



Photo courtesy of Paula Hinkel

# Savannah Update

*El Monte Cemetery Association*

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## SAVANNAH'S SIEGE MORTAR



Hello, I am Walter White. My family arrived in El Monte in 1853 and later settled in Lamanda Park and the San Gabriel area. Twenty-six of my family members have been buried at Savannah Memorial Park beginning in 1882. I was asked to investigate how to restore the cannon in the park and one thing led to another. An article which appeared in the Los Angeles Times newspaper on July 3, 1929 was brought to my attention. The following article describes what must have been a monumental event for an Independence Day celebration.

### **EL MONTE AND ROSEMEAD TO JOIN IN CELEBRATION**

*EL MONTE, July 2, 1929 – Patriotic exercises featured by the placing of a seven-inch trench siege mortar, obtained from Benicia Arsenal by the United Veterans of the Republic, in El Monte Cemetery in tribute to the war veterans buried there will be held here on Thursday.*

*Arrangements have been made by Charles A. King, adjutant of the Veterans of the Republic, and a chamber of commerce committee, Roy C. Adelman and Neil R. Murray to make this an historic occasion in this city.*

*State Senator Frank Merriam of Long Beach will be the principal speaker and Mayor C. A. Baker will be the chairman of the day. Rev. Bob Schuler will give the benediction. The procession to the cemetery will be headed by Grand Marshal T. H. Lambert, who will have a county motor patrol escort. Included in the line of march will be the City Council, Mayor Baker, United Veterans of the Republic, Civil War veterans, Spanish-American War veterans, El Monte Legion Post, Daughters of the American Revolution, El Monte and Rosemead Women's Clubs, Lions' Club of El Monte, Business and Professional Woman's Club, Lexington Masonic Lodge No.104, Odd Fellows, Boy Scout troops of El Monte and Rosemead, and a section including the surviving pioneers of this city. Adjutant King has made special arrangements to have the naval band from the U.S.S. Colorado present.*

The trench siege mortar was manufactured in 1898 at the Watervliet (pronounced water-vuh-leet) Arsenal in New York. This arsenal was established in 1813 to support the War of 1812 and is still making weaponry in 2010. The cannon was made the same year as the beginning and end of the short Spanish-American War. For related topics see:

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/1898/intro.html>,  
<http://www.wva.army.mil/museum.php> and  
<http://www.militarymuseum.org/Benicia.html>

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**NOTABLE QUOTABLE**

“Every man is his own ancestor, and every man is his own heir. He devises his own future, and he inherits his own past.”  
*Frederick Henry Hedge*



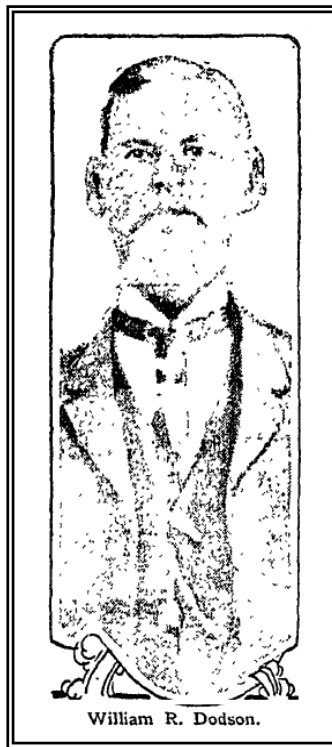
**An Early Pioneer . . .**

**William R. Dodson**

In tracing the history of this truly public-spirited citizen, it is learned that he hails from the “old south” and that his ancestors were early settlers of the Old Dominion. His father, Gainaim M. Dodson, was a native of Halifax county, Va., and passed his boyhood and youth there. In 1833 he removed to Kentucky, where he met and married Nancy P. Thompson, who had spent her life in that section of the south. The young couple soon went to Crawford county, Ark., where their son, William R., was born in 1839.

The early years of our subject were passed in the uneventful routine of farm life, but he learned lessons of industry and thrift which have been important factors in his subsequent career. The clouds of Civil war were gathering and when the great issue was fairly upon the people of the land he waited only a short time ere he volunteered his services to the Confederacy, in whose rights he firmly believed. Though he entered the ranks of a regiment of cavalry as a private soldier, he was promoted for gallantry and courage to the captaincy of his company and in 1864 he sustained severe wounds in the left arm at the battle of Fayetteville, Ark.

At the close of the war Mr. Dodson went to Nevara county, Tex., where he embarked in the business of stock-raising and general farming and met with the success which he deserved, for he has always been systematic, persevering and industrious in all of his business undertakings. Much was being said of the beauties and possibilities of the Pacific coast at that time, and at last he decided to try his fortune in the far west, where so many men were becoming wealthy. Proceeding toward the setting sun by the tedious old overland route, he reached Downey, Cal., in October, 1868, and after prospecting considerably in the southern part of this state he purchased seventy-



William R. Dodson.

**Calendar of Upcoming Events**

**Tuesday, April 20, 2010** **Pino’s Fundraiser**  
*(See Page 3 for details)*

**Saturday, May 29, 2010** **Annual Cemetery Cleanup**  
*(Bring the family and help tidy up the cemetery.)*

**Monday, May 31, 2010** **Memorial Day Service**  
*(See website for details – www.savannahcemetery.org)*

three acres of land situated south of the county road, near El Monte, and at once began the task of improving the same. In addition to this he built a blacksmith shop and for several years had all that he could attend to in that line of work.

In 1878 Mr. Dodson rented the El Monte hotel and commenced his new enterprise as a hotelkeeper. Like most of his ventures it was a success and at the end of two years he became the owner of the hotel, which has since been conducted by him. From time to time he has made substantial improvements upon the house and grounds and by due attention to the needs and wishes of the public has made warm friends and kept a fine class of guests. In 1882 he opened a livery stable in connection with his hotel, and from that time until the present has been able to furnish good accommodations to the public in this line as well. In 1887 he erected Dodson hall, and many other enterprises here have received his support. He has retained his old-time interest in agriculture and the raising of fine cattle, and upon his valuable farm there may be found many excellent specimens of Jersey, Short-horn and Durham breeds, as well as thoroughbred horses.

January 2, 1866, Mr. Dodson married Miss Clairmond Jones, a daughter of William L. and Malvina F. Jones. The father was a native of Tennessee; and the mother was from Georgia. The death of William L. Jones took place in 1874, and his wife departed this life in November, 1897. To the union of our subject and wife six children were born, namely: J. W. B., who wedded Nellie Wixon and now makes his home in San Bernardino county; May, who is the wife of B. B. Mings, and lives in Texas; Clayborne B., Elbert, William L. and Foster A. Dodson. C. B. Dodson married Ana M. Mayes, and E. J. Dodson wedded Addie N. Newman. Both reside in El Monte.

In his political faith Mr. Dodson is a Democrat of the old school. Fraternally he is a member of El Monte Lodge No. 188, A. O. U. W. He always has had great faith in the future of Southern California and has seen many of his sanguine dreams in regard to this section of the Union realized.

*(Source: Historical and Biographical Record of Los Angeles and Vicinity: Containing a history of the city from its earliest settlement.)*

## Financial News

	<i>Year Ended</i>
	<i>12/31/09</i>
<i>Donations</i>	<i>\$19,041.99</i>
<i>Plot sales/burials</i>	<i>4,030.00</i>
<i>Other income</i>	<i>7,702.82</i>
<i>Total Income</i>	<i>\$30,774.81</i>
<i>Administrative expenses</i>	<i>\$ 3,846.33</i>
<i>Cemetery maintenance</i>	<i>20,931.56</i>
<i>Utilities</i>	<i>9,966.49</i>
<i>Other expenses</i>	<i>3,941.75</i>
<i>Total Expenses</i>	<i>\$38,686.13</i>
<i>Net Income (Loss)</i>	<i>\$ (7,911.32)</i>

*Help balance these numbers! Send a donation:  
El Monte Cemetery Association  
P. O. Box 4247  
El Monte, California 91734*

*Note:* Without the generous donation from M. C. Gill Corp. last year, Savannah would have sustained a loss of \$19,617.31

## **Pino's Place** *Italian Restaurant*

**Tuesday, April 20, 2010**  
**11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

4988 Santa Anita Avenue  
Temple City, CA  
626-258-0013

*Bring your family and friends and enjoy  
a delicious Italian meal at Pino's Place*

Get a coupon at our website  
[www.savannahcemetery.org](http://www.savannahcemetery.org)  
(click on Events)

Present the coupon to the cashier when paying  
and Savannah Memorial Park will receive a  
generous donation of 20% of your bill.

Or call Janice White at 626-443-8325 for  
more information

## OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS



Joy Allen	Daniel Munoz
Don & Mary Alley	Sandra Pearman
Meredith Babbott	Marcia Roberts
Valerie Basquette	Jeanne Schiada
Betty Cook	Gloria Smith
Darlene Cravea	Meredith & A. P. Smith
DAR - Pasadena	Mary Lee Tippet
Clinton Dillon	Jerry Treinen
Kate Godfrey	Claudia Turner
Stan & Nancy Goldbloom	Renay Wallace
Peggy Huetig	Carol & Ed Wells
Darrell & Marilyn Kelty	Walter White
Tod Kunioka	Randy Wiggins
Bonnie Lott	Marilyn Wilson
Carol Marburger	

## Thank You

The Board of Directors wishes to extend its deepest gratitude and many thanks to those of you who answered our plea for donations. You have helped.

The desperate need of donations continues and we hope that you will continue to think of your family and friends who entrusted their mortal remains to the care of Savannah.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

*The Savannah Cemetery has a small number of remaining plots. To better fund the Savannah your Board is moving to cremation only interments. The change will be effective April 1, 2010. An increase in some pricing and fees will also take place in April, 2010. This change in policy will help improve the Savannah's financial well-being. If you wish to purchase a site at the Savannah, phone (626) 287-4847 immediately for an appointment. Please do not miss this deadline there will be no exceptions. Owners of graves prior to April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 will not be affected.*

Watch for your  
**2010 CENSUS**

in your mail box mid-March

***BE COUNTED!!***



El Monte Cemetery Association  
P. O. Box 4247  
El Monte, California 91734