



# THE AMADORIAN

*A Publication of the Amador County Historical Society*

## ***President's Corner***

Dear Fellow ACHS Member:

Thank you for your membership and interest in the Amador County Historical Society. Plans for 2017 are set in motion. The ACHS board has scheduled several activities to promote membership value and an opportunity to share in the rich history of this County. More details on page 7. We hope to see many of you at our first event, planned for Saturday, March 25th in Sutter Creek as we partner with the Native Sons of the Golden West for a lunch and short program. Weather permitting, we will have a tour of the newly constructed Miner's Bend memorial.

For those of you that attended our annual membership meeting in November heard about our plans to construct a new livery building on the Museum grounds to house our existing collection of carriages, carts, wagons, and other large outdoor items. Plans are moving ahead and we await dry weather to commence the project. We are extremely grateful for the generous donation from ACHS members Joe and Iris Aparicio towards the livery building project. Thank you!

On February 10th, I had the privilege to represent ACHS and join numerous guests and residents to celebrate the city of Plymouth's "Centennial Celebration." In honor of Plymouth's Centennial, I have chosen to reprint a selection of Logan's Alley on how the city was eventually named. If you happen to have read the story in the February 27, 2017 *Ledger Dispatch* by Historian Deborah Cook, the two stories together paint a colorful picture of Plymouth's early days.

Enjoy the Amadorian and I hope to see many of you later this month in Sutter Creek.

*Best regards, Jeana Hultquist President*

## ***Plymouth, Pokerville Revisited<sup>1</sup>*** *Logan's Alley Vol III, Page 155*

Honored to be in Puckerville tonight with the Pokerville Historical Society (defunct, alas, 1999). Like lawyers and politicians, historians are feared. Cross a historian and he or she will ruin your reputation forever!

In relooking into Plymouth's history I was stunned to realize that I first wrote about it almost a quarter-century ago and my writing on it dates 1972!<sup>2</sup>

This invitation, which I readily accepted, gave me the chance to revisit the subject, and to discover additional facts that have awaited (my or someone's) more thorough research. I was not wrong in 1972, merely incomplete. But I was a novice then...

Most towns sprouted from one spot and grew in all directions; or they ceased growing and eventually disappeared. But Plymouth? Where was the one spot it grew from? Or was transplanted from? Indeed, few can boast that their town started in more than one location and started growing at another! Was Plymouth a migrating town? You'll have to decide.

Was Plymouth an entirely new town, or did it evolve from another place or migrate easterly on the Fiddletown - Sacramento road? Was there really a Pokerville, a Puckerville, a Badger store, and a place named Indian Springs? Was Plymouth, born circa 1871, named after a mine, a hotel, an Illinois town? And who named it? In truth, this may be the story of a sparsely settled 4-mile stretch of county road searching for a name.

First there were Indian trails, probably where most roads go now. Next came John Sutter's wagon road from today's Sloughhouse, then Daylor's and Sheldon's grants or ranches, to Pine Woods,<sup>3</sup> located 4 miles upstream from Sutter Creek - on a ridge between Sutter and Amador creeks. (continued on page 2)

### ***Plymouth, Pokerville Revisited (cont.)***

So, from 1844, this foothill interior had a worn road all the way from Sutter's Fort, via Daylor's and Sheldon's, past what would be Drytown, into the hills. After gold was discovered, miners could easily penetrate this area on a road!

Someone among the thousands who placer mined in the area named Indian Creek, Little Indian Creek, and place named Indian Springs, surely after the sizable native population in the vicinity and near the river forks.<sup>4</sup>

Either old Indian paths were broadened or new routes made and what is now the Plymouth area was crossed by two wagon stage routes, the Placerville-Yeomet<sup>5</sup> - Drytown road, and the Fiddletown-Sacramento road.

While one can assert that the alignment of the Fiddletown-Sacramento road hasn't changed appreciably in 140 plus years, one can't say that about the Drytown-Fiddletown road. In fact, until you determine the approximate routes of the Drytown-Fiddletown road and the road through Puckerville, you have a hard time determining where camps and villages were.

The next things to consider are the quartz claims and the miners' ditches. Before Pokerville or Puckerville are mentioned, the Willow Springs and/or Michigan Bar ditches were constructed, one cutting through what is now Plymouth. And quartz claims pretty well followed one another from the Cosumnes to the Mokelumne along the gold belt. We know those claims are near today's intersection of Highway 49 and Main Street.

Of course the gold belt cut through were Plymouth is now. Before we consider the location and longevity of Pokerville, Puckerville, and Badger Store, we need to talk about Indian Springs. It is a name and site which have prime importance. In fact, Indian Springs may be the first name applied to what now is the general area of Plymouth.

Of course, when the first 24 counties were formed in 1850, what is now Plymouth and all land in Calaveras County north of Dry Creek, was in El Dorado County. One must research that county's records for facts about its early development.

In 1850, when John Joseph Ekel<sup>6</sup> came to California from Illinois, the Sutherland family crossed, too, and had moved by 1851 to a 480 acre domain they called Indian Springs Ranch. Then or soon after they also claimed another ranch in Buckeye Valley they also call Indian Springs Ranch.

That confused me until recently when I realized the family named both ranches. On the Drytown-Fiddletown Road the family built a big house for an extended family of father, mother, sons, wives, children. It is uncertain whether they claimed the ranch and then found a gold claim on it, or the reverse, but the gold mining was not their interest. They were cattlemen and wholesale and retail butchers.

What is the Indian Springs Ranch's significance?<sup>7</sup> The ranch covered what is now Plymouth, or from the old school to mid-downtown.

Another name or person one must know about in writing the history of Plymouth is English-born Thomas Pinder,<sup>8</sup> who in the 1870s, became its subdivider, selling lot after lot in the new town.

The first time I find Pinder is in the 1854 assessment roll for El Dorado County. He is listed as an Indian Creek resident, while Albert Pinder is listed at Indian Creek and Fiddletown-Sacramento Road. Whether that should have said "Little Indian Creek" is uncertain.

It appears that Pinder claimed or owned a 320-acre ranch on Little Indian Creek and the Fiddletown-Sacramento road, near the "sugar loaf,"<sup>9</sup> or over two miles from Plymouth. He or (continued on page 4)

## ***Amador Central RailRoad***

Amador Central Railroad was hit hard by the mega storms that have been coming our way this winter and the railroad has experienced two severe landslides causing half of our railroad to be shut down for safety reasons. We are extremely thankful to Adam Dalton and Rich Hoffman for the Rancheria's donation of rock from their stockpile to help fill in the erosion. Once the ground is dry enough we can begin the repair. We are in dire need of funding/donations to help with the cost of repairing the slide so that the railroad can once again function in its entirety. A descriptive video can be seen on the AMC website at [www.amadorcentralrailroad.com](http://www.amadorcentralrailroad.com).

For more information on how you can help, please contact Grant Vogel at [grant@amadorcentral.com](mailto:grant@amadorcentral.com) or P. O. Box 855 Lone, CA 95640



### ***Photos:***

Top: Near Mountain Springs

Left: tracks from Cyclone to the old Hwy 88 crossing



**AMADOR COUNTY  
PARTICIPATION IN THE CIVIL WAR  
By Jim Norris 1/2017**

With the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, many California volunteer militia companies were formed throughout the state.

After the First Battle of Bull Run on July 21, 1861, at Prince William County, Virginia; a battle which ended in a disorganized retreat of the Union forces; the US Secretary of War notified California Governor John G. Downey that the US government “would accept” one regiment of infantry with a three-year enlistment to guard the Overland Mail Route from Carson Valley to Salt Lake City.

The California response was rapid. In Amador County, in Jackson, on July 12, 1861 the Amador Mountaineers were organized under Capt. William McMullen and on August 16, 1861 the Mountaineers entered the service of the US Army as Company C, 1st Infantry Regiment of the California Volunteers. Several of the Amador Mountaineers were not from Amador County.

California is credited with providing 15,725 volunteers plus units for the Massachusetts Cavalry (California One Hundred) and the Washington infantry.

Amador County cities formed additional volunteer city guards, to protect the mail and provide protection from Confederate supporters: Amador City, Ione City, Jackson, Sutter Creek Volunteers, Volcano – Blues – Old Abe.

After their initial meetings the Volunteer Regiment mustered in San Francisco and moved across the bay to Camp Downey, then south to Camp Latham near Los Angeles. Five companies marched to Warner’s Camp (Wright) then to Fort Yuma where supply lines were established for 2300 men.

1<sup>st</sup> CALIFORNIA VOLUNTEER INFANTRY –  
Col James H. Carleton  
(Only Company C is Amador County)

Company A, Capt. Edward B. Willis  
Company B, Capt. Valentine Drescher  
Company C, Capt. William McMullen – was Amador Mountaineers  
Company D, Capt. Hugh D. Gorley  
Company E, Capt. Thomas L. Roberts  
Company F, Capt. Washington L. Parrin  
Company G, Capt. Henry A. Green  
Company H, Capt. Bernard J. McMahon  
Company I, Capt. William F. Calloway  
Company J, Capt. William Moore

They were now called the “California Column” and marched at night on or near the abandoned Overland Mail Route to Tucson then New Mexico. They did not engage the Confederate Army under General SH Sibley but did battle with Apaches at Picacho Pass.

Company C left Yuma April 19, 1862, and marched to Ft. Barrett > Tucson, then Mesilla, NM.

From Mesilla they had 21 marches to Texas > Fort Wingate, NM > Colorado Chiquito > Bear Springs and finally Fort Whipple, Arizona Territory in 1864. In 1864 when their enlistment was up C Company was mustered out. at Fort Whipple or at Los Pinos, NM

Recent historians have downplayed Californias’ Civil War participation noting that only 7% of the States’ early population was from the South suggesting the scare of Southern supporters was overblown.

*Sources : Amador County Archives, CA Military Museum, Mason*

***Plymouth, Pokerville Revisited (cont.)***

the original owner - if Pinder wasn’t - called it Pokerville Ranch. But that name, while applied to a location a long way from today’s downtown, in practice was applied to the stores and habitations from the ranch by the sugar loaf on the Middletown-Sacramento road to the intersection of the Drytown-Yeomet Road at Indian Springs.

(continued on page 5)

## ***Plymouth, Pokerville Revisted (cont.)***

By late spring, 1855, the area became part of Amador, and in the Amador assessment rolls that year 14 of the many ranchers, and miners residing along Little Indian Creek said they lived in "Pokerville," a district probably stretching from west of Pinder's Pokerville Ranch all the way to the Sutherlands' Indian Springs Ranch near the road to Fiddletown, a distance of maybe three miles!

Pinder, however, in April, 1856, bought another 320-acre ranch from JW Rodgers,<sup>10</sup> sold the Pokerville Ranch by the "sugar loaf" to the John Brown family. Where was the new ranch? It was described as adjacent and west of the Sutherland Ranch or Indian Springs, and east of the Drytown-Placerville road. That's right: *east* of the road. On today's map that means that in 1855 the Pinder Ranch on the west and the Sutherland Ranch on the east took in all of what is now Plymouth.

By 1855, then, though there were individual houses along the Middletown-Sacramento Road, the principal places, hotels, stores, saloons were located at Indians Springs, near the intersection of the Fiddletown-Sacramento Road with the Drytown-Fiddletown Road, and east of Pinder's original Pokerville Ranch at a place in 1855 called Pokerville.

Realize that if the [village] along Little Indian creek migrated, it probably followed changes in stage routes. They differ from today's alignments. Take the original Drytown-Fiddletown route. If you're heading for Fiddletown from Drytown the logical route

would cut considerably east of today's Highway 49, avoiding the drop-off into Dry Creek canyon, of course. Hence that original route probably hit today's Fiddletown-Shenandoah Road about where the Plymouth kindergarten and first-grade school is.



Look back at the 1866 county map. While far from accurate, it nonetheless generally shows that the Drytown-Fiddletown Road ran well east of the then Plymouth Mine, whereas today's highway generally is west of it.

Or consider the Placerville-Drytown Road. Today's Highway 49 is far from the straight line or shortest feasible distance that the Indians or early gold seekers would have established. In 1856 when Pinder acquired his ranch which was all the westerly part of (today's) Plymouth, the Placerville-Drytown Road - today's Highway 49 - was west of Pinder's Ranch! So that route has migrated over the last 145 years maybe a half mile!

Picture this scene in the early 1850s. The main road from Drytown to Plymouth swinging wide easterly of today's Plymouth and having little habitation or business between Central house<sup>11</sup> and the road's intersection with the Fiddletown-Sacramento road. The latter seems to have been a secondary route then. At the junction of those two roads in those days, at Indian Springs Ranch, was the Sutherland family place which, when they owned it or certainly after they sold it, was a major hotel on that route.

What was on the Fiddletown-Sacramento road along Little Indian Creek? In the early

(continued on page 6)

### ***Plymouth, Pokerville Revisted (cont.)***

1850s probably little until you got to the “sugar loaf” or the other side. Most of the land was claimed for ranches. There were ranch houses, perhaps a small hotel on one ranch.

There is evidence that the early Sacramento-Fiddletown road did not go into the small canyon of Little Indian Creek but went around it. Probably about the time that the road was rerouted through the small canyon, the business section which became Puckerville got started. Say 1853 or 1854.

Curiously, owners of the Fort John lode<sup>12</sup> or mine in 1855 said their office was in Puckerville. This may be the first time the name shows up in any record.

Now, downtown Puckerville, as depicted on the 1866 map, was along the Fiddletown-Sacramento road just before entering the “canyon.” The maps shows four black squares representing buildings. Did four symbols mean 20 buildings? No, I think it meant four, because assessment records and other records show that not more than four buildings were ever assessed.

In 1855, no Puckerville except a mention in a deed that the ditch company was headquartered there. Meanwhile, the assessor that year listed 14 men who said their residence was Pokerville. And those 14 lived from three miles west of today’s Plymouth to over a mile east, and included Gregg whose ranch was north. Thus Pokerville was the whole area around today’s 49-Fiddletown-Sacramento Road intersection. Yet, remember, that deed said the Fort John Mine office - perhaps an early name for the Plymouth mine - was in Puckerville!

A key year in Plymouth’s history is 1856. Pinder sold his Pokerville ranch, and bought 320 acres adjacent to Indian Springs Ranch and beyond where Puckerville would be on the 1866 map. I reemphasize that the ranch was east of the Drytown-Placerville road. In the assessment

record for 1856, Pokerville disappears and suddenly everyone is living in Puckerville! That year 19 men give their residence that *puckish* name! Did the Englishman Pinder, have anything to do with it? Also that year the Fort John Mine isn’t mentioned and the Plymouth appears for the first time. Those who said they lived in Puckerville resided as far apart as Bisbee and Finn west of the “sugarloaf,” Pinder who still was on Pokerville ranch, and the Sutherlands at Indian Springs. Even the Wheelers up by Indian Creek said they lived in Puckerville. In ’56, Puckerville seemed even bigger than Pokerville did in ’55!

Yet, the Sutherland Ranch near the Fiddletown Road, is listed as Indian Springs and the office of the mine is in Puckerville!

We need to determine those business houses on the Fiddletown-Sacramento road which would become those symbols on the 1866 map as Puckerville! One was definitely a general store which history will remember as the Linzee<sup>13</sup> and, later, Badger Store. El Dorado 1854 records show that men named Schairer and Stints had an improvement on the road which I believe is the Badger Store. In ’55, Charles Estey and Fred Sharrar (Schairer) had an assessable building on Little Indian Creek. Both at Puckerville: one a store, the other a hotel.

In 1857 when Pinder sold Pokerville Ranch to the Brown family, the “Traveler,” a peripatetic *Ledger* correspondent, visited Puckerville, which he described as being a mile from one end to the other, or (probably) we would say, from the little gulch’s mouth to downtown Plymouth. It has “20 houses” scattered along the Fiddletown-Sacramento road, including five families, Pinder’s tavern and Linzee and Son’s store. Pinder’s tavern could have been on his ranch, and thus in today’s Plymouth, or perhaps he had it at Puckerville, at the canyon’s mouth. (Who can say? We need more facts.)

(Continued on page 10)

## **ACHS 2017 - Board of Directors**

### **Officers**

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 Keith Sweet, Correspondence Secretary

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*Board Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday  
 of each month at 3:00 p.m. at 225 Church St.  
 (Amador County Museum)*

*Members and friends are invited to attend.*

## **Amador County Historical Society**

### **Member Events for 2017**

- **March 25 - Membership Event at NSGW Hall & Miner's Bend - Sutter Creek - 1pm**
- **June 16 - BBQ at Museum - Featuring Mine Model Refresh - 5:30 pm**
- **Sept 8 - Wine & Cheese Tasting at the Museum - 4:00 - 8:00pm**
- **TBD - Old Schoolhouse, Plymouth**
- **Nov 5 - Annual Dinner at Teresa's Restaurant - 5:00 - 7:00 pm**

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## **Amador Central Railroad -**

### **Events and Run Dates for 2017**

**April 22 - Photo Run for Motor Car operators and their guests. Due to a major landslide that has happened near Mountain Springs, the upper half of the railroad is closed to any rail traffic until the slide is repaired. We will still offer a half run to Sunny Brook and back, two runs for the day for a total of 20 miles for motor car operators and their guests. Cost of run is \$25.00.**

**May 27 - Memorial Weekend run for the public, runs from Ione to Sunny Brook and back, \$20.00.**

**Sept. 23 - End of Summer Run, for Motor Car operators and their guests.**

**Oct. 21 - Fall History Run for the public, reserved tickets only, information coming soon.**

**Dec. 2 - Christmas Run, for Motor Car operators and their guests. Bring a Toy and run fee is only \$25.00.**





## ***Kennedy Mine Model Tours***

*Tours of the Kennedy Mine Model* are on-going every Friday, Saturday and Sunday in the building adjacent to the museum... come on down, bring your friends, see how the "Hardrock Miners" brought the gold up from more than a mile from under the earth.

See the headframe, the Stamp Mill and the Wheel in action with mechanized motors...it is like a little show lasting about 45 minutes, with live narration and tape presentation.

Tours are at noon and 1:00 p.m. or by appointment any day or time (subject to docent availability). Group tours, schools and organizations welcome! Located at 225 Church Street, Jackson Mine Model building in parking lot next to museum.

For more information, call the Amador County Historical Society at 209-257-1485.

## ***ACHS Lifetime Members***

Kathy Allen & Frank Axe - Richard & July Allen - Joseph Aparicio Family - Ed & Mary Lee Arata - Caryl Arnese - Michael Bell - Heidi Boitano - Mark, Lorie & Matthew Bowlby - Ray & Barb Brusatori - William Burger - Paul & Claudine Burnett - Jerry Cassesi - Robert J. & Susan L. Chandler - D.E. Collins - Thornton & Paula Jo Consolo - Robert M. & Lorraine M. Cooper - Mary Cowan - Jeannine & Patrick Crew\* - Jean Louise Dahl - Robert Davis - Kathleen Du Bois - John Ellyson, MD - Carol Emerson - Katherine Evatt & Pete Bell - Robin Field & Carol Mischer - Wayne Garibaldi - Phillip & Jenny Giurlani - Ray & Cheryl Herndon & Bobby Keeling - Curtis & Denise Hollis - Patricia Huberty - Jeana (Cova) Hultquist & Marshall Cova - Ida Ruth Johnson - Marilyn Jones - Richard & Pat Jones - Gretchen Kingsbury - George & Joan La Ponsie - Gary & Jaimie Little - Stan Lukowicz - Allen & Karen Martin - Jeremy & Shirley McCarty - Frances Melusky - Marshal Merriam - Joe & Alicia Miller (Giurlani) - Jean Mueller - Ron Oliverro - Katherine & William Orescan - Hazel, Jeffrey & Amy Powell - Marian & Leonard Randolph - Jeanne C. Russ - Martin Ryan - John H. & Patricia Scott - Norm Seid - Beverly Smallfield - George P. Smith - Rose Marie Smith - John Solaja\* - Marie-Louise Solaja - Audrey Souza - Charles J. Spinetta - Ray Stacey\* - Steve & Linda Stocking - Suzanne Erickson Stroy - Ed & Margaret Swift - Russell & Mary Beth Van Voorhis - Violich Farms - Grant Vogel & Pam Sharp - Sutter Creek Promotions Committee - Volcano Community Services District - Fraser & Teddy West

\*Benefactor



## ***About the Amador County Historical Society***

The Amador County Historical Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the research and preservation of Amador County heritage and history.

The organization brings together people from diverse backgrounds to work towards these goals. We invite all interested persons to attend our monthly meetings and encourage your suggestions and active participation in Society events and endeavors.

We also welcome guest articles for our newsletter. Unfortunately, due to limited space we can accept only those pertaining to local history. If you have any questions regarding ACHS please contact the office at (209) 257-1485.

**If you would like to become a member of the Society**, please fill in the membership form below and mail along with the appropriate dues to the Amador County Historical Society, P.O. Box 761, Jackson, Calif.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check one of the following Membership:**

- |                 |   |  |  |
|-----------------|---|--|--|
| <b>ANNUAL</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Individual \$20.00</b>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Family (2 or more) \$30.00</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Students \$15.00</b>           |
| <b>LIFETIME</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Family (2 or more) \$400.00</b> | <b>SPONSOR</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Benefactor (\$1,000 up)</b>    |
|                 |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Patron (\$500 to \$999)</b>    |
|                 |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Associate (\$250 to \$499)</b> |
|                 |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other _____</b>                |

### ***Just How Many Saloons? By Jim Norris***

Frequently when we read about the Gold Rush there is mention of the numerous saloons that kept the miners happy. For instance, just how many saloons were there in Jackson in the 1850s?

The Amador County Archives holds the BAR receipts for Amador County in 1854 and 1855. (Every receipt does not list a town or place so our count is an estimate.) The county charged \$30 for a three months Bar Permit. Numerous historical writers have mentioned 17 saloons in Jackson. The receipts document 17 in 1854 and a whopping 32 in 1855! Volcano listed 21 in 1854 and Sutter Creek 11 in 1855.

Remember, during the Gold Rush the population of towns fluctuated frequently and quickly with each new gold strike.

Several permits were issued to what are now ghost towns, ie; Butte, Boston Rose, Clinton, French Bar, Grass Valley, Hunts Gulch, Indian Creek, Live Oak Shade, Lower and Upper Rancheria, Mountain Spring, Muletown, Quincy, Secreta, and Slabtown.

Peddler permits and Billiard Table permits were also included.

According to the county archives documents, there were a lot of saloons!

### ***Plymouth, Pokerville Revisted (cont.)***

In 1857 Puckerville is a precinct with 28 voters, including Linzee, Senior, and Pinder.

In 1858 the Plymouth Mine was listed in the Puckerville area, and supervisors bought for \$50 a road that Ira Bisbee constructed which started at the head of Little Indian Creek - say the intersection with Drytown-Fiddletown road to Finn's Hotel.

An item in '58 in the *Ledger* reports that Aden, Simpson & Co. were mining between the two Fiddletown roads and there were favorable reports from Puckerville.

In 1859, Aden sold to the Plymouth Mine. Meanwhile, James Sutherland and wife Helena sold their Indian Springs Ranch to Charles Estey and Robert John which today would cover eastern Plymouth.<sup>14</sup> They also sold their large house, barn, other buildings and tenements. If it wasn't already, Estey and John converted the main house into a hotel. Later, Estey sold out to John.

That same year, five families in Puckerville and elsewhere petitioned supervisors to form the Indian Creek school district, taking territory away from the Fiddletown district.<sup>15</sup> Probably soon after the first school was built and it was named Puckerville because it was centrally located in the new district, on what then or later would be Alpine Mine ground. In future years, the school and the mines lured the town away from historic Puckerville.

In 1860, supervisor minutes variously refers to Puckerville, and page 209 refers to "the Badger Store in Puckerville." Curiously, the Puckerville precinct ceases and a new one called Badger Store takes its place.

In 1861 the Plymouth mine acquires the Sutherland claim. I don't know whether the Sutherlands originally claimed it - it was on their ranch - but it nonetheless became part of the Plymouth Mine.

In 1862 the precinct again was called Badger Store, with the same owner as in 1854, Fred Schairer (probably sometimes spelled Shearer). No Puckerville or Pokerville is mentioned.

In 1863, meeting as Schairer's or Badger store, the miners of Puckerville and vicinity formed the Puckerville mining district. That same year, its president announced that the Fiddletown & Pokerville turnpike was half completed. Also in '63 the Internal Revenue Service said Estey had an 8th class hotel, either at Indian Springs or the canyon's mouth, and "Sherer and Huston" had a retail liquor license, both at Pokerville. In '64 the IRS mentioned Finn's hotel and Schairer's retail liquor outlet.

Also in 1864, a post office was established at Yeomet, at the Placerville-Drytown crossing of the Cosumnes River. With its application, it included a marvelous map of the territory between today's Plymouth and the river. On it one sees Indian Springs about where Plymouth is now. That is how I discovered Indian Springs and realized that it was a place name in early El Dorado, Amador and Plymouth history.

In 1865, John Dixon, freighter and drayman, who had a ranch east of the old Sutherland ranch, said he lived in Pokerville. Also that year the school<sup>16</sup> had 47 children between 4 and 18. The 1866 county map says its Puckerville, at least that business settlement at the canyon's mouth.

In 1868 the Plymouth Mine went bankrupt and John Ekel was listed as living in the Forest Home precinct. That same year, the Badger Store predict disappeared, and Enterprise took its place. Still, most men said they were living in Pokerville again, including "Ed Allison, Jeremiah Green Aden, James Berry, Thomas Dixon, Nova Scotian Charles Estey, Thomas

(continued on page 11)

## ***Plymouth, Pokerville Revisted (cont.)***

Pinder (a naturalized citizen in 1860), ES Potter, John Petit, the Stacys, John Schairer, John Palmer and William Hooper of the Plymouth Mine, and Frederick Schearer.<sup>17</sup> Also that year, in a district court suit, Pinder's 320 acres were described as being *east* of Puckerville.

In 1871 a San Francisco corporation purchased the assets of the old Plymouth mine and renamed it the Phoenix, as it was rising, we guess, from financial ashes. Ironically, not long after, the town of Plymouth was founded,<sup>18</sup> perhaps to keep alive the name that first appeared 15 years before.

In 1871, new capital hired men at the Phoenix, and the newspapers reported a new community named Plymouth springing up as an off-shoot of Puckerville, half a mile east of it. The name became official when townspeople applied for and got a post office.

When the post office for Plymouth first opened on September 8, 1871, the first postmaster was John Ekel who evidently had moved from Forest Home precinct area to the Plymouth area sometime between 1868 and 1871. He owned a boarding house. Whereas I can't find the deed showing from whom Ekel bought it, I find the deed showing in 1873<sup>19</sup> when Ekel sold his saloon and boarding house. In the deed, he called it Ekel's and not the Plymouth Hotel. The Plymouth mine bought it to bunk its miners.

Ekel must have had political connections to be named the first postmaster. Did he fill out the application for the post office and suggested the name Plymouth, or was it someone else who did both? The county archives has copies of most of the original applications for Amador post offices. That's how we know who signed the first application and who we can probably credit for

the town's name. In Ekel-Plymouth's case we don't have a copy of the original application.

Regardless, friend Bert Payne, with whom I have corresponded sporadically since 1980 about Plymouth's name, has always believed that Ekel named the town. He first said he named it after his hotel. But at least when he sold it, Ekel called it "Ekel's." Is there some other derivation for the name?

Payne also has argued that Ekel was born in Spring Creek, near Plymouth, Illinois, in 1840. He believes that when he became postmaster he named the post office after that Illinois place.

But Ekel or whoever filled out the application, had to select a name, and if the post office didn't like it they would select another. So was the new town named after the former mine, by Ekel after an Illinois hamlet, or by some unknown post office applicant or the post office itself?

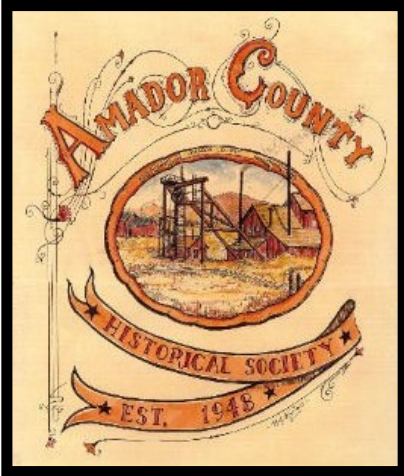
Until we have more facts, the preponderance of evidence seems to side with Bert Payne. Hence, after stubbornly holding out for 20 years, I finally must side with Bert until we find out differently. At least we know it wasn't named after a car.

In sum - and I urge (the Plymouth Historical Research Society) and others to continue to research the Badger Store, Indian Springs Ranch, Frederick Schairer, Thomas Pinder, the Esteys, and other pioneers.

In 1872, the Puckerville mining district changed its headquarters to Plymouth but otherwise left the district's name be. Plymouth became a precinct for the first time.

In September, 1873, the Sutter Creek *Independent* correspondent called Plymouth "a new and prosperous mining camp...the Alpine and Phoenix were active...4 stores...Robert Whitacre's livery...6 or 8 *sancho pandas* or saloons.... Mrs. Thompson and Miss Ekel teaching at the school...the old Lick House had  
(continued on page 13)

# Amador County Historical Society



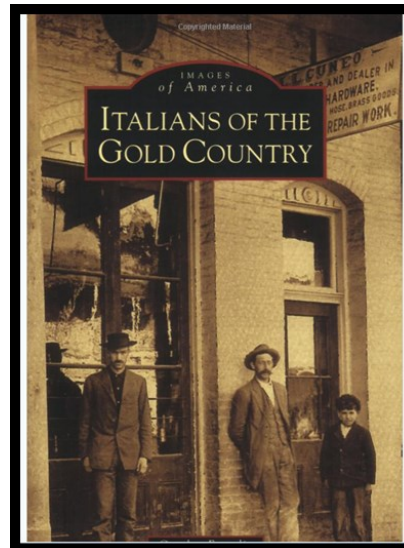
## NSGW Hall - Sutter Creek Saturday, March 25, 2017 at 1p.m.

Enjoy lunch and program ~

Carolyn Fregulia - Local Author and Historian, *"Italians of the Gold Country"* (book will be available for sale)

Ed Arata and Frank Cuhna - *"Miner's Bend Park - The Artifacts and Interpretive Signage"* (Tour - Weather Permitting)

\$15.00 per person - Lunch & Beverage  
Tickets at [amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org) or  
RSVP - 209-257-1485





***Plymouth, Pokerville Revisted (cont.)***

been acquired by the McGee family and they named it the “Wyoming.”

The town is established. It’s still on the Fiddletown-Sacramento road, but up cheek by jowel with the Phoenix and Alpine mines, and the Puckerville school. Now townspeople decided the school was too close to mining activity and wanted its removal, about where the old Sutherland house or hotel was, near the Fiddletown road. It seems that the names Pokerville for a ranch, Badger Store for a store and precinct, and Puckerville for a small village, were specific names applied generally in the sparsely populated area. Pokerville was at the base of the “sugar loaf.” Badger Store within Puckerville or Pokerville.

The naming of Plymouth simplified the residents schizophrenia. Though accustomed to using many names for the area, they now had but one....

Thank you for your attention and good night.

Logan’s Alley - Volume III  
(pages 155 - 165)

Amador County Yesterdays In Picture and Prose  
by Larry Cenotto (Published 1999)

\* \* \* \* \*

***Footnotes***

<sup>1</sup>Delivered to the Plymouth Historical Research Society on May 20, 1996, in city hall. Alas, the group disbanded in 1999

<sup>2</sup>Logan’s Alley, I, pages 103-105

<sup>3</sup>Probably the first seasonal non-Indian settlement or habitation in the Sierra. See Logan’s Alley I, page 53 et seq.

<sup>4</sup>A federal Indian agent, Wozencraft, was active in the area in the early 1850s, attesting to the number of Indians

Footnotes (cont.)

<sup>5</sup>About where the Highway 49 bridge crosses the Consumes River today

<sup>6</sup>Born in Spring Creek, near Plymouth, Illinois, according to Bert Payne, a descendant.

<sup>7</sup>In 1851 diarist PY Cool refers to the place. Why? He probably caught the stage there for Middleton or Sacramento after walking from Ft. John

<sup>8</sup>Sometimes Pinder

<sup>9</sup>Called Bisbee’s originally, then Finn’s

<sup>10</sup>Amador County deeds, Book C, page 97, County recorder’s office

<sup>11</sup>Historical hostelry in the 8150s and then home to the Grambart-Wells families from 1860s on. See the 1881 county history for more illustrations.

<sup>12</sup>If not part of, this lode was associated with the Plymouth mill and company which became the Plymouth Mine. Owners of the claim today are planning to mine it.

<sup>13</sup>Jacob Linzee, county supervisor in 1858-9

<sup>14</sup>Amador County Deed, D-498

<sup>15</sup>Approved by supervisors and formed on Nov. 7, 1859

<sup>16</sup>By now it was Puckerville School District

<sup>17</sup>Alas, the writer hasn’t ascertained whether Frederick Schearer (Shearer) is the same person as F. Schairer, or a misspelling.

<sup>18</sup>The new center of town arose nameless. It’s naming was surely coincident with the establishment and naming of the new post office in September 1871

<sup>19</sup>Amador County Deed N-398, March 24, 1873



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