

Lincolnite replaces

gravestone hit by vandals

Rural Lincoln resident William Chandler has remedied a grave situation — and plans to do it again.

Chandler, who is retired and lives in his bucolic home off Wise Road with his wife, Marion, is an avid hiker through a group organized by the Auburn Adult Education.

It was on one of these excursions, along the bed of the American River near Foresthill, that the group came upon a lonely grave.

The marble stones marked the grave of Robert Dunbar McKee, born in Buller, Penn. on Jan. 21, 1816 who died at Stony Bar in Placer

County in July, 1853. The marble slab said the marker had been erected by his brother, J. Cooper McKee, surgeon, U.S.A., in July 1874, nearly 20 years after his brother's death.

The gravestone was tilting badly and so they returned with cement to give it a firm foundation.

The hikers photographed the lonely grave and moved on. But on an excursion to the same spot a few months later, the gravestone was missing as was the much smaller stone at the bottom of the grave which had said simply, "R.I.P."

"We got to talking about it and someone said 'why

don't you make a new one,'" said Chandler. "So I thought I would give it a try."

About Easter of this year, Chandler started "pecking away at it."

A pilot and retired litho-

grapher with the words and numbers done like a photographic positive.

For that, Chandler made another "photographic negative" in plaster of Paris, with the words again backwards.

returned to the site to erect the stones. They also placed a third marker which notes that the gravestones are replicas erected by the Placer Conservation Task Force, 10-26-85.

"That's in case someone

"I don't know what they expected to find (in the grave) at this late date," said Chandler.

One of the members of the hiking group was so moved by McKee's lonely, violated grave that he wrote this poem:

MCKEE AT STONY BAR

It was down on Stony Bar
they came

The youth of all nations
for riches and fame.

The bar was laced with
the gold,
Wandering young men
with stories to be told.

But, oh, a deathly sick-
ness came
Destroying all their rec-
ent fame.

Robert Dunbar McKee
was one of the boys to die.
Now upon a ledge his
body lies.

So there in peace he
rested at Stony Bar,
Then a famous brother
arrived from afar.

To honor his brother,
long since dead,
By placing a stone to
mark his bed.

by Gene Markley