

Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation

May Newsletter, 2020

*In this issue of our newsletter,
we'll take a walk along Spanish Street in Sutter
Creek in the 1850's*

Sutter Creek's Spanish Street is one of the earliest county roads and the City's first street. It follows the creek, one block west of the current business district and was once Sutter Creek's only thoroughfare. The name comes from the area's history as Spanish Town, where in the early 1850's, Hispanic workers and miners, generally Mexicans, South Americans and Indians, lived along the banks of Sutter Creek. The area had its own Spanish dance halls, saloons, and other forms of entertainment as well as a multitude of crude residences. By 1851, the street had already burned once.

The recently ended Mexican war left bitter divisions along racial lines and the infamous Foreign Miners Tax of 1850 virtually erased the "Spanish" presence in local communities leaving only vaguely remembered place names such as Spanish Street, Chili Gulch, China Graveyard, etc.



Several houses dating to this "post Spanish" period of the 1850's remain today (see example above). Sutter Creek's merchants and entrepreneurs began building permanent, woodframe, Eastern style houses to replace the previous

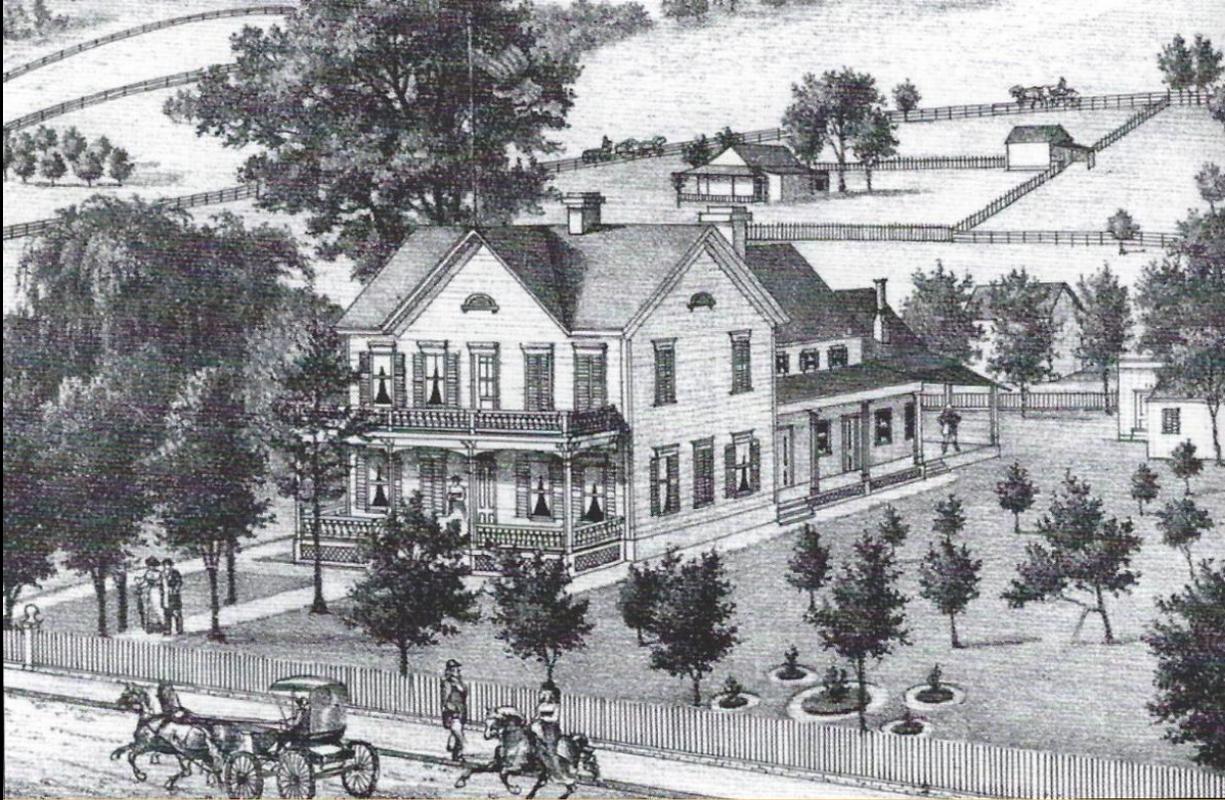
tents and shacks. They planted trees and roses, and constructed the white picket fences so popular back in "the States". Nearly all of these residents came from "back East".



One of these 1850's woodframe houses is the former McIntire home (above). Edward Bucknam McIntire arrived in Sutter Creek from New Hampshire in 1850, and by 1851 was a stockholder in the Amador Quartz Mine No. 2 - later to be consolidated with the Union Mine and sold to Leland Stanford who named it "The Lincoln". McIntire also sent for his wife, Mary, and children in 1851 and shortly thereafter constructed the home still standing on Spanish Street. Mary died in 1892 and Edward in 1899 after living almost 50 years in the same home. Both are buried in the Sutter Creek City Cemetery.



Spanish Street was also home to working folks and cottage businesses as evidenced by a Chinese laundry operating out of a tiny shack at least until 1912.



The former R.C. Downs home, also known as the Union Mine Boarding House, is on a huge lot across from the old Catholic Church and cemetery.



UNION MINE BOARDING HOUSE SINCE 1851

(NOW A PRIVATE RESIDENCE)

LELAND STANFORD ACQUIRED THE UNION MINE IN 1859 FOR DEBT. HE FORMED A PARTNERSHIP WITH R.C. DOWNS AND RENAMED IT THE LINCOLN MINE.

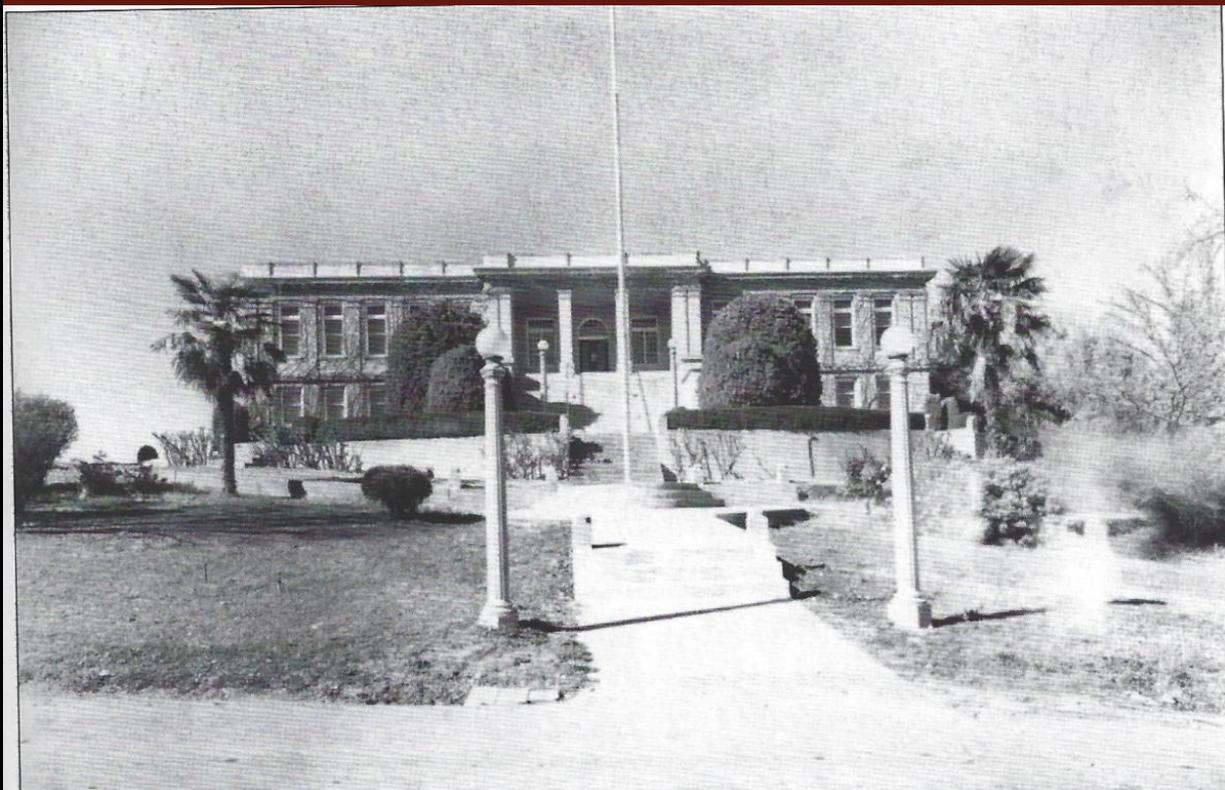
THE LINCOLN MINE PRODUCED \$2,200,000. IN GOLD BY 1873, HE THEN SOLD IT TO THE BRITISH SYNDICATE FOR \$800,000.

THE FIRST FIVE STAMP MILL WAS POWERED BY A BREAST-WHEEL WITH A WOODEN SHAFT AND WOODEN CAMS WITH FLUMED WATER FROM SUTTER CREEK.

R.C. DOWNS MARRIED ROSE WILLIAMS IN CONNECTICUT IN 1856. ROSE REFUSED TO LIVE HERE AND LIVED IN SACRAMENTO FOR THREE YEARS UNTIL THE FRONT PORTION OF THE HOUSE WAS ADDED.



The Catholic Church was first built in 1860-1861 and burned in the 1870's. After it burned again in 1972, it was rebuilt to the original specifications on the original footprint.





Sutter Creek Union High School, located at the top of Spanish Street, had its first graduating class in 1913, with Donald Jarvis as the first graduate. The school had 58 students and five teachers. Principal John G. Curtis and Vice Principal Miss Maude Taylor comprised the administration and both also conducted classes. This school was demolished in 1975 because of California's new earthquake retrofit requirements. The present high school occupies the site.



Today Spanish Street is a beautiful tree-shaded lane with well maintained houses reflecting Sutter Creek's past. It is this writer's opinion that Mayberry should be so lucky to have a street as pleasant as our Spanish.

Reference: *Images of America - Sutter Creek*, by Kimberly Wooten and R.Scott Baxter

Whether it's a love of our heritage, a special connection to our town's diverse, deeply rooted cultures, or a desire to improve your community, every donor's passion for Sutter Creek is unique. A gift to Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation is the perfect way to fund your passion and watch it prosper. By connecting people who care with causes that matter, we help ensure a stronger, healthier tomorrow. We provide a simple, powerful and highly personal approach to giving. (Donations to SCCBF are received through the Amador Community Benefit Foundation.)

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