

O'NEALE -- NEAL

AMANDA WESLEY (as NEAL) m. JAMES ALDRED - March 4, 1847, WARREN CO. GEORGIA.

EDWARD O'NEAL m. R. WHEAT (REBECCA) FEB. 18, 1811

IRA NEAL - witness to will of Robert Palmer of Warren Co. Ga.  
S/ Nov. 25, 1827  
P/ Oct. 7, 1828

WARREN CO., GA. WILLS:

"Grand-children AMANDA, EMILY and any other children of daughter ELIZA NEAL may have" -- in will of Robert Seall.  
S/ March 30, 1822  
P/ Sept. 16, 1822

WARREN COUNTY, GA. WILL BOOK I

JOHN O'NEAL witness to will of Jacob Brooks -  
S/ March 19, 1804  
P/ June 9, 1804

Will of Peter Perkins (Parkins)  
Wife Sarah

March 6, 1801  
Daughters: RENEY CLOWES, ABIGAIL, ELEANOR DARDEN, JEMINA WHITE,  
ELIZABETH NEAL Sons JOHN & ABRAHAM.

From "GEORGIA PIONEERS" (Feb. 1966):

Widow of Henry Bailey attended University of Georgia. His widow married a Presbyterian minister, REV. THOMAS B. O'NEILL. 1 child, of Bacon, Bibb County, Ga. - CHERRY NEIL

Mrs. THERESA B. NEAL d. either Jan. of June 30, 1864, probably at Fairview, S.C. where her husband was Minister of a church.

NANCY NEAL - on 1850 MORALITY CENSUS, GORDON CO., GA. - age 40; female; born S.C. died in Jan.; married.

SAMUEL O'NEAL - witness to will of John Germany, Columbia Co., Ga.  
S/ Oct. 23, 1807  
P/ July 5, 1814

WILKINSON COUNTY, GEORGIA WILLS:

Will of Sanfair Whitehurst - Proved 1/1/1829; sworn to before JAMES NEAL, J. I. C. and recorded Jan. 12, 1829, Talbot County, Ga.

1827 LAND LOTTERY, LEE COUNTY, GEORGIA:

ROSS O'NEAL - Rev. Sold. of Warren County, Ga.

MARY NEEL m. JAMES M. PENNINGTON, Nov. 10, 1839, Decatur County, Ga.

# Land baron's heirs make unusual request

## O'Neill family seeks private cemetery

By Donald E. Skinner  
The Register

One of Orange County's pioneer landholding families, which has been turning pasture land into housing tracts for two decades, is seeking its own plot.

The descendants of Richard O'Neill Sr., one of the county's original land barons and founder of Rancho Mission Viejo, will ask county supervisors Wednesday for permission to establish a private family cemetery on the rancho.

The request stems from family members' long association with — and love for — the land that has supported the family for generations.

Rancho Mission Viejo, owned by the family since 1882 and also

known as the O'Neill ranch, covers 42,000 acres of mostly undisturbed rolling hills in south Orange County. At its peak it encompassed 230,000 acres from El Toro to Oceanside, including Camp Pendleton and the community of Mission Viejo. It is the second largest private land holding in the county, ranked behind the holdings of the Irvine Co.

O'Neill family members could not be reached Friday for comment on the cemetery request. But Alice O'Neill Avery, 68-year-old granddaughter of the ranch's founder, explained in a Register interview last year how she felt about her ties to the ranch.

"From the time I was 18 months

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old, the ranch was my second home. My father would start out in the afternoon in a touring car from Los Angeles and we would lunch in Santa Ana. Then we would call on people all down the road," she said.

"That land has taken care of us, made us comfortable all our lives. It is where we belong. It's where I want to be buried," said Avery, who lives in Los Angeles.

The family first broached the idea of a family burial place in November before the Orange County Planning Commission. The commission recommended approval of an amendment to a land plan allowing for a private cemetery.

Doug Leavenworth, a county planning commissioner, said this was the first request for a private family cemetery that he's seen in his 3 1/2 years on the panel.

"They were probably a lot more customary many years ago than these days," he said. "There were lots of little family plots in the old days, particularly on the ranches."

Leavenworth said that even if housing eventually springs up around the proposed cemetery, there are plenty of places where the living and the dead coexist.

"If I had the kind of place they have it would be kind of nice to have a family cemetery. We certainly have lots of cemeteries that are bordered by housing. I'm thinking of one in downtown Anaheim," he said.

Supervisors Chairman Thomas Riley, whose district includes the O'Neill ranch, said, "I'd support it. I don't know of a family which has contributed so much to our county than they with so little fanfare. There's O'Neill Park, and they donated 45 acres for a high school down there, and there have been other donations above and beyond what they had to do.

If approved, the eight-acre cemetery, restricted to family use, probably would be only the second family cemetery in the county, according to Nikki Fannon, past president of the Saddleback Area Historical Society.

The Yorba Family Cemetery, now owned by the county as an historical park, is located off Imperial Highway in Yorba Linda. It is maintained by a county ranger and was once owned by the Diocese of Los Angeles.

The only other private cemetery for longtime Orange County resi-

dents is in El Toro, Fannon said. The El Toro Cemetery was established at the turn of the century by Dwight Whiting, who founded El Toro Land & Water Co. Purchasers of stock in the company were given 10 burial plots as a bonus, she said.

The O'Neill Cemetery would be the 15th use approved for Rancho Mission Viejo's agricultural preserve.

Agricultural preserves permit the landowner to defer taxes by agreeing to limit the use of the land.

Other uses approved for the rancho's agricultural preserve include crop farming, ranching, orchards, nonprofit public recreational facilities and sand and gravel extraction. Housing subdivisions are precluded.

Wednesday's action will add the cemetery as a potential use. When the company selects a site and wants to begin the cemetery it will have to return to the planning commission, said Bryan Speegle, director of advance planning for the county's Environmental Management Agency.

Staff writer Jean O. Pasco contributed to this report.

## On Part of Rancho Mission Viejo

# O'Neill Family Cemetery Approved

By JOHN NEEDHAM, *Times Staff Writer*

In a throwback to pioneer days, members of the O'Neill family received permission Wednesday to establish a private family cemetery on a portion of the 40,000 acres they own at Rancho Mission Viejo.

"Because of their longstanding ties to the land, they were very interested in having a place on the land to be used as a private cemetery for family members," a spokesman for the family said.

The Board of Supervisors Wednesday approved the cemetery, with Supervisor Thomas F. Riley hailing the O'Neills as one of "the most generous participants in the Orange County community."

Richard J. O'Neill Sr. acquired the ranch, which once covered 260,000 acres, in 1882. Much of it was sold to the federal government in 1941 and became Camp Pendleton. Ten thousand acres later were sold to the Mission Viejo Co., now owned by Philip Morris Inc., and the family now owns 40,000 acres, a family spokesman said.

Richard J. O'Neill Jr., grandson of the original purchaser of the ranch and the only family

member still living on the property, said Wednesday that the cemetery was not his idea and he has no plans to be buried there.

"There's been talk of this [family cemetery] for years," said O'Neill, the former state Democratic Party chairman. If other family members want a cemetery, "fine, they did it," he said.

County officials said they were unaware of any remaining family cemeteries in Orange County.

The Yorba Cemetery in Yorba Linda, resting place of the Yorba family and other Spanish settlers, is being restored by the county, which acquired it in 1967 from the Roman Catholic Church.

Mike Miniaci, the county ranger who oversees Yorba Cemetery, said family cemeteries of the pioneer days tended to be transformed into community burial places as family property was developed and sold.

"Very few people can afford to have a private cemetery," Miniaci said.