing medicine in San Francisco, but after six months his pulmonary troubles returned. He felt that he could no longer bear the cold winds of San Francisco.

Near the end of 1851 while searching the other side of the bay for a warmer climate, he met John Horner who offered him the agency of the steamboat & warehouses at Union City. The steamer was to run daily from Union City to San Francisco and back, loaded with vegetables and other produce raised by Mr. Horner and other farmers in the vicinity.

Dr. Bucknell established a U.S. Post Office at Union City on November 8, 1851. Known as the "Union" Post Office it was located in what was then Santa Clara County. At this same time he was also appointed Justice of the Peace of Union City. Besides attending daily to the loading and unloading of the steamboat and being the Postmaster, he also married couples that could not find a minister. As he was a doctor he also helped the sick and because he could speak Spanish he also was in demand to the Spanish occupants around Alvarado.

In 1852-1853 he suffered so much from rheumatism that he left Alvarado, and eventually ended buying a farm between Centreville and Irvington. Here he died on April 19, 1860.

William Wales:

William Wales came to Centreville in 1854. He was born in Maine on November 28, 1827 and came to California in 1852. He spent two years in the mines and then came to Washington Township working for Mr. Beard at the Mission. He bought a 46 acre farm in 1862 on Thornton Avenue midway between Centreville and Newark. On October 11, 1852 he was married to Miss May Kelly, a native of Ireland. They had nine children: Olive, born December 6, 1859; William, born December 16, 1861; George, born September 10, 1865; Abbie, born June 10, 1867; Maggie, born June 4, 1869; Jura, born June 1, 1871; May, born May 2, 1873; Anna, born October 23, 1876; Harry, born August 5, 1878. Mr. Wales died December 17, 1880.

Andrew J. McLeod:

Andrew J. McLeod arrived at the Mission San Jose in October 1854 with his uncle L.P. Gates after crossing the country with an ox-team from Ohio. Andrew engaged in farming near the town of Centreville where he stayed for three years until he was forced to take a year off on account of ill health. Andrew then went into business in Centreville for six months when he became proprietor of the American Exchange Hotel there and conducted it until 1866, at which time he sold out, moved to Washington Corners (Irvington) and built the Union Hotel.

Six months later he sold the hotel and returned to Centreville and embarked in the livery stable business, which he sold at the end of one year. One year later he moved to Livermore and there in the fall of 1869 began a general mercantile business with Henry Meyers, under the firm name of Meyers & McLeod, in the structure known as the Bank Exchange Building. Mr. McLeod was appointed postmaster of the town of Livermore in 1869 and held the office until January 1882. At this same time he was also Assessor of Murray Township, to which position he was elected in 1879, 1880,

and 1882, and 1883. He was married in Centreville in November 1859 to Miss Delia Foley, a native of Ireland, and had five children: Norman, Mamie, Colin, Annie, and Leah.

Henry Dusterberry:

Henry Dusterberry came to Centreville in 1854. Henry was born in Hanover, Germany, February 17, 1830. Henry left Germany in 1847 for the U.S. He spent several years roaming about the U.S. In September 1852 Henry arrived in El Dorado County and spent several years in the mines until the fall of 1854. At this Henry came to Washington Township where he worked for Ed. Niehaus & Co. In 1855 he returned to Grizzly Flat and there spent portions of it and the following year, after which he returned to Alameda and his former employer, with whom he resided until the spring of 1857. In 1860 Henry was lodging with James Beazell, the Centreville blacksmith. He was subsequently variously employed, chiefly in farming transactions with Mr. Niehaus until July, 1863, when he purchased farmland on the corner of Central Avenue and Blacow Road.

Henry was married on September 25, 1863 to Miss Ellen Faley, and had the following children: Mary, Henry, Frank, Frederick, and Lizzie.

Henry was a farmer first and public servant second. Henry served on the Alameda County Board of Supervisor from January 1880 to January 1889.

Henry's name was mentioned as a possible candidate for the Democratic ticket for a seat on the Board of Equalization in October 1890. Oakland City Clerk, James Brady was on the Democratic ticket at the time and said he would be glad to make way for some other Democrat if a victim could be found. But there's one rub. He says that Henry Dusterberry would not accept the nomination, and that no one else can be found willing to make the hopeless fight.

As to Mr. Dusterberry's demeanor some insight can be gained from questions asked him as a potential juror for the case of Mr. Dalton, who was Alameda County Assessor at the time. Henry was called to the stand in July 1902 and his testimony proved to be surprisingly amusing.

Atty. Foote: "Have you formed any opinion of the guilt or innocence of the defendant?"

Dusterberry: "Well, it's like the Dutchmen said at the theater last night, you can't believe what read in the newspapers."

Atty. Foote: "Do you know any of the attorneys for the defense?"

Dusterberry: "No. I never had a lawyer in my life, and I haven't any use for them. They are worse than the newspapers."

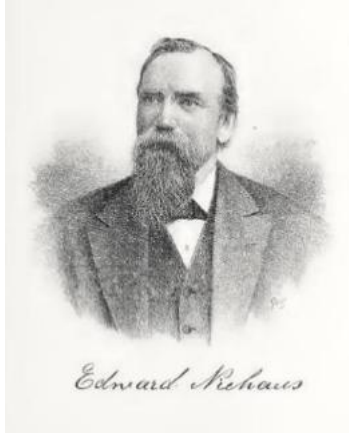
After a few more questions, which drew equally blunt answers, Dusterberry was turned over to the defense, which only drew a few questions.

On July 16, 1901 Henry Dusterberry narrowly escaped cremation when a lamp by which he was reading suddenly exploded throwing oil all over him, the furniture and the carpet. His family had gone out for the night and he was all alone. The oil ignited and suddenly all was ablaze about where he was reading. He managed to tear off his burning clothing, and then fought the flames, which were threatening his home. He

finally extinguished the flames by the use of rugs. His injuries consisted of severe burns to his arms and shoulders.

Mrs. Ellen Dusterberry passed away on April 14, 1894. Henry Dusterberry passed away on April 13, 1919.

Edward Niehaus:



Edward Niehaus first came to Washington Township circa 1853 and to the town of Centreville about 1854. He was born in Germany on December 24, 1827. At age fifteen he came to the U.S. and eventually found his way to Placerville and spent some time in the goldfields.

Edward came to Centreville and began farming in 1854, an avocation he continued until 1874 when he sold his farm. He then went into business with Sigmund Salz under the firm name Salz & Co. Salz & Co. was a diverse company that owned a general store, dealt in grain and real estate and also acted as sureties on loans and mortgages.

On December 11, 1885 Edward Niehaus was appointed as Postmaster of the Centreville Post Office, taking over this office from his partner Sigmund Salz. Ed Niehaus would continue as Postmaster for Centreville until he was arrested on February 12, 1890 for reporting more stamp sales than he made purportedly to increase his salary. He was arraigned before Judge Hoffman and pleaded not guilty and was released on bail.

Sigmund Salz, Niehaus' partner in Salz & Co., came to his defense when he averred that it was he alone that attended to the post office business as Deputy Postmaster. It was Salz who made the returns and he thinks if there is any blame it should be attached to him. On March 14, 1890 Judge Hoffman dismissed the indictment against Ed Niehaus.

On August 15, 1890 the creditors of Salz & Niehaus, the Centreville merchants who had gone insolvent, went to court to have Salz & Co. declared insolvent debtors, and to have their property placed in the hands of an assignee for the benefit of the creditors. Eventually the debts were settled 40¢ on the dollar.

On the morning of January 20, 1898 the residence of Ed Niehaus was destroyed by fire with all its contents. The fall of a plate-glass mirror awoke the members of the family, who barely escaped with their lives. The loss is \$15,000, insurance was \$5,800.

In June the Niehaus' created a canvass room and tent near the site of their burned out home, which they occupied during the summer.

Garrett Norris:

Garrett Norris was born in New York, but his family moved to Pennsylvania early in his youth. After his parents died he came to California landing at San Francisco where he stayed until 1854 when he went to work for Robert Blacow in Centreville. After a few years Garret bought eighty acres of land in Centreville and commenced to farming. He developed this into a good farm and then added 80 acres more. The property was located on the south side of Main Street and the west side of Central Avenue, with most of the Main Street frontage taken by small property owners.

Garrett married Miss Johannah Connor, a native of New York. Their children were all born in Centreville. Joseph, was born in 1858; Harriet & Emma (twins), were born in 1860; Miranda was born in 1861; and Monroe was born in 1863. Johannah Norris passed away in 1865 and in 1871 Garrett Norris married Miss Margaret McGuire who survived him until 1925. From Margaret Garrett received three more children: Mary, David and Garrett.

Garrett Norris passed away in 1877, at the age of fifty years.

William Barry:

William Barry was born in Ireland on October 2, 1831 and resided there until he was fourteen years of age. On May 1, 1852, our subject arrived in the harbor of San Francisco with a cargo of coal from Valparaiso, but soon after left his ship and found employment with the Pacific Mail Steamship Company for one month. Mr. Barry worked for a short time in Contra Costa County working for William Castro.

William Barry came to Washington Township on July 12, 1852, and obtained work from E. L. Beard and the Millard Brothers until 1854. In 1855 William Barry built a store on Centreville's main street and went into business with Richard Wilson. The mercantile business became known as Barry & Wilson's, which was later sold to Steiner, Pepper & Co, and finally it was purchased by Jacob Salz. He was also known for his manufacture of grain sacks in Centreville, which he sold to farmers in the area.

He continued this business until 1857 when he sold out and embarked in sheep-raising, an occupation he abandoned in the fall of 1861, when, meeting with some serious reverses, he left the county for the first time since his arrival in it. After residing in Monterey County, San Francisco and Hollister he returned to Centreville.

On Christmas Day in 1866 William Barry wed Mrs. Johanna Gage, who had recently been living in Connecticut with her young daughter Lilly.

William then became interested in growing of plants and herbs. His acumen at this proved to be so great that in 1885 he was elected a member of the Board of Directors of the State Horticultural Society. His advice was sought locally for anything to do with pest problems in local crops and in 1890 he appeared before the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to report on the ravages of the scale-bug in the orchards of this county.

In 1876 William Barry and William M. Liston (of Alvarado) floated the idea of a Pioneer Association of Washington, Murray, and Eden Townships. In November 1876 a meeting of pioneers was called for Thanksgiving Day, November 30th, at Centreville to discuss the organization of a township pioneer society. The persons present were: Charles Kelsey, John Riser, J. A. Trefry, E. Ross, E. Munyan, E. Niehaus, C. C. Scott, Wm. H. Cockefair, D. C. Bane, G. W. Bond, and William Barry.

William Barry passed away on February 28, 1912 at Centreville. He had been Horticultural Commissioner of Washington and Murray Townships for thirty years. He was a member of Alameda Lodge, No. 167, F. and A. M. at Centreville and the Order of the Eastern Star.

Capt. Jotham Sewall Marston:

Jotham S. Marston was captain of the steamboat for John Horner in Union City from November 1851 to January 1853. He was elected the first county Treasurer for Alameda County at Alvarado. His career was cut short when a large sum of money was stolen from the treasury safe housed on the second floor general merchandise store of Smith & Church in Alvarado. The county hounded him for repayment until his sureties repaid a portion of the loss. Capt. Marston then moved to Centreville where he became a farmer with his two sons Samuel and Benjamin.

Jotham Sewall Marston was born in Addison, Washington County, Maine on October 8, 1804 to Samuel Marston and Sarah Hall. In 1850 he was residing in Whitneyville, Maine with his wife Cynthia Ingersoll Marston and ten children. At this time he had six sons: Samuel, George, Benjamin, Henry, Kenny and Charles; and he had four daughters: Judith, Laura, Mary and Lydia; all of the children being born in Maine.

Jotham Marston and family came to California shortly after 1850. He settled in the home that had been occupied by Joseph Ralph, this being the first house built in Union City by Capt. Bulmer. Here the Marston's had their eleventh child, Charles.

In the fall of 1851 John Horner purchased the steamer "Union" to ply the route between the Union City embarcadero and the wharf in San Francisco. The first trip of the "Union" was advertised at the end of August 1851 under the command of Captain T.S. Seely. Captain Seely operated the Union City to San Francisco run of the "Union" until mid-November 1851 when Captain J.S. Marston became captain of the little ship. Captain Marston guided the destiny of the steamship until January 1853 when Captain Trefry took over command of the ship.

When Alameda County was created in March of 1853, J.S. Marston was elected County Treasurer of the fledgling county. The County Seat was given to the town of New Haven under the proviso that the town would change its name to Alvarado to honor Alta California's former Mexican Governor.

After the Legislature had named Alvarado as the County Seat an election was held in May 1853 to seat public administrators. Jotham S. Marston was elected as the first county treasurer for Alameda County. The county's valuables were stored in a safe on the second floor of the county seat, which was located in A.M. Church's General Store on Levee Street in Alvarado.

In February of 1855 the safe on the second floor of the store was rifled and \$12,555.31 was stolen. Some recovery of funds was made, but the loss still stood at \$7,156.44. The blame was laid at the feet of Mr. Marston, as he was the county treasurer although there was no indication that he had any involvement in the theft. The county tried to recover the loss of funds over the next few years from Capt. Marston, the county refusing to pardon the amount lost.

On March 2, 1857 J.S. Marston petitioned to be released from all liabilities due to the robbery at the county treasury in 1855. His petition was refused. Many people still concede that this was one of the reasons that Alvarado lost the county seat in 1856.

Finally in August 1857 \$3,441.40 was paid to the county treasury to settle the missing funds and Capt. Marston and his bondsmen were finally released from liability of the robbery.

Jotham Marston then moved his family to Centreville where he commenced farming along with his sons Samuel and Benjamin. Capt. Marston stayed in Centreville until his retirement when he moved to Oakland and lived with his daughter Lydia and her husband, Judge Noble Hamilton. Judge Hamilton had been a lawyer in Alvarado when that town was the county seat. On December 31, 1854 Noble Hamilton married Miss Deleana (Lydia) Marston of Union City. The Hamilton's left Alvarado for San Leandro when the county seat was lost.

On September 22, 1888 Captain Jotham Sewall Marston was walking along Seventh Street on his way to the Oakland Sanitarium, evidently to take a bath, and passing the railroad tracks which curves around at that place on the way to the pier, when he was struck by the SP Sacramento Local that killed him instantly. Mr. Marston was slightly deaf and did not hear the approaching train.

Were Captain J.S. Marston & Jotham S. Marston the same person?

Were Captain J.S. Marston and Jotham Sewall Marston the same person? I had often wondered about that because there was really nothing concrete that tied these two persons together. Captain J.S. Marston (of John Horner's steamboat) was always referred to as "J.S." never as "Jotham S." And Jotham S. Marston, Alameda County's first Treasurer was always referred to as "Jotham" and never as "Capt. J.S. Marston." Here are two articles, which lead me to believe that Captain Marston and Jotham Marston was the same person.

An article in the November 9, 1889 Oakland Tribune, written by Judge Noble Hamilton who maintained a law office in Alvarado in 1853:

"In the year 1853, Alameda County, by an act of the legislature, was formed out of the territory taken from the counties of Contra Costa and Santa Clara. New Haven or Alvarado was the first county seat. Judge A.M. Crane was the first County Judge of the county, who, as such, under the law as it then existed, held what was then called the Court of Sessions, which transacted the business of the county now performed by the Board Supervisors. There were also associated with him two Justices of the Peace, more ornamental than useful. The Honorable A.M. Church was the first County Clerk and Recorder, both offices then being held by the same person, and served a term in the Legislature. Mr. Coombs, known as "Black Hawk Coombs," was the first District Attorney; *Captain J.S. Marston was the first County Treasurer*, and Andrew H. Broder, called "Tom Snooks," was the first Sheriff, whose duty it was to also collect taxes."

The second article that lends credence to my claim is the death of Captain J.S. Marston on September 22, 1888:

"*Captain J.S. Marston*, an old resident of Oakland and a pioneer of Alameda County, was instantly killed by the Sacramento local train at 9:15 o'clock Saturday morning (September 22, 1888). Marston was wandering along Seventh Street toward the Oakland Sanitarium with the intention of taking a bath, and passing the railroad track, which curves around at that place on the way to the pier, was struck by the swiftly-passing Sacramento Local. Marston evidently did not hear the train, as he was slightly deaf. He was also very slow in his movements, being over 80 years of age. Mr. Marston was the father-in-law of Judge Noble Hamilton, and a well-known citizen. Mr. Marston was an old pioneer of California, having arrived here in 1849. *He was also one*

of the commission that established the boundary of Alameda County, and was that county's first Treasurer."

Samuel I. Marston:

Samuel Marston was born circa 1830 to Jotham S. & Cynthia Marston of the State of Maine. Samuel was the oldest child of the Marston's. He came west with his family in the early 1850's.

By 1860 Samuel had married Abigail (Abbie) Marston and had two children, Frank & Hattie. At this time Samuel was farming in Centreville near his father and brother Benjamin. In 1870 Samuel was still in Centreville farming and had added a third child Mary. In 1880 Samuel was still living in Centreville and had added two more children, Jotham S. and Samuel I. Jr. His younger brother George was also living with the family.

Samuel Marston was one of founding members of the Washington College at Washington Corners (Irvington). The certificate of incorporation, filed July 20th, 1871, named the school "The Washington College of Science and Industry." Others involved in the creation of the school were W. F. B. Lynch, County Superintendent of Public Schools, Albert Lyser a teacher in the public schools of San Francisco, E. L. Beard, W. Y. Horner, H. Crowell, O. Mowry, H. Curtner, and M. Dixon. The College was opened, under the charge of Mr. and Mrs. Harmon, on the 31st of July 1872.

In June 1882 an expedition left for Alaska to mine for gold and silver. The expedition included several members from Washington Township including Samuel Marston, John Lowrie, Charlie Babb and James Hawley, among others.

The expedition had built a steamer called the "Lady Anne" for the Alaska river trade. It was taken north, along with those on the expedition, on the deck of a schooner named the "Alaska," and was used to bring ore from the mines to the tidewater.

Leaving part of the company there for the winter, Lowrie, Marston and Babb started for home with a load of ore, expecting to return to the mine in the spring. Soon after their departure from St. Michaels heavy storms arose, and the vessel was never heard from again. The following year James Hawley and others, who had remained at the mines through the winter, returned, but the company was never reorganized.

Calvin J. Stevens:

Calvin J. Stevens was born in Brownsville, Jefferson County, New York, on October 23, 1828. He resided on a farm with his father until he attained the age of twenty-three years. Then in May 1852, accompanied by one sister, he started for California by way of the Nicaraguan route, arriving in the State on July 7, 1852.

He settled in Alameda County in the town of Union City, and embarked in a mercantile business in the town of Alvarado. Later he added John Horner's flourmill to his holdings. Calvin remained in Alvarado until 1858 when he transferred his merchandise business to Centreville.

Mr. Stevens opened his store in Centreville and afterward put up a two story building, the lower part was used as a store, and on the upper floor grain was stored. The building was destroyed by the earthquake of 1868, Mr. Stevens narrowly escaping death, at that time there were twenty tons of grain on the top floor.

In 1869 Mr. Stevens moved the Horner flouring mill to Livermore, and abandoned his mercantile business in Centreville. Mr. Stevens was extensively engaged in producing flour, grain buying, as well as in general mercantile affairs. On October 16, 1882 the Stevens flourmill of Livermore burned to the ground.

Mr. Stevens then largely pursued his agricultural business, he having owned much farming property about Livermore as well as land of value in the city of Oakland. Only once was Mr. Stevens an occupant of a public office. In 1874-75 he served Alameda County as tax collector.

On November 8, 1887 Calvin J. Stevens, aged 59 years, was thrown from his a buggy and within an hour was dead from the injury received. Mr. Stevens was married and had three children: Albert B., Mellie, and Daisy.

James Lewis:

James Lewis was born in Washington D.C. circa 1818. In 1860 he showed he was married to Jane Lewis who had been born in New Jersey circa 1839. In 1870 James showed he was married to Bridget J. Lewis, who was born in Ireland circa 1840. James Lewis came to Centreville in 1858 and worked a year in the Ogden House; he then rented a place adjoining Capt. Bond's and ran a boarding house. The building was afterward used as a dwelling for two families. Mr. Lewis built the United States Hotel, in 1859, and was landlord until his death. After that Mrs. Lewis carried on the business until she too passed away in January 1891, *The San Francisco Call* said of Centreville, "There are two fine hotels in this town, the United States Hotel and the Gregory House."

Jacob Salz:

Jacob Salz was in the general merchandise business in Centreville in the late 1850's. He took over the general store that had been built by William Barry in 1855. He went into partnership with Gabriel Kutz, which lasted until January 24, 1864 when their partnership was dissolved by mutual consent. The business would stay in the hands of Jacob Salz and would be known as Salz & Co.

Jacob Salz would be joined by a nephew from Bohemia, Sigmund Salz who worked in his store as a clerk. A few years later Edward Salz would also come from Bohemia to join his uncle. Edward Salz would settle in Decoto and would eventually own just about every grain warehouse in the township among other good properties.

In 1874 Jacob Salz married a niece of the Kullman brothers, Moses and Herman, who operated a tannery in San Francisco. Jacob then purchased an interest in their tannery firm. In November 1878, 45-year-old Moses Kullman shot himself in the heart in a rooming house. The reason given was despondency over the woman he loved.

Herman Kullman and Jacob Salz renamed their tannery firm Kullman & Salz. They owned tanneries in San Francisco and their largest was in Benicia. The business produced one third of all the leather produced in California. Later Kullman & Salz Co. would add a tannery in Santa Cruz, and would have offices in San Francisco, Chicago and New York.

Salz passed away in San Francisco at the age of 77 years. Jacob had been born in Bohemia. Jacob's wife Rachel had passed away December 27, 1901.

Daniel H. Beck:

In 1859 Mr. Daniel Beck came to Centreville with his family. Daniel Beck was born in Pennsylvania on July 13, 1819. He married Miss Laretta (Laura) Roundy who was born in New York on September 26, 1821. The family included these children: William, Ellen, Caroline, Charles H., Julia, Martha, Dana, John C. Vesta, and Franklin. Daniel and Laura had lived in Illinois, Iowa, and Utah before coming to Centreville.

Daniel opened a harness shop, the first in the town, and built up a prosperous trade. In his later years he handed the business over to his son Frank, who then conducted the business.

William Milton:

The best description of Mr. William Milton in Centreville was given by the ladies of the Country Club in their book, *The History of Washington Township*:

“The first hotel was conducted by William Ogden in a small building on the present site of the Gregory House. Thomas Nusham was the next landlord, and then Mr. Myer; following him came Wm. Milton, Milton & Dildine, and Bamber & McLeod. In 1866 McLeod moved to Irvington and built the Union Hotel. During this time the hotel had burned and Mr. Milton had built a larger and better one. This one also burned and, in 1869, the present Gregory House was built. In 1862, the May-Day Ball was held in Milton's hotel, and there were present over one hundred and fifty couples, "the bravest and fairest in the land." In the fifty years of which we write, there has been but one serious alarm to the inhabitants. This was the earthquake of October, 1868. The Presbyterian Church was so badly damaged that it had to be rebuilt. Stevens' store fell, and Milton's hotel slid from its under-pinnings.”

The story above pretty much tells the tale of William Milton's hotel keeping in Centreville. As for when Mr. Milton came into the proprietorship of the hotel the best information available is that in 1860 he listed his occupation as "landlord." So by 1860 Mr. Milton was probably already operating the Ogden Hotel. After his hotel burned to the ground the second time Mr. Milton changed his occupation to carpenter, a trade he followed until he retired.

Mr. Milton was born in Maine in 1810, his wife Susan was born in Maine in 1827. They had three children that I could locate, all born in Maine: Charles, Sarah, and Mary. William Milton passed away in 1893 and was buried in the Centreville Pioneer Cemetery.

*** PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ***

In the early 1850's the moral and religious welfare of the population had not as yet received much attention. There were, however, three or four Protestant Church organizations in Oakland; while the Catholics, for the purpose of worship, had to travel to San Francisco, on the one hand, or the Mission on the other. W. W. Brier, at Centreville, was the first Protestant clergyman in the county, and at this period was Superintendent of Education for Alameda County.

In June of 1853 the interest in church services had so increased that the following persons organized a Presbyterian Church in Centreville: Charles Hilton, Elizabeth A. Brier, Hannah Breyfogle, Chancey Cornell, Charlotte Cornell, Charles Kelsey, Mary C. Kelsey, Eliza Beard, and Dr. J. M. Selfridge. This church was called the Alameda Presbyterian Church, after the name of the creek. Charles Hilton was chosen and ordained Elder. After more than a year of

preaching, while he gathered this and another small church in the Mount Eden settlement, Mr. Brier was invited to take charge of the two churches at a salary of \$1,800.

* **CENTREVILLE POST OFFICE** *

The ladies of the Washington Township Country Club cite a Mr. Clemens as having erected a two story building in 1854. The ladies state that Mr. Clemens used the upper floor for a dwelling and he kept a general merchandise store below.

On March 3, 1855 the Centreville U.S. Post Office was officially opened. Postal records show that the first Postmaster was named Reuben Clements. This could be the same Reuben Clements the ladies of the Country Club cited as the builder of the general merchandise store built in 1954 Centreville.

To further muddy the waters of the name of the first Postmaster the *Los Angeles Star* newspaper edition printed the Centreville Postmaster name as Reuben S. Clement. The only thing three sources agree on is that the Centreville Postmaster's first name was Reuben. His last name was either, Clements, Clemens, or Clement. Mr. Clements served as Postmaster for Centreville until October 18, 1858 when he was succeeded by George W. Bond. Besides being Postmaster Reuben Clemens was also a member of the Washington Township Pioneer Society.

* **ALVISO GRAMMAR SCHOOL** *

When the Alviso Grammar School was opened in 1856 there were no towns of Decoto, Niles, or Newark as yet in Washington Township. The township reached maturity when the number of towns reached eight. These were: Alvarado, Centreville, Decoto, Irvington (Washington Corners), Mission San Jose, Newark, Niles and Warm Springs (Harrisburg). In 1898 the township reached its zenith in schools at thirteen, however four of the schools were very small (Lincoln, Mowry, Rosedale, and Sunol Glen (Sheridan). By 1930 there remained but nine grammar schools in Washington Township, one for each town and one for the Alviso District.

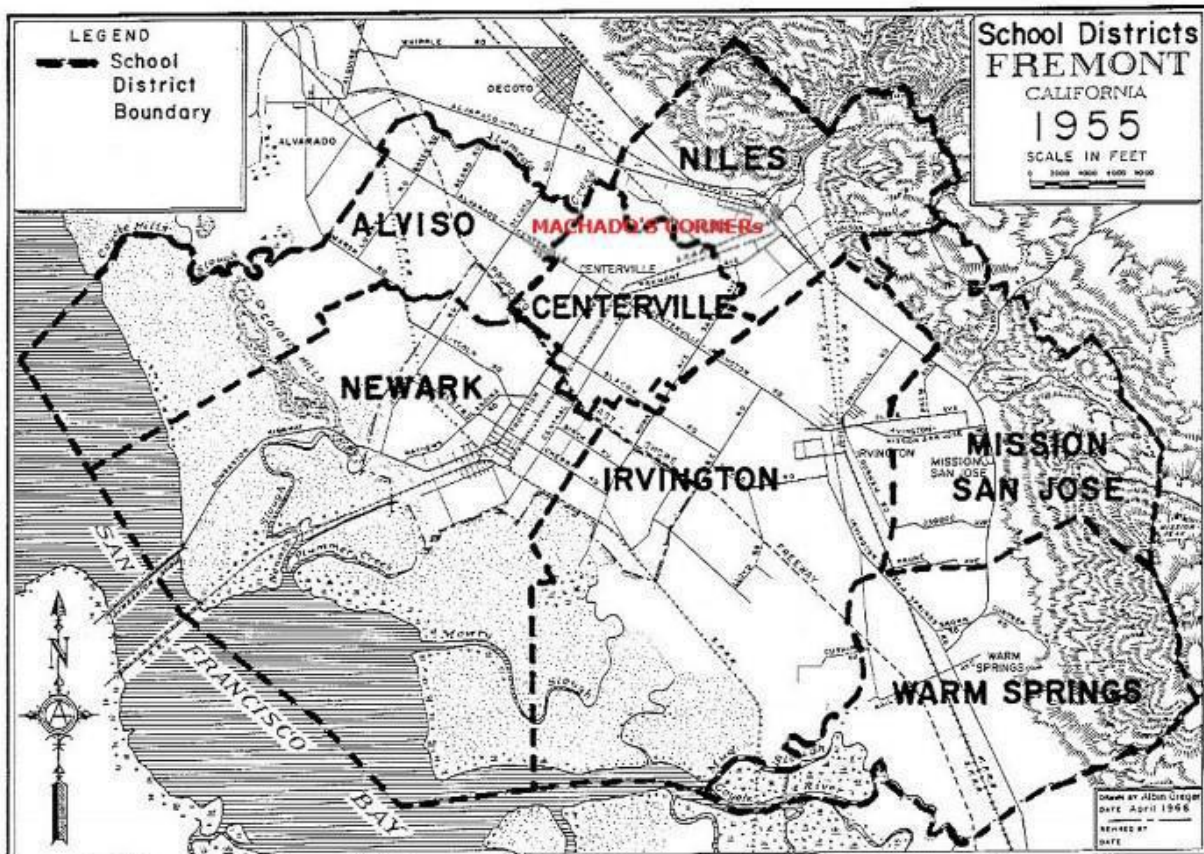
Alviso was not a town because it did not have a Post Office, and it also had no central business core. What it did have was the "Four Corners," later to be called "Machado's Corners" after "Het" Machado who had a blacksmith shop where the Alvarado Centreville Road met the Jarvis Landing Road to the west and the Bell Ranch Bridge Road (Decoto Road) to the east.

When I was in school in the late the 40's and the 1950's you associated your town of residence with the grammar school district in which you were located. But Alviso was a completely different circumstance. It is bad enough they did not have a Post Office to identify with, there was a real town of Alviso just across the Coyote Slough from Irvington in Santa Clara County.

When I started researching Alvarado history over fifteen years ago the first project I searched was the location of my father in 1930. I found him in enumeration district #343, which was Alvarado and Alviso combined. My father was working on a ranch right where

Paseo Padre Parkway crosses Decoto Road heading north. So this was part of Alvarado? The more I researched the more confused I became.

For example in 1954 the Alviso Grammar School was Precinct #3 under Alvarado for the Washington Township Hospital vote. I was curious why Alviso was more closely related to Alvarado than Centreville when Alviso is closer to Centreville. I could only come up with one answer, the land grant "Potrero de Los Cerritos," granted to Alviso and Pacheco. This land grant contained all of Alvarado south of the Alameda Creek, all of Alviso School District, and some of Newark School District. So that is a brief history of Washington Township's odd-man out school district, although I am sure you could find more facets to the story.



The map above shows the seven school districts in Fremont in 1955. Shown in red is "Machado's Corners" (to the left of Machado). The Alvarado and Decoto School Districts are not shown on this map, however this will give you a good idea of the layout of the Fremont and Newark School Districts.

Here is the telling of the Alviso and Lincoln School Districts by the ladies of the Country Club of Washington Township:

"In 1856 the Alviso district school was opened, with Erastus Johnson as teacher. Others that followed him in those early days were: Charles Johnson, Miss Everett (afterward Mrs. Johnathan Mayhew), Miss Blackwood, Mr. Pratt, Miss Naylor (sister of Mrs. W. W. Brier), Miss Laura T. Fowler (who later became identified with the San Francisco schools), and many others who long since have taken places in the more prominent walks of life.

Still later, the Lincoln district was taken from the Centreville and Alviso districts, and a school house built on the Alvarado-Newark road (north of the town of Newark), about two miles west of Centreville. Of those who taught there we may mention Miss Mollie Reeder, Miss Emma Reeder, Miss Louise Cearley, Miss Flora Brown, Miss Cora Simpson and Miss Addie Ross, all young ladies of our own neighborhood; Miss Mott

(Mrs. Comfort Healy) and Miss Thompson (Mrs. I B. Haines) also taught here. Mr. Emory Munyan, a pioneer resident, served as a trustee of this district from its organization until his death, a period of twenty-nine years. Religious services were early held in the Horner school house."

* **OGDEN HOUSE HOTEL** *

The only information found on the Ogden Hotel came from *The History of Washington Township* by the ladies of the country club:

"The first hotel was conducted by William Ogden in a small building on the present site of the Gregory House. Thomas Nusham was the next landlord, and then Mr. Myer; following him came Wm. Milton, Milton & Dildine, and Bamber & McLeod. James Lewis came to Centreville in 1858 and worked a year in the Ogden House; he then rented a place adjoining Capt. Bond's and ran a boarding house. The first fraternal order in the township, the "Sons of Temperance," called the "Agricola Division," was organized June, 1855, in Mr. Brier's study. The meetings were held in the Ogden Hotel. William Ogden was a member of the Pioneer Society of Washington Township."

The Ogden Hotel burned down in 1868 and the Gregory House was built in its place.

* **TRANSPORTATION** *

So what was transportation like in early Centreville? Well, if you were close to water you could go by boat, otherwise you walked or rode a horse or went by carriage.

The first regularly scheduled transportation system that served Washington Township was by John Horner out of his Union City embarcadero. In the early fall of 1851 John Horner purchased the steamer "Union" to ply San Francisco Bay between Union City and San Francisco. The ship made three round trips a week, going one day from Union City to San Francisco and then on the following day returning from San Francisco to Union City. The steamer did not run on Sundays.

The little ship carried Horner's produce to San Francisco where he had established a commission house to sell his produce to the locals. He also carried passengers and freight each way. Then on September 30, 1851 John Horner advertised his regularly scheduled stage line from Union City, where it met his steamboat the "Union" at the Union City embarcadero. It would then go onto the Mission San Jose (through Centreville) and then on to the City of San Jose. The following day it reversed its run, making three round trips a week. The fare structure for the trip is shown below:

FARE:

S.F. through to San Jose	\$8
S.F. to Union City	\$5
S.F. to Mission San Jose	\$6
Mission San Jose to City of San Jose	\$3
Union City to Mission San Jose	\$4

On August 5, 1853 William Forst's steamer, the steamboat "San Jose" under the command of Capt. T. Huntington started regularly scheduled runs from the wharf at the foot Clay Street on Mondays, Wednesday's and Friday's for Union City and Mission San Jose, meeting a connected stage line. The "San Jose" scheduled route from San Francisco to Union City and back continued daily until October 26, 1853, when William Forst either stopped advertising the "San Jose" route to Union City or he abandoned the route.

The steamboat Union started the year 1854 under the commanded of Capt. J.A. Trefry, still making its three round trips a week from Union City to San Francisco under the agency of John Horner. On May 9, 1854 the Union made its final voyage to Union City under the agency of John Horner.

On May 19, 1854 the Pioneer Stage lines began advertising service from San Francisco to San Jose, via Oakland, Union City, Centreville, Mission San Jose and intermediate points. The stage would leave Oakland every morning on the arrival of the 9 o'clock boat, and leave San Jose every morning at 8 o'clock, and arrive at Oakland in time to connect with the 3 o'clock boat to San Francisco. Now there were regularly scheduled boats leaving San Francisco for Oakland and connecting with stage lines to the north, Sacramento and the gold country; and to the south, Washington Township and the town of San Jose.

On December 11, 1854 J. Birch of the California Stage Co. reported that his company had bought the interest of James Tallmadge and Pioneer Stage Lines now running between Oakland and San Jose via the Mission San Jose (and intermediate points), together with the stables on the road now owned by the California Stage Co.

On February 2, 1855 the steamboat Union owned by John Horner again began its runs between San Francisco and Union City making three rounds trips a week. The boat was under the command of Capt. Charles Thorn, and under the agency of Spang and Blake. On March 19, 1855 the steamboat Union made its final trip under Capt. Charles Thorn. On the same day the Daily Alta California printed an ad for the sale of the Union by John Horner. She would be sold for a low price for cash.



A Concord style stagecoach

In June 1855 the California Stage Line advertised their Concord Stagecoach service, which carried passengers and the U.S. Mail to towns along the route from Oakland, Union City, Alvarado, Centreville, Washington Corners (Irvington), and the Mission San Jose.

In September 1855 Washington Township had a new steamboat service that was introduced to Union City. The steamer E. Corning under the command of Capt. John Hawkins began service from San Francisco to Union City, Alvarado, Centreville, and the Mission San Jose, making three round trips a week. The E. Corning boasted that it had superior accommodations for carrying stock of all kinds, which would be carried at the lowest rates. The steamer was under the management of Spang & Blake.

In November 1855 Mr. J.W. Hoag started his San Francisco and Contra Costa Express. He offered two lines going through Washington Township. Both lines were daily by the California Stage Company's Line of Coaches from Oakland, via Clinton, San Antonio, San Leandro, Hayward's Hotel, Mission of San Jose, to Warm Springs.

The second line, also by the California Stage Company and Williams' Line of Stages went to the Mission of San Jose, via San Leandro, San Lorenzo, Alvarado, Union City and Centreville.

Mr. Hoag boasted of expanded service including a Weekly Express throughout the Valley as far as Warm Springs, calling at every ranch, thereby giving to farmers and others the opportunity of having business transacted without the expense of a trip to the city. They would also daily papers on either of the above mentioned Stage Routes at city prices, and weekly papers "at a trifle more," delivered at their doors, together with Atlantic States, and Foreign Papers and Magazines as low as can be purchased in the city. They also offered general express business, such as collecting bills, forwarding letters, parcels and packages to all parts of California or elsewhere, being connected with Wells, Fargo & Co., and the Pacific Express Companies. Mr. Hoag was in partnership with John Bamber and C.D. Goble.

Transportation changed in August 1856 when the California Stage Line routes from Oakland to Union City, through Centreville and on to the Mission San Jose, was sold to Charles McLaughlin. His line carried mail and passengers with a run leaving Oakland every day after the arrival of the 10:00 a.m. boat from San Francisco for points at Union City, Mission San Jose and the City of San Jose and points in between.

In 1856 there were no steamboats that were regularly scheduled to ply the Bay between Union City and San Francisco. Because of this the town of Union City would slowly be forgotten and within several decades it was only the old timers that even remembered there was a Union City in Alvarado.

The ladies of the Country Club gave this stirring account of early transportation in Alameda County and Washington Township in their book *The History of Washington Township*. After John Horner's stages stop running in 1854 the void was filled by other stage lines, one of the most prominent being that of Charles McLaughlin's line of stages and mail lines:

"In 1856 the Cameron's (Duncan & Ashley) put on opposition coaches, and exciting times followed. The fare came down to \$1 or less for the trip. Old settlers laugh now when they speak of Cameron's galloping broncos and the famous runs they made. Ashley Cameron of Centreville held the reins, and never failed to deliver the mail on time, although sometimes obliged to forsake the stage and walk the fences across stretches of high water. He also carried and threw with unerring hand the Alta Californian to subscribers along the way as the broncos flew onward. It is said that when they were fairly under way no stop could be made for way passengers. In times of high water, mud wagons were used instead of coaches, and even these were not infrequently "stuck in the mud." At such times the male passengers were of

necessity compelled to get down and help pry out before the journey could be continued. Although this seems a prosaic employment, at least one romance began in the Alvarado slough, for it was there that two of our old settlers first met.

An interesting feature of these trips was the fact that the steamer at San Antonio could not wait for the stage, if it chanced to be late, for the boat had to go with the tide, which waits for no man. Then Mr. Cameron would hurry his passengers into light wagons and rush them across to what is now Alameda arriving before the steamer made the landing at that point. The stages continued to run to San Antonio until the railroad was completed to Haywards, when that was made the objective point. But when the railroad service was extended to Oakland they were discontinued. Hoag was the first express man with his pony and cart, and after him came the Bamber Brothers.

The Daily Alta California of San Francisco printed this article of confrontation between Duncan Cameron and Lewis J. Hilt, stagecoach drivers:

"On July 28, 1857 between three and four o'clock, a difficulty took place on the San Antonio landing between Cameron Duncan, one of the proprietors of the lower lines of stages to Union City, and Lewis J. Hilt, driver on Charles McLaughlin's mail line. Hilt had driven his stage ahead of Duncan's, and taken the stand at the landing which Duncan usually occupied. Duncan became incensed and called Hilt rough names and attempted to push him away from his own stage door. In a few minutes afterwards they met again, and Hilt renewed the conversation by taking Duncan to account for the names he had called Hilt a short time before, and returned his words with interest.

Duncan then struck Hilt in the face and kicked him. Hilt drew a slung shot (a hard object, such as a metal ball, attached by a strap or thong to the wrist and used as a weapon, akin to what David slew Goliath) and hit Duncan under the left eye, cutting him slightly. They were then separated; Duncan went to wash the blood from his face, and Hilt went into the stable nearby. About fifteen minutes afterward Duncan came into the stable with a knife in his hand and made an attack upon Hilt, who was unarmed. The first blow cut through Hilt's coat and vest, and was only prevented by striking an account book in his breast pocket from going into his heart. Hilt then ran and got behind a horse, which was in one of the stables. Duncan followed him up and stabbed him twice, once in the right shoulder, penetrating to the bone, and once under the left arm, inflicting an ugly wound. Duncan later obtained a warrant for the arrest of Hilt, on a charge of striking him with a slung shot."

In November 1857 the Grand Jury of Alameda County met and considered all the evidence of the trouble between Duncan Cameron and Lewis Hilt of July 28th and handed down the following ruling. Duncan Cameron was fined \$30, which he paid. Hilt pleaded not guilty and was released after paying \$500 for bail.

In 1859 Washington Township continued to be serviced by a large stage line out of Oakland: This was Bamber & Co.'s Contra Costa Express whose office was on Davis Street opposite the Oakland Ferry. Their daily schedule was:

Daily Express to:

Oakland	Union City	San Antonio	Centreville
Alameda	Vallejo's Mills	Mission San Jose	Washington Corners
San Pablo	San Leandro	Hayward's Hotel	San Lorenzo
Warm Springs	Milpitas	Alvarado	

They had connections throughout the State with forwarding agreements with Wells Fargo and Co. and Freeman & Co. Expresses. They also boasted that due to the great increase in their facilities they were able to reduce the price of their stamped envelopes to 12½ cents.

* **NOTEWORTHY EVENTS** *

Sons of Temperance / Presbyterian Church Dedicated / Methodist Church / Wild Mustard Seeds / New Postmaster / New Cemetery

June 1855:

Sons of Temperance:

The first fraternal order in the township, the "Sons of Temperance," called the "Agricola Division," was organized June, 1855, in Mr. Brier's study. The meetings were held in the Ogden Hotel.

1856:

Methodist Church:

A Methodist Church was formed at the same time as the Presbyterian Church and a church building was erected in 1856. "A feature of the service," said the old history, "was Robert Breaching and his bass viol."

January 27, 1856:

Presbyterian Church Dedicated:

On January 27, 1856, the brick building of the Presbyterian Church was dedicated. The cost to build the church was \$3,300. The lot of two and one-half acres was donated by George Lloyd. On the day of dedication Mr. Brier was installed as joint pastor of the Centreville and Eden Presbyterian churches. Rev. Sam. B. Bell preached the sermon. It was a day of joy in the new community. The church grew rapidly in numbers and influence. A. A. Saunders and Dr. Selfridge were added as Elders.

The church frequently permitted its pastor to go out and do missionary work which resulted in planting the churches in Alvarado, East Oakland, and Alameda, Livermore, and other and more distant places.

Wild Mustard Seeds:

A most interesting article from *The Sacramento Daily Union* of December 30, 1857 heralded a possible new industry for the town of Centreville in Alameda County. The particulars:

"Another very lucrative employment, which was engaged by a number of parties, was the gathering of wild mustard seed. The success attending this operation, carried on as it invariably was under the most favorable circumstances, and in the roughest and most wasteful manner, is sufficient to encourage the idea of regular cultivation of mustard next season. It was tried last year by someone in the vicinity of Centreville, in the adjoining county of Alameda, with what success we never learned. A friend who was engaged in the mustard business in the Atlantic States for a long time, assures us that from his knowledge of the business and his observations and calculations on the subject, he has no doubt that it would be profitable. He has some idea of establishing a mill in the vicinity of San Jose. The California mustard is said to be an article much superior to the English, or any other imported seed."

Such a write up is enough to excite many into jumping into this new industry in the fledgling town of Centreville, until you read the article that followed this one:

The *Baltimore Patriot* says:

“We have had the pleasure of tasting (to us) a new wine, made from the juice of the tomato. We consider ourselves a “good judge of wine,” and pronounce this a first rate article. It is made with no other ingredients than the pure juice of the tomato and sugar, and very much resembles champagne, having a lighter transparent color, with a pleasant palatable flavor. We believe it can be made equal to the best champagne.”

September 1858:

New Cemetery:

The Pioneer Cemetery was laid out in September, 1858, on land given by G. A. Lloyd, although burials had been made in it before then. The first trustees were: Charles Kelsey, Erastus Johnson, Charles Hilton, Dr. J. M. Selfridge and James Hawley. Many old settlers are buried within these quiet borders whose names are familiar to those now living—some of them have borne prominent parts in the history of this part of the State. The names inscribed on the old tombstones bring up many a picture and memory of bygone days. One of the first post offices established in the township was at Centreville and Capt. Bond was, perhaps, the first postmaster.

The paragraph above was taken directly from *The History of Washington Township* by the ladies of the Country Club.

October 18, 1858:

New Postmaster:

George W. Bond was appointed Centreville Postmaster on October 18, 1858 replacing Reuben Clements.

*** THE LOST BREYFOGLE MINE ***

Charles and Joshua Breyfogle, from Lockhart, New York, joined the thousands of '49ers' rushing into California. The pair headed west with a train of saddle and draft horses and two wagons in the spring of 1849. They teamed up with other pioneers in Columbus Ohio and continued their long journey to the California goldfields. They reached Sacramento on August 14, 1849 and they soon began searching for gold on the Butte Creek and Chico River. They had some good fortune near Marysville California and by December 1850 Charles Breyfogle returned to New York with \$20,000.

In 1851 Charles returned to California and settled in Centreville. The ladies of the Country Club of Washington Township wrote in the history of Breyfogle:

“C. C. Breyfogle, one of the first county assessors, built the house that is now the Chadbourne home”

At the first court of Sessions of Alameda County held on June 3, 1853 C.C. Breyfogle was named supervisor of the 1st Road District, which encompassed two miles on either side of the road from Union City to Mission San Jose.

October 2, 1854 Assessor Goucher resigned and was succeeded by Charles C. Breyfogle. In 1855 Breyfogle was elected to the office of Assessor for Alameda County. Then on September 14, 1857 C.C. Breyfogle was elected as Treasurer for Alameda County.

William Halley in his “*Centennial Yearbook of Alameda County*” recounts this story of Charles Breyfogle:

"Rumors having become rife (1859) charging that all was not right in the Treasurer's office, a committee, consisting of Jonathan Mayhew and Sam. M. Davis was appointed by the Board of Supervisors, to examine that officer's books, when it was discovered that his accounts showed defalcations in the office amounting to \$8,107.37. The wonder was what the Treasurer, Mr. Breyfogle, had done with the money; but when it is remembered that gambling was a prevalent vice among men, there ought to have been no great wonder how the money was squandered. Of course the county, possessing sufficient security, ultimately sustained no loss in funds."

On August 16, 1859 Alameda County officials demanded that Breyfogle deliver the keys to the treasury to them. He refused and continued to refuse until the hounding became unbearable upon which Breyfogle admitted his guilt and delivered the keys. When opened the treasury was empty. Breyfogle was arrested and jailed and in 1861.

But there was more to this story than what had been told by William Halley. From *The San Bernardino Sun Telegram*, March 22 & 29, 1964:

Breyfogle's successor at the assessment office was not satisfied with the trial that convicted Charles, so he took to investigating the books of the assessor's office. He noted some entries that appeared irregular. All were in the same handwriting. They totaled approximately \$5,500. The new Treasurer identified the handwriting as that of a clerk who was still employed. The District attorney was notified and a partial confession was obtained.

Freed of his sentence, and his name cleared, Charles C. Breyfogle decided to go to the newer silver fields of Nevada rather than try to pick up loose threads of his career in California. His older brother Joshua, returned to the east for a reunion with his wife, Mary, to whom he had sent several shipments of gold by both friends and by a third brother Richard.

Charles went to Virginia City, then on east over the famed Pony Express route to Austin Nevada. At Austin he began dealing in mining properties and became a promoter of Geneva, a mining town some 30 miles south of the tributary of the Great Smoky Valley that stretches from near Austin to Tonopah.

Very rich ore ledges had been found at Geneva and its backers enthusiastically envisioned a great metropolis. In the narrow Geneva Canyon the town's most pretentious structure was a hotel. It was two stories tall, built of stone but occupied a space but 30 feet wide and 50 feet deep. Erected by partners Smith and Jackson, it was run by Breyfogle and appears in the current newspaper articles as the "Breyfogle Hotel."

At this hotel, in the summer of 1863, four men registered who spent hours in the lobby talking in whispers and pouring over a map. Then in the night they left. Breyfogle, who of course had been curious at his guest's conduct, felt certain that they were bonanza hunters. He noted that they had headed south and that convinced him they were on the track of the legendary "Lost Gunsight Mine" in Death Valley.

Hastily assembling a kit, and turning over the hotel to an assistant, he followed finding only that his former guests were wasting no time. It took two days for Breyfogle to catch them even by a forced march. He overtook them in a camp somewhere between today's Tonopah and Goldfield.

The four men were surprised to be joined by their former host of Geneva, but were cordial. Around the camp fire that night they confessed that the prospector garb was camouflage.

They sought no mine. They were Confederate sympathizers seeking to elude Union guard points by striking out for Texas over the desert.

The Great Basin Desert was unsafe. Paiute war parties were hunting white men. Five armed men would be safer than four, so they would travel together until they reached the Salt Lake – San Bernardino Trail where Breyfogle could join some caravan headed for California.

That was the plan and that was the way the trek started until the Amargosa Desert was reached. Only one, maybe two days from the Salt Lake Trail, they set up a camp near today's town of Shoshone.

Toward morning Breyfogle awakened with a start to hear a companion scream and a second later see him die from the crushing blow of an Indian war club. Breyfogle grabbed his boots and took off into the desert. He had no time to pick up either gun or canteen. Through the night he ran with only one thought – to get away.

Breyfogle's flight did not end until weak from hunger and thirst he reached Stump Spring in the Pahrump Valley. There he was captured and held as a slave by Indians. After his capture Breyfogle was utilized as a slave to haul water for the squaws. Then the youngsters took over. They made him "play horse" with several getting on his back and having him buck. It was great sport for the kiddies, but when bigger boys moved in the emaciated Breyfogle couldn't buck hard enough to suit them even when prodded with sticks. One larger boy showed his anger by bashing Breyfogle's head with a club.

Then along came a California wagon train. Its members heard of a white man being held captive in an Indian rancheria, or camp. The travelers paid a ransom and Breyfogle was released. He was half dead and mentally dazed from the clubbing. The travelers left him with the Yount's at Manse (about ten miles distant from the rancheria). Here he was nursed back to health.



This is the Manse where Charles Breyfogle was nursed back to health.

Breyfogle showed his gold, but he couldn't remember where he had found it. He insisted it wasn't far away for he had picked it up before the Indians had caught him. When his health returned, Breyfogle went back to Austin Nevada. During the rest of his life he organized expeditions to help him find the lost gold. He never did.

At the Manse Breyfogle had left a few pieces of his gold. They intrigued the Yount boys who must have been among the first "Breyfoglers" as hunters for the bonanza came to be called. Up in the hills at Johnnie, north of Pahrump Ranch, a fine outcropping of gold was found.

The ore compared with the Breyfogle's pieces. It matched in color and grain. That is ample reason by the Younts felt they had found the famous Breyfogle.

