



Women in Union Cemetery: Louisiana Schnell

The women featured in this series of articles are part of the Women in Union Cemetery Tour conducted by Mike Roberts in 2024.

Louisiana Schnell 1903-1985

Buried in Placerville Union Cemetery, Section 17 Block 1 Plot F

Louisiana Schnell was born and raised in Pennsylvania but actually taught school in Louisiana for seven years. Coincidence? Errata??

She arrived in El Dorado County in 1931 and taught, then â??principaledâ?• in Placerville schools for 35 years, including 13 years as the principal of Sierra School. When the newly built elementary school in Placerville opened in 1966 it was named after her.

She was active in many organizations: the Soroptimist Club, Order of the Eastern Star, Daughters of the Nile, Delta Kappa Gamma, and the Federated Church.

In 1958 Coloma celebrated the centennial of the discovery of gold. She took her grammar school class to Coloma to live as the pioneers did for a week.

â??School routine wasnâ??t disrupted â?? it was thrown out the window. But the youngsters who for a week lived in the days of long ago learned what no books could teach them. They responded to the living â??feelâ?? of history. They are out of their pantalettes and coonskin caps today and back to bobby socks and zipper jackets, but they got something they can take with them, something they wonâ??t forget.â?•

Like many of the women weâ??ve featured, Louisiana Schnell never married.

Henry Schnell

Louisiana is not the only notable Schnell in El Dorado County history.

In the 1860s Henry Schnell was a German arms dealer working for various foreign interests in Japan during the violent decades following its opening to foreigners. He served the Aizu domain as a military instructor and procurer of weapons, and was rewarded with a high-status wife, a residence in the castle

town of Wakamatsu, and the right to wear swords.

After Aizu's defeat, Henry, his wife and a couple dozen disgruntled samurai established the Wakamatsu Silk and Tea Farm in El Dorado County. The farm proved unviable for several reasons. After two years Schnell, his wife and a daughter disappeared without a trace.

OES symbol — Order of the Eastern Star, Mason affiliated.

Each of the five Points of the Star represents a significant female role in our lives — wife, widow, mother, sister, daughter — and has been allocated not only a color and a symbol but also a guiding virtue — fidelity, constancy, loyalty, faith and love.

The Star Point Heroines are central to the Order of the Eastern Star and its teachings:

- Adah — Daughter
- Ruth — Widow
- Esther — Wife
- Martha — Sister
- Electa — Mother

Thanks to the internet, we know that the top-secret acronym F.A.T.A.L which appears in some OES symbology stands for Faith, Adoration, Trust, Altruism, and Loyalty. Why keep them a secret?



Interpretation by Mike Roberts, 2024

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Category

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