

SUNSET VIEW CEMETERY

**Cemetery for the Paupers
and the Indigent of San Francisco**

Colma, California



SUNSET VIEW CEMETERY

San Francisco's Cemetery for the Paupers and the Indigent

The San Francisco City Cemetery [also known as the Golden Gate Cemetery] at the site of the present day Palace of Legion of Honor was ordered closed in 1898, to the pleasure of the Outer Richmond District residents of San Francisco. No burials were to be made after March 1898. With nowhere to bury these souls, undertakers searched for land that would be approved as a new paupers cemetery. A. Verkonteren in 1899 saw the benefit of burying paupers on property that he thought that he owned in northern San Mateo County. His widow, Olive Verkonteren, quickly sold the land in 1899, and the cemetery operated by the Hagen brothers, James, Joseph, and William, grew to encompass a full square block of the Abbey Homestead Association subdivision east side of Hillside Boulevard.

The ledger books containing the burials, which for a long time were thought to be lost, were given in 2013 to the Colma Historical Association by Olivet Memorial Park. The books cover the years 1901-1904, 1907-1919 and 1922-1948. The book for the period 1905 and 1906 may have been lost in the 1906 earthquake and fire, and burials because of that event may have overwhelmed the record keeping.

The cemetery is not maintained and the gravestones were removed many years ago.

The Colma Historical Association is located at Hillside Boulevard and 'F' Street in Colma.

The History Room of the San Francisco Main Library has actual pictures of this cemetery taken in 1941.

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SUNSET VIEW CEMETERY

Colma, California

Cemetery for the Paupers and the Indigent of San Francisco

Part I - The Early Years¹

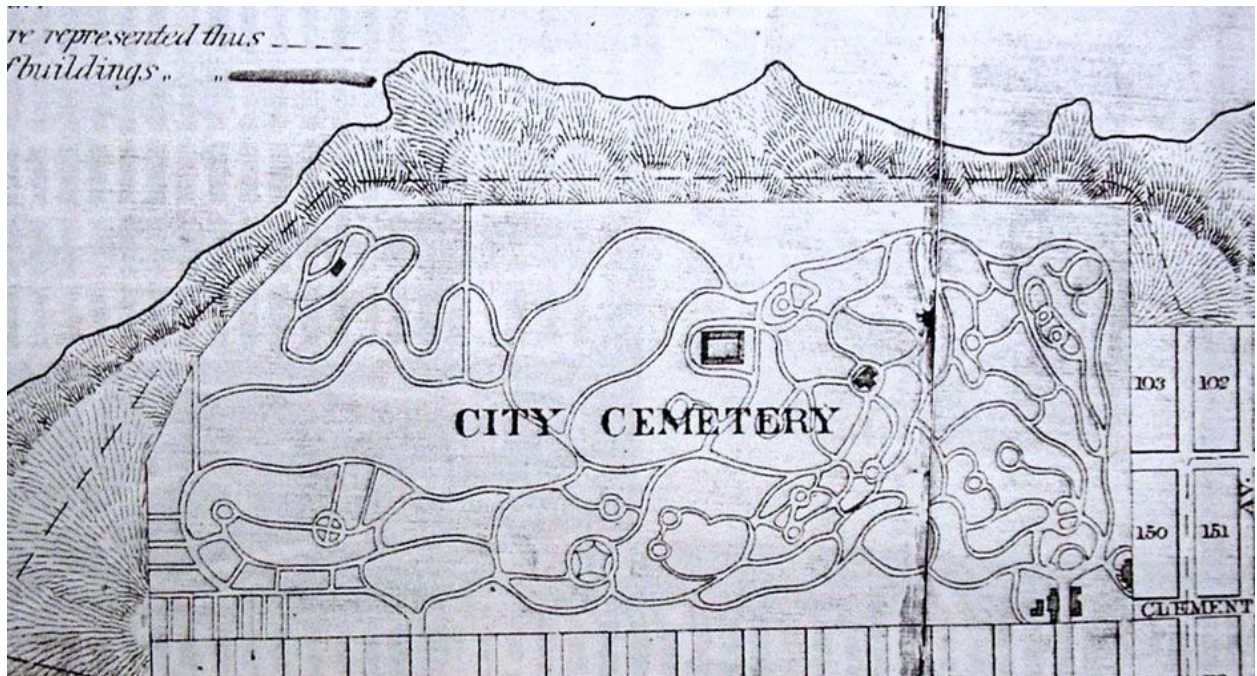
Yerba Buena Cemetery, 10 acres of municipal land later repurchased at great expense by the city for much of the current Civic Center, accepted burials from 1850 to 1861. According to Hansen's San Francisco Almanac, the bodies were exhumed and moved to Golden Gate Cemetery, roughly 200 acres of land purchased by the city in 1868.

Before it became Lincoln Park in 1909, Golden Gate Cemetery encompassed the Clement Street Cemetery and the City Cemetery, the later mainly a "potter's field" for those too poor to pay for their own interments. Many bodies remain beneath Lincoln Park's golf course.

The Palace of Legion of Honor stands over the old City Cemetery. City cemetery plots were sold to 25 individual "societies" of the time including The Improved Order of Red Men. They moved some, but for the rest - they just shoveled dirt right over them.

Golden Gate Cemetery (Lincoln Park) also received the remains removed from former Chinese and Greek cemeteries. For the Chinese, this was supposed to be a temporary stop before the remains could be shipped to their ancestral land for permanent burial.

¹ Newspaper two-page article from the San Francisco History Center, Main Library



Map of 1894

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During 1993 while the Place of Legion of Honor was undergoing renovation and expansion, graves were uncovered near its front entrance.

“... 300 corpses from the Gold Rush era - two of them still clutching rosaries, others wearing dentures and Levis - were unearthed from what appears to be an old pauper’s graveyard. Some experts say another 11,000 bodies might be underneath the museum grounds. “I am not aware that any of them were [exhumed],” says College of San Mateo history professor Michael Svanevik. The city simply knocked down all the monuments in 1909 and put in a golf course. The museum was added in 1924. Among the finds was a man who had a third arm buried with him, several medical school cadavers and two coffins containing remnants of denim with rivets stamped Levi. Someone also left their heart in San Francisco - a tiny box that first appeared to hold some

sort of tree root. Most coffins simply contained elderly men - believed to be buried between 1870 and 1900 wrapped in shrouds.”²

.....

Part II - The Cause

29 December 1897

--- CLOSING OF THE CITY'S CEMETERY ---

[Created in 1868, was also known as the Golden Gate Cemetery which included a pauper field]

Richmond Residents Jubilant Over the Crowning of their Fight
Resolutions Passed Thanking “The [San Francisco] Call”
for Its Valuable Assistance

The members of the Richmond District Club are feeling particularly jubilant at present over the crowning of their efforts to have the city cemetery closed.

They had a long and uphill fight, many having been opposed to them on the theory that if one cemetery were removed others might suffer a like fate. On the first of the year [1898] the ordinance passed by the Supervisors some months ago will go into effect, and no further burials will be permitted.

The cemetery was originally intended for a burial ground for indigent dead, but a number of societies reaped a harvest by the sale of lots and its beneficent purpose was defeated.

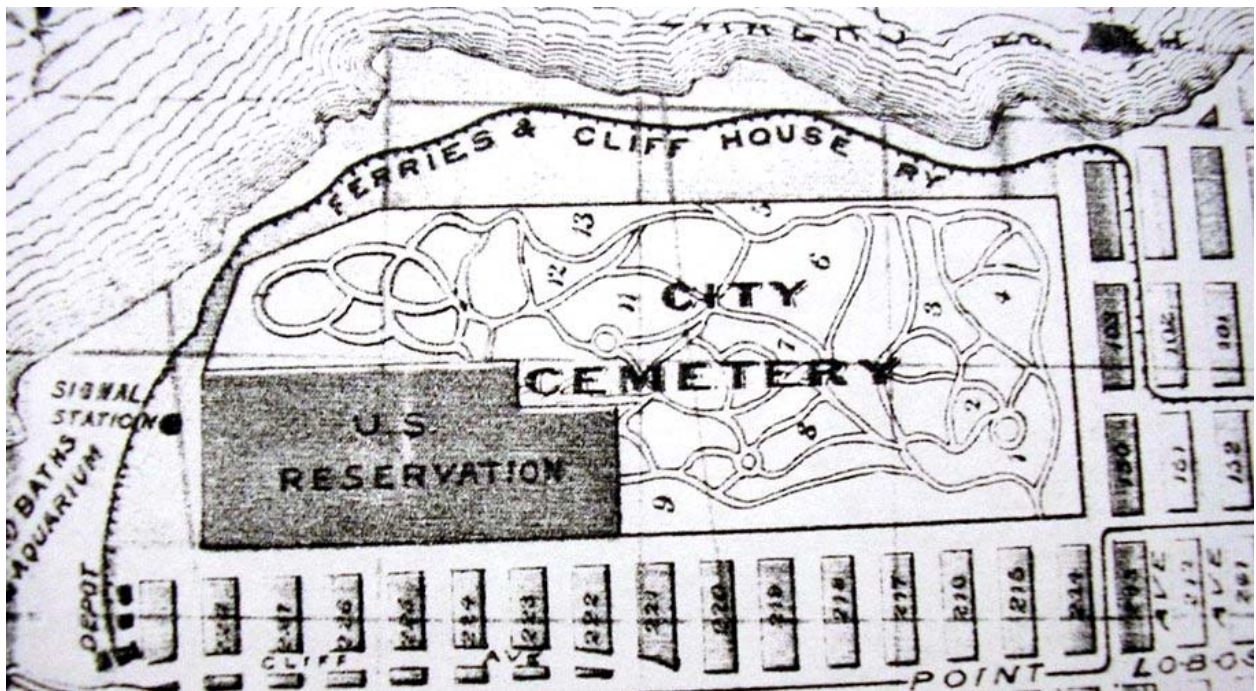
This state of affairs will end on the beginning of the year, and property owners in the district surrounding the cemetery are happy, as it means a long stride toward the improvement of their portion of the city.

² *San Francisco Cemeteries*, Brian Bonner Mavrogeorge, May 1999, page 13, Presentation at the California Genealogical Society Annual Fair. San Francisco History Center, Main Library.

The Richmond district people have always felt that the cemeteries within the city's limits should be removed to accommodate the westward growth of the city, and that the dead should not retard the progress.

President Charles H. Hubbs of the Richmond District Club, in speaking of the improvement of his district yesterday, said: "I have been a resident in the Richmond district for a great many years and have watched with pleasure the many residences that have been erected. There are still a great many acres lying idle owing to their being located near cemeteries. People have a natural aversion to living near a burying ground, and therefore the land remains unoccupied. We worked hard to have the city cemetery condemned as it was a menace to health and prevented the improvement of our district. We hope that ultimately all other cemeteries within the city limits may be removed, and our efforts shall be in that direction."³

The official date prohibiting further interments in the City cemetery was 01 March 1898.



Map of 1898

³ *San Francisco Call*, Wednesday, 29 December 1897, page 11, column 1.

Part III - The Problem

UNDERTAKERS PERPLEXED

16 January 1898

The Closing of the City Cemetery Brings About Disadvantages
The Chinese Will Purchase a Tract of Land in San Mateo County
for a temporary Resting-Place

Notwithstanding the long notice given by the Supervisors that the City Cemetery would be closed for all interments on and after the first of the present year, nothing has been done by those societies and the undertakers having the responsibility of providing a final resting place for the indigent dead. The same condition of affairs has existed with the Chinese.

...The time now being extended to the first of April, steps will be taken by the Chinese to procure a tract of fifteen acres in San Mateo County for a temporary resting place for their dead [actually a five-acre tract and a ten-acre tract].⁴

.....

⁴ *San Francisco Call*, Sunday 16 January 1898, page 9, columns 5 and 6.

Part IV - The Participants

James Hagan, owned undertaking parlors at 525 Valencia Street (1891), 445 Valencia Street (1898), 49 Duboce Avenue (1908) and 132 Duboce Avenue (1919). James was born at England in 1863 and died 15 December 1919.⁵ Sarah Hagan was born at Canada in 1853 and died 19 December 1930.⁶

James Hagan buried San Francisco's poor from 1900 until about 1949. His aging hand-written records, with little specifics, were stored in a fireproof vault at Olivet Memorial Park Cemetery, but they do not include a detailed plot map.⁷ ***The records that were kept at Olivet Memorial Park were given to the Colma Historical Association in 2013.***

Joseph Hagan, owned undertaking parlors at 17 City Hall Avenue (1892), 1705 Sacramento Street (1898), 1710 Sacramento Street (1908) and 1724 Sacramento Street (1939). Joseph was born at England in 1867. His will was dated 23 January 1939.⁸

Catherine Hagan was born at California in 1871 and died 17 February 1936.⁹

William Hagan, brother to James and Joseph, transported the deceased to cemeteries. William died 04 April 1929.¹⁰

The City of San Francisco awarded a yearly contract for the burial of its indigent dead and the one of Hagens were usually successful in their contract bid and then later appealed for additional city moneys to complete their job.

⁵ Volume 288 of Deeds at page 319, San Mateo County Records.

⁶ Volume 535 of Official Records at page 330, San Mateo County Records.

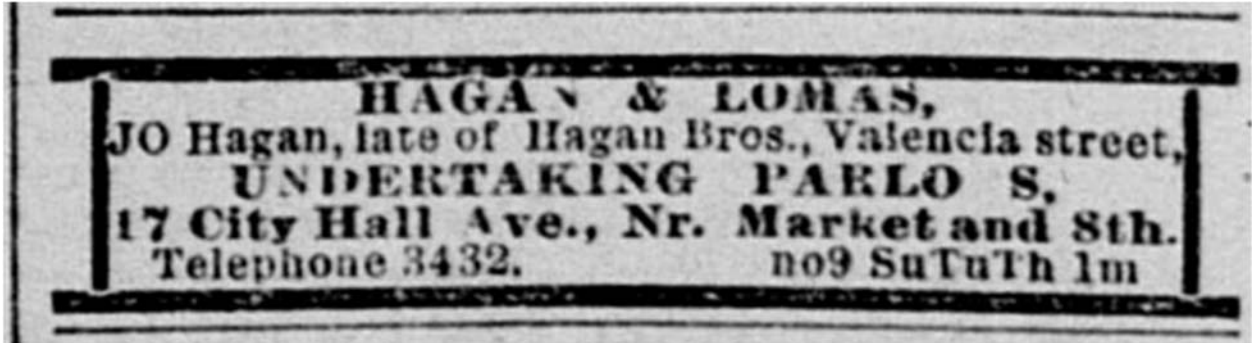
⁷ "Hunt for Graves Leads to Colma", *San Francisco Chronicle*, Monday, 05 September 1994. San Francisco History Center, Main Library.

⁸ Volume 906 of Official Records at page 74, San Mateo County Records.

⁹ Volume 1023 of Official Records at page 472, San Mateo County Records.

¹⁰ Volume 485 of Official Records at page 467, San Mateo County Records.

David J. Kelly, a limited-time partner of William Hagan, not to be confused with Edward Kelly who established a two-acre cemetery in 1898 on the west side of Junipero Serra Boulevard.



Part V - The Result

1899

26 September - Widow Olive Verkouteren sold to Sarah Hagan, wife of James Hagan a portion of Lot Number 5 in Block Number One Hundred and Seventy of the Lands of the Abbey Homestead Association.¹¹ James Hagan died 15 December 1919,¹² and his wife, Sarah L., died 19 December 1930.¹³

21 Oct 1899

WORRIED OVER DEPOSITION OF DEAD BODIES New Cemetery on the County Line "INDIGENTS" CAUSE TROUBLE

CONTRACTOR VERKOUTEREN IN A BAD SITUATION A Very Awkward Predicament follows a Protest by the Creditors of the F. E. Luty Estate¹⁴

A. Verkonteren, who has the contract to bury the city's indigent dead, is sorely puzzled over a difficulty he has collided with. Some time ago the Supervisors passed ,a law prohibiting the further interment of the dead within the city limits, and before arrangements were made for the interment of indigents elsewhere Mr. Verkonteren had accumulated about two dozen bodies which he did not know what to do with. While in this predicament he noticed an advertisement of the sale of some lots in the Abbey Homestead Association, lying on the boundary of San Francisco and San Mateo Counties. He bid for the two lots the sum of \$750, which was accepted by the executrix. Without loss of time Mr. Verkonteren place the bodies under sod of his recent purchase, starting a cemetery of his own.

¹¹ Volume 81 of Deeds at page 482, San Mateo County Records.

¹² Volume 288 of Official Records at page 319, San Mateo County Records.

¹³ Volume 535 of Official Records at page 330, San Mateo County Records.

¹⁴ *San Francisco Call*, Saturday, 21 October 1899, page 9, column 1.

He was getting ready to make additions to his graveyard when the matter of confirming the sale of the lands, which were a part of the estate of F. E. Luty, came up before Probate Judge Coffey. Then there was a hitch which had not been anticipated. Some of the creditors of the estate entered a protest against the sale of the land, and in spite of the fact the purchaser had made a liberal deposit the sale was not confirmed by the court. What made matters worse was the fact that the court ordered the land readvertised for sale. This is what has tied things up in a hard knot. Mr. Verkouteren does not know whether he has the two dozen bodies on his hands now or not. If he has it it is a question as to whether or not he can disinter the bodies, for the law is very strict in the matter of disturbing the dead. Should some one else buy the property it is very likely that the new purchaser will demand that the owner of the bodies remove the same without regard to whether he can do so or not.

There is still another question that the unfortunate gentleman is studying over, and that is if he can remove the bodies without being molested for trespassing what he can do with them so that he will not suffer great loss in again disposing of them. At present indications Mr. Verkouteren will be a lively bidder for the lots when they are again on the market. In the event of his being successful he hopes to induce the authorities of San Mateo and San Francisco counties to allow him to let the indigents remain where they are, which may be difficult, for so far the lots in question are not included in the lands set apart for cemetery purposes.¹⁵

NOTE ONE: Did not find a deed to Mr. Verkouteren for this property from the F. E. Luty estate. However Mrs. Olive Verkouteren of San Francisco acquired this property from Eva Esten Fisher of Oakland, California, on 10 July 1899,¹⁶ three months before the newspaper article.

NOTE TWO: Mr. Verkouteren was alive according to the newspaper article of October, but the deed in July states Mrs. Olive Verkouteren was a widow.

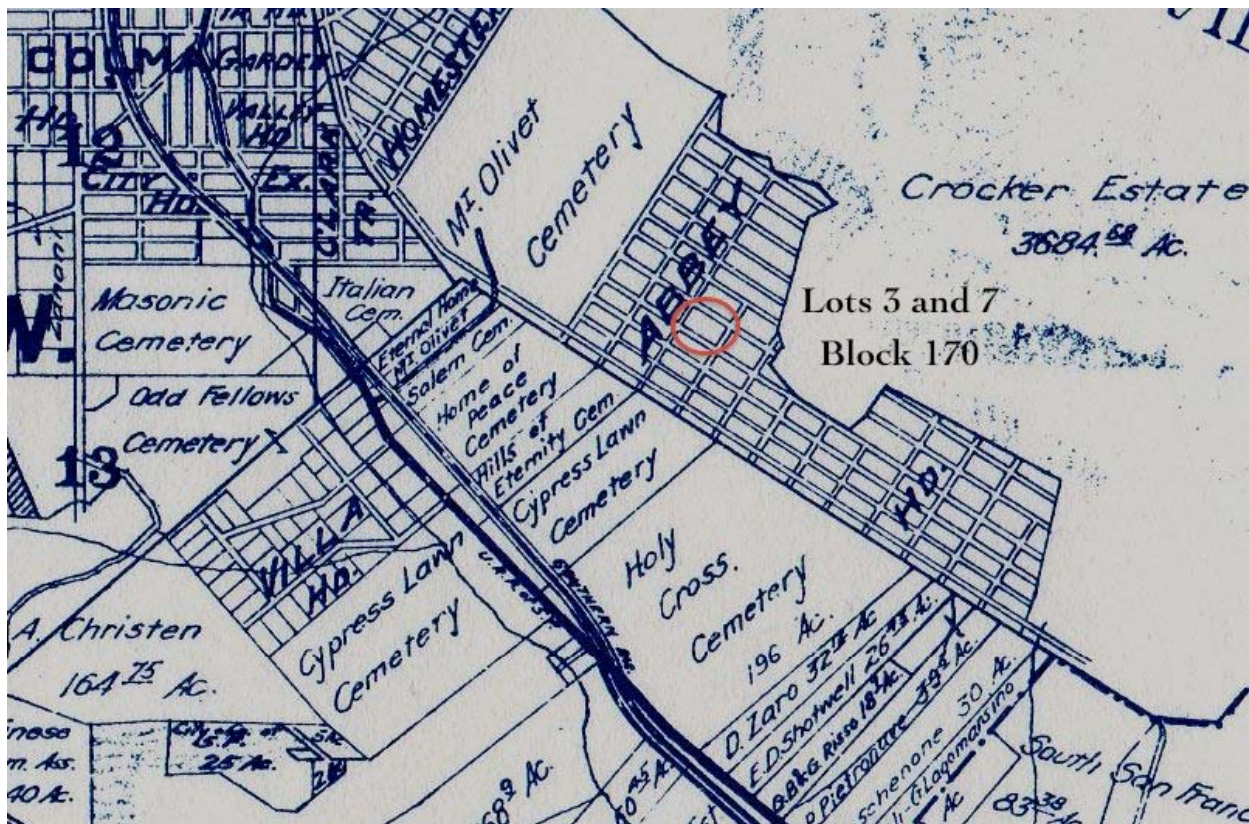
¹⁵ *San Francisco Call*, Saturday, 21 October 1899, Page 9, column 1.

¹⁶ Volume 81 of Deeds at page 328, San Mateo County Records.

1900

22 Jan 1900

Probate Court awarded to James Hagan Lots 2 and 6, the south east 30 feet of Lot 1, and the south east 80 feet of Lot 5, Block 170, of the Abbey Homestead Association for the sum of Three hundred dollars that being the highest and best bid.¹⁷



Sunset View Cemetery – Block 170, Abbey Homestead Association, Colma

31 Jan 1900

The estate of Frederick E. Luty deeded to James Hagan Lots 2 and 6, the South east 30 feet of Lot 1 and the Southeast 80 feet of Lot 5, in Block 170, of the Map of the Abbey Homestead Association.¹⁸

¹⁷ Volume 86 of Deeds at page 248, San Mateo County Records.

¹⁸ Volume 83 of Deeds at page 330, San Mateo County Records.

01 Feb 1900 Sarah and James Hagan deeded to Catherine Hagan, wife of Joseph Hagan, the South East thirty feet of lot one and all of lots two, five and six in Block one hundred and seventy of the Abbey Homestead Association.¹⁹

1901

21 Jan 1901 Widow Mathilda Rumsf deeded to James Hagan a portion of Lot No. One in Block No. 170 of the Lands of the Abbey Homestead Association.²⁰

1902

04 Jan 1902 Henry E. Allen and Elizabeth Sarah Allen, his wife, deeded to James Hagan all of Lot numbered Four in Block Numbered Two and the portion of Lot Numbered Three in Block Numbered Two of the Abbey Homestead Association.²¹

1904

17 Jan 1904 **POLICE FIND MAN WHO SAW SOEDER ON NIGHT BLAISE WAS MURDERED**

Leon Soeder allegedly poisoned his brother-in-law. The [San Francisco] Call published a four-column article on page 33 of its 17 January issue. The following is at the end of the article:

Coroner Leland has notified the police that he is ready to hold the inquest, but has been asked to delay it until the police have been able to secure more evidence against Soeder.....

In the dead wagon with a number of the city's pauper dead, the body of Joseph Blaise was taken to the Sunset Cemetery, in San Mateo County, and buried

¹⁹ Volume 85 of Deeds at page 312, San Mateo County Records.

²⁰ Volume 85 of Deeds at page 240, San Mateo County Records.

²¹ Volume 92 of Deeds at page 248, San Mateo County Records.

yesterday by City Undertaker Joseph Hagan of 1705 Sacramento street. Undertaker Hagan visited Soeder at the City Prison before the interment was made and asked him if he did not want to have the body of his murdered brother-in-law interred in a private cemetery. Soeder at first said that he did not care what was done with it. But later told Hagan that he would remove it from the potter's field as soon as he was cleared of the charge now pending against him and in a position to pay for a decent burial.

As soon as the dead man's relatives in Germany can arrange it they will undoubtedly have the remains disinterred and buried in a private cemetery or taken to his home in Germany.

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06 July 1904      David J. Kelly purchased from Angelette J. Breck (a widow of the City of Oakland) Lots 3 and 7 of Block 170, of the Abbey Homestead Association. The purchase price was not disclosed.<sup>22</sup>

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12 July 1904 **UNDERTAKERS STILL AT WAR**

William Hagan Declares His Brothers Are Trying to Have Contract Rescinded

ROW OVER PAUPER DEAD

One Owner of Sunset Lots Says Force Will be Used to Stop Burials There

There is still trouble between the Hagans, but William has not been arrested for placing the pauper dead in the lots belonging to his brothers, James and Joseph, in San Mateo County. Williams says his two brothers are trying to have his contract rescinded by the Board of Supervisors of San Francisco because they want the contract themselves. The two brothers, James and Joseph, deny that they want to bury the indigent dead of San Francisco at \$5.50 per corpse, but they do insist that their brother William and his partner, Kelly, shall not deposit paupers' bodies in their ground.

²² Volume 109 of Deeds at page 212, San Mateo County Records.

On Sunday night James Hagan said he would have his brother William and William's partner, Kelly, arrested the first thing Monday morning, but he failed to make good his threat. He gives as a reason that the lawyer with whom he was to consult did not come to see him at the time agreed upon. This morning at 9 o'clock the matter is to be taken up and the opinion of the lawyer expressed as to the rights in this case.

William Hagan was busy yesterday preparing boxes to receive the dead bodies of the city's poor. He stopped long enough to say:

"My two brothers are anxious to keep this matter before the public through newspapers so as to prejudice the minds of the Board of Supervisors of San Mateo County and cause me to fail in getting the permit to bury the pauper dead in the ground which I have purchased and have platted as Sunnyvale Cemetery. The facts of the case are that my two brothers and David Kelly fixed up a scheme to put in only one bid to the Supervisors for the burial of the poor of San Francisco and then divide the work. The price was to have been \$10 for each corpse, adult or child, but we learned of the scheme and put in our bid for \$5.50, which is enough.

"We have gone to considerable expense in fitting up a place for the care of bodies and burial of San Francisco's poor and I intend to continue my contract with the city. John Kelley has put up the money with the understanding that I buy him out when I can. After we got the contract from the city my brothers sent their lawyer to Kelley and offered him \$500 to turn the contract over to them. He refused to do so and now they are trying to get us turned down in San Mateo County.

"We paid \$500 for the lots we have asked the San Mateo Supervisors to allow us to use as a burial ground and have the ground surveyed and the title examined. That and the other expenses which we have had amounts to an investment of \$1,000. Yes, part of that was paid as attorney fees to get the permit through the San Mateo Supervisors and part of it for general expenses. The permit should come from the Supervisors within the next nine days and then we can bury in the lots we have bought.

“No complaints have been made by the neighbors regarding the holding of bodies here, as I have not held any longer than the law allows. Until the permit is granted for us to use the land we bought and have platted we will bury in the lots adjoining.”

WILL USE FORCE - James Hagan is waiting to learn what his lawyer has to say regarding the opposition firm's use of land belonging to himself and his brother Joseph. He called at the Health Office yesterday and protested that no permits should be issued to the new firm on the ground that they had no land in which to inter the dead. Deputy Health Officer Levy said he would issue the permits, as the Supervisors had awarded the contract to Kelly and Hagan, and they claimed they had a place of burial. No other complaints have been received by the Board of Health, hence Levy concluded that the trouble was a family one and that he would keep aloof from such a row.

When asked as to the real cause of the complaint James Hagan said:

“William Hagan, my brother and his so-called partner, Kelly, will not be allowed to bury any of the city's paupers in our lots, even if force has to be used to stop them. We have a watchman there now and he will see to it that no one is buried in our ground without an order from us. My brother William says there is only a one-inch fence between us. There is only a one-inch fence between our land and the land adjoining, but he has not got that land yet [Deed dated 06 July was filed on 15 July]. He says he is to get a permit from the San Mateo Board of Supervisors. He paid the District attorney of San Mateo County \$25 to get his permit to bury the indigent dead of San Francisco in the lots he says he has bought in the county, but the permit has not been granted yet, even if he did pay \$25 to get it.

“It is a fact that my brother Joe did offer Kelly \$500 to turn the business over to him, and he would have taken William with him, but when the matter was to be talked over William and Kelly said \$1,000 had been used and they wanted that amount. My brother Joe said he would pay that amount provided the land was all turned over to him, but not otherwise. Kelly was putting up all the money. My brother William did not have any money. We are going to

have a conference in the morning - that is, my brother, our attorney, and my self - to decide what steps to take.”

JOSEPH WANTS PEACE - Joseph Hagan says that he does not want any notoriety over the dispute which has arisen between himself and brother, but substantiates all James Hagan says about the offer to buy out his brother William and Kelly. Regarding the refusal to allow any more bodies to be buried by the opposition firm in Sunset Cemetery he says:

“I think the law is plain enough and good enough to handle this matter and I certainly would not consent to the use of force to prevent my own brother from burying the dead, although I have told him not to use our ground for that purpose again. If it should come to a point where the law could not prevent it, I would just let the matter go, but I think the proper way to do will be to get an injunction. The matter will be talked over in the morning and we will then decide what to do.”

In the meantime William Hagan, as a member of the firm recognized by the city as the official undertakers, is gathering the city’s dead and preparing the bodies for burial. The barn back of 3620 Nineteenth street [at Guerrero Street] is the firm’s headquarters.²³

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02 Sep 1904      **INSPECT UNDERTAKING PLACE**

Supervisor D’Ancona and Frank Schmidt, Superintendent of the Almshouse, yesterday paid a visit of inspection to the undertaking place on Nineteenth street run by Kelly & Hagan who have the contract for burying the indigent dead. Complaints have been made against the way in which the contractors are conducting their business, because they were using a barn to house the dead bodies pending burial. D’Ancona will today endeavor to secure a site in San Mateo County for a cemetery to be used by this city to bury the indigent [25 acres was secured from the estate of Patrick Brooks, but apparently never used].<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *San Francisco Call*, Tuesday, 12 July 1904, page 16, column 1.

<sup>24</sup> *San Francisco Call*, Monday 02 September 1904, page 16, column 3.

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03 Sep 1904

CITY TO BURY INDIGENT DEAD

Supervisors Will Not Complete Contract With the Firm of Hagan & Kelly

Supervisor d'Ancona, chairman of the Health and Hospital Committee, and City Engineer Woodward yesterday made a visit of inspection to the plat in Sunnyvale Cemetery, San Mateo, where the bodies of the city's indigent dead are buried. The visit was made in connection with the investigation of the manner in which Hagan and Kelly are conducting the burials, some complaints having been made in relation thereto.

Supervisor d'Ancona as the result of his investigations will recommend that the contract with Hagan & Kelly for the burial of the indigent dead be not completed. The firm is at present operating under a resolution of the Board of Supervisors, but the contract has never been signed.

D'Ancona says that steps will be at once taken to utilize the appropriation of \$5,000 made in the last budget for the purchase of a city cemetery. As soon as this is done, the city itself will bury the indigent dead.

An effort will be made to have the bodies taken from city institutions for burial to the Morgue, instead of taking them to the barn on Nineteenth street [3620 Nineteenth at Guerrero], as Hagan & Kelly are presently doing. D'Ancona thinks a barn hardly a fit place for the reception of the dead. The bodies will be kept at the Morgue until the time for their transfer to the burying ground.

"The manner of burying the city's dead has been no worse than it always was." said d'Ancona. "The fault lies in the contract system that has been in vogue. As to the taking away of the wrong body from the hospital morgue and its subsequent burial, I am unable to say whether the mistake was due to Hagan & Kelly or to the man in charge, the regular morgue keeper having been absent on account of illness. However we intend to remedy the matter, and think we will do so when the city itself does the work. I have instructed Hagan

& Kelly to file with the Board of Health a record of each burial, and in future to make weekly reports thereon.”²⁵

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20 Sep 1904 James Hagan & Co. Sent a communication to the board [of Supervisors, San Francisco] offering to sell their cemetery in San Mateo County for burial of the indigent dead. The offer was made as a result of reports that the board contemplating taking the interment of indigents out of the hands of the firm.<sup>26</sup>

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San Mateo County Board of Supervisors

“The hearing on petition of D. [David] J. Kelly and Wm. Hagen for a permit to establish a cemetery and bury dead in Lots 3 & 7 Block 10 Abbey Homestead Association tract in First Township, heretofore fixed for this day was ordered continued to meeting to be held August 15, 1904.” - 01 August 1904.²⁷

“The hearing on the petition of Messrs. Kelly and Hagan for a permit to establish a cemetery on Lots 3 & 7 Block 170 in the Abbey Homestead Association tract, came on regularly on this day pursuant to continuance from Monday August 15th 1904, for which date said petition had heretofore been regularly set for hearing.” - 07 September 1904²⁸

“The further hearing on petition of Kelly & Hagan for a permit to establish a cemetery in the Abbey Homestead tract near Colma heretofore continued to and fixed for this day was ordered further continued to the next regular meeting October 17th.” - 03 October 1904²⁹

²⁵ *San Francisco Call*, Tuesday, 03 September 1904, page 16, column 6.

²⁶ *San Francisco Call*, Friday, 20 September 1904, page 9, column 5.

²⁷ Board of Supervisor’s Minutes, Volume 14 at page 121.

²⁸ Board of Supervisor’s Minutes, Volume 14 at page 138.

²⁹ Board of Supervisor’s Minutes, Volume 14 at page 179.

“All matters in connection with the establishment of a cemetery district at Colma and vicinity were ordered continued to November 9th 1904.” - 17 October 1904³⁰

09 November 1904 - continued to November 21st.

19 November 1904 - continued to January 16th 1905.

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**1905**

13 Aug 1905      **SEEK TO OBTAIN CONTRACT  
FOR BURIAL OF PAUPER DEAD**

Kelly & Hagan Petition Superior Court to Compel Supervisors to Give Them the Work

Failing to obtain the award of the yearly contract for the burial of the indigent dead from the Board of Supervisors, the undertaking firm of Kiley [Kelly] & Hagan has filed a petition for a writ of mandate to compel the board to give it the contract.

The affidavit of Joseph Kiley [Kelly] alleges that the bid of \$7 per body made on May 17 last was the lowest bid submitted to the board for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1906. Despite this, the plaintiff alleges that the board refuses to award the contract and has entered into another agreement to pay \$450 per month to another party for the burial of the indigent.<sup>31</sup>

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1906

³⁰ Board of Supervisor’s Minutes, Volume 14 at page 191.

³¹ *San Francisco Call*, Sunday, 13 August 1905, page 16 column 4.,

16 Jan 1906 The petition of William Hagan that he be given the contract to bury the indigent dead for \$350 per month was referred to the Health Committee. Ed. A. Kelly [Edward Kelly Cemetery] has the contract now at \$450 per month.³²

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## 1907

26 Jan 1907        David J. Kelly sold Lots 3 and 7, Block 170 of the Abbey Homestead Association to William Hagan for \$500.00.<sup>33</sup>

The Sunset View Cemetery was established in the vicinity of Colma in 1907, and closed in 1951.

This was the potter's field where indigents, amputations, used cadavers, and still-born from San Francisco were buried. The headstones have been removed and the site is covered over by the Cypress Hills Golf Course.

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1912

18 Apr 1912 An investigation was made into the manner in which the city's indigent dead are buried by undertakers, J. Hagan & Co. [Joseph or James], a complaint being made that Hagan charged more for burial in certain cemeteries than in the graveyard which he owns in the rear of Cypress Lawn Cemetery. Hagan explained that he charged the city \$3.50 for each case, and that when relatives or friends of the dead desire a more elaborate funeral he sometimes charged them more, in which case he put in no bill to the city. His explanations were satisfactory.³⁴

³² *San Francisco Call*, Tuesday, 16 January 1906, page 9, column 5.

³³ Volume 143 of Deeds at page 134, San Mateo County Records.

³⁴ *San Francisco Call*, Thursday, 18 April 1912, page 5, column 2.

30 Sep 1912 James Hagan acquired Lots Four and Eight of Block 170 from Angelette J. Breck. A widow, of Alameda County.³⁵

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**1919**

31 Dec 1919 James Hagan's estate passed to his wife Sarah. Lots 4 and 8 and the 85-foot by 100-foot parcel in Lot One, Block 170.<sup>36</sup>

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1926

05 Nov 1926 Sarah Hagan, a widow, sold her inherited parcel in Lot One of Block 170, 85 feet by 100 feet, Lot No. 4, and Lot No. 8 to Joseph Hagan.³⁷

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**1929**

29 Apr 1929 William Hagan died 04 April 1929. His estate was held in trust for his three nephews and one niece, Edward A. Hagan, Arthur Hagan [born 1911], Samuel Hagan [born 1917] and Alice Hagan [born 1915], until Samuel becomes 21 years of age [1936].

Lots numbered three (3) and seven (7) in Block One Hundred and Seventy (170) "Abbey Homestead Association".<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Volume 217 of Official Records at page 329, San Mateo County Records.

<sup>36</sup> Volume 288 of Official Records at page 319, San Mateo County Records.

<sup>37</sup> Volume 274 of Official Records at page 159, San Mateo County Records.

<sup>38</sup> Volume 485 of Official Records at page 467, San Mateo County Records.



**1930**

19 Aug 1930 William Hagan’s heirs [nephews and niece] sold to Joseph Hagan Lots numbered three (3) and seven (7) in Block One Hundred and Seventy (170) “Abbey Homestead Association”.<sup>39</sup>

19 Dec 1912 Sarah L. Hagan, widow, died. No cemetery property had remained in her estate.<sup>40</sup>



**1940**

02 Jul 1940 Joseph Hagan’s estate was bequeathed to his three children: Mrs. Helen Hoffman (nee Hagan), Fred Hagan, and Richard Hagan according to his will dated 23 January 1939 according to the decree of settlement of final account and distribution.<sup>41</sup>

Parcel #CR-193, Lots 3 and 7, Block 170.  
N.W. 85 feet of Lot #1, Block 170.  
Lot 4, Block 170.  
Lot 8, Block 170.  
N.W. 35 feet of Lot 5, Block 170.  
All of Abbey Homestead.

And the mortuary with equipment, Cathedral Mortuary, at 1724 Sacramento Street.



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<sup>39</sup> Volume 485 of Official Records at page 469, San Mateo County Records.

<sup>40</sup> Volume 535 of Official Records at page 530, San Mateo County Records.

<sup>41</sup> Volume 906 of Official Records at page 74, San Mateo County Records.

**1961**

03 Mar 1961      Action quieting title of estate of Catherine Hagan, deceased 1936. Property omitted from her estate granted to her children, Helen Hoffman, Fred Hagan and Richard Hagan.

- A. The northwesterly 85 feet of Lot 1.
- B. The northwesterly 35 feet of lot 5, all in Block 170.<sup>42</sup>

07 Mar 1961      The heirs of Joseph and Catherine Hagan, Helen Hoffman, Fred Hagan and Richard Hagan sold their inheritance to the Cypress Abbey Company:

- A. The northwesterly 85 feet of Lot 1.
- B. All of Lots 3, 4 and 7 and 8.
- C. The northwesterly 35 feet of lot 5, all in Block 170.<sup>43</sup>

07 Mar 1961      The heirs of Joseph and Catherine Hagan, Helen Hoffman, Fred Hagan and Richard Hagan sold their inheritance to the Cypress Abbey Company:

- A. The southwesterly 30 feet of Lot 1.
- B. All of Lots 2 and 6.
- C. The southwesterly 80 feet of Lot 5, all in Block 170.<sup>44</sup>



**2011**

The Cypress Golf Course filed Parcel Maps of their property. The maps are all similar, with minor variations:

Map No. 1 - dated June 1987, Volume 59 at page 66.

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<sup>42</sup> Volume 3946 of Official Records at page 107, San Mateo County Records.  
<sup>43</sup> Volume 3946 of Official Records at page 108, San Mateo County Records.  
<sup>44</sup> Volume 3946 of Official Records at page 109, San Mateo County Records.

Map No. 2 - dated May 1992, Volume 65 at page 96.  
Map No. 3 - dated August 1992, Volume 66 at page 47.

Sunset View Cemetery property and the Cypress Golf Course are owned by the Cypress Abbey Company, P.O. Box 1516, Colma.

During the 1960's the cemetery was incorporated into an 18-hole golf course. The course shrunk to nine hole in the mid-1990s when Tom Atwood sold 25 acres to neighboring cemeteries, The cemetery spent nearly two decades under the fairways of Cypress Golf course. It is now an unmarked block south of the clubhouse with no headstones or monuments.<sup>45</sup>

APN: 011-360-250 [year 2012], 41.493 acres more or less being a portion of parcel 2, Parcel Map, Volume 69 at pages 86 and 87.

I met with Mr. Wilson Jang of the Golden Hills [Chinese] Cemetery during August 2011. This cemetery began in 1992 organized by Wilson's father, and it is split by the Sunset View Cemetery along the longitudinal axis of the Golden Hill Memorial Park, 2099 Hillside Boulevard. Sunset View Cemetery land is not part of the Golden Hills Cemetery. The overgrowth tends to indicate that nothing has happened to Sunset View since it's closing.

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<sup>45</sup> *"Hunt for Graves Leads to Colma"*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, Monday, 05 September 1994. San Francisco History Center, Main Library.



## Part VI - Epilogue

The first official record is in the San Francisco Directory 1889 as "Hagan & Schofield Undertaker", 507 Valencia Street, James and Joseph Hagan, George W. Schofield Undertakers and Embalmers. The San Francisco Directory 1892 reads: "Hagan Brothers Undertakers", 525 Valencia Street and 17 City Hall Avenue. The Duggan family roots began in 1902 when James hired William Duggan who had just been mustered out of the army (Spanish-American War) at the Presidio in San Francisco. He was a hack-driver, casket maker, gravedigger and all around handyman. He was willing to do any work and was mainly hired by James Hagen because of his experience and familiarity with horses. James owned a stable where he kept his horses and wagons for trips to the cemetery.

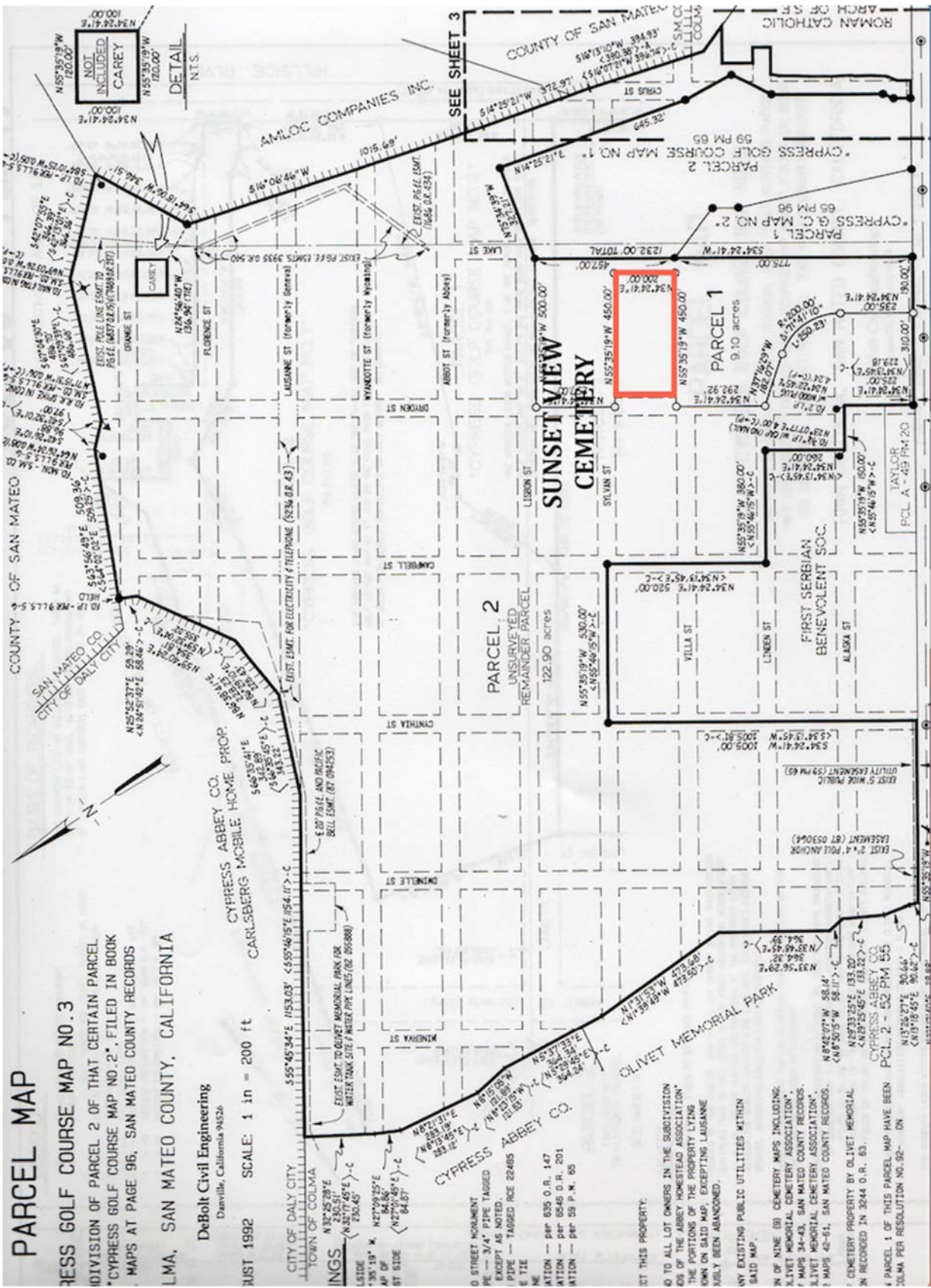
In 1903 Henrietta, James Hagan's youngest daughter married William Duggan shortly after her graduation from medical school at the University of California. William continued working in the livery business, later bought a horse and carriage and went into the taxi business, one of the first taxi services in San Francisco. William was issued a license as an embalmer in 1915 after a course of study. When automobiles were manufactured he bought a limousine and continued in the taxi business until he bought out William Green Undertakers in 1916.

At the age of 13, Edwin J. "Bud" Duggan began assisting his father at the family business in the city after school on Valencia Street. He later attended the San Francisco College of Embalming graduating with a degree of Doctor of Mortuary Science on June 28th, 1935. Bud continued working with his father at the family business until he opened Duggan's Serra Mortuary with his wife, Madeline and children, Bill, Maureen, Patty and Dan.

In the beginning the family had no employees and did all the work themselves. Today Duggan's has grown to be the largest family owned firm in Northern California.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> <http://duggans-serra.com/history.shtml>



Russell R. Brabec, 2015  
 History Guild of Daly City/Colma  
 San Mateo County Genealogical Society