

Auburn's 49ers

Stories of the brave men and women
who came
to California for gold in 1849 and
early 1850.

VOLUME THREE

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Placer County Historical Society

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*“ The whole tract of the mountainous land is
impregnated with gold
but it is verrey hard to be got.”*
Isaac Annis - 1849

Introduction

The general story of the 49er's is well known. In 1848 and 1849, young men, excited by the news of the gold discovery, flocked to California. Initially, the area around Auburn was rich with opportunity. Spanish Flat, near present-day Nevada Street, Rich Flat, near the Gold Country Fairgrounds, and the Auburn Ravine and its tributaries all yielded substantial amounts of gold in the first few years of the Gold Rush.

One of the most common attributes of the newly arrived would-be miners was their propensity to move about following rumors of the next "big strike." As such, not very many 49er's stayed put once they arrived in California and few left a record of their time here.

When we started researching for this project, John Knox and I were hoping to identify maybe 20 forty-niners who came to Auburn in 1849 and early 1850. So we were astonished to find over eighty men and women who came to the Auburn area in the first years of the Gold Rush. Most did not stay but they still left a record of their time here.

Each story is a unique tale about a pioneer who came hoping for gold. Though they rarely found it, many ended up loving California and cherishing the memories of the biggest adventure of their lifetime.

Table of Contents

Robert Gordon	4 - 5
King & Rachel Gorham	6 - 7
Nancy Six McCormick Green	8 - 9
William Gwynn	10 - 11
Judge James Hale	12 - 13
Edward Massar Hall	14 - 16
Hiram R. Hawkins	17 - 18
Samuel Wirt Holladay	19 - 20
Henry Thomas Holmes	21 - 22
Hudson M. House	23 - 24
Dr. Henry Hubbard	25 - 26
George A. Keehner	27 - 28

Robert Gordon

1825-1877



Robert Gordon left Ireland in 1847 for America. He had been a member of the Constabulary Force. The reason for his leaving is unknown. When he arrived he found work in Baltimore. Gordon later wrote, "I found myself attacked with the contagion" (gold fever). His employer financed Gordon's trip and sent along some merchandise that Gordon would sell to repay his debt.

He and two companions boarded the ship *Xylon* in Baltimore on February 3, 1849. Gordon kept an extensive

chronicle of the journey and continued it for several years while in the Auburn area. From Gordon we learn so many details of the long and monotonous journey across the ocean.

The hardships encountered began almost as soon as they set sail. Gordon reported: "Nearly all the passengers are knocked over with seasickness. I could not be much worse and live." After the seasickness passed, Gordon suffered severely from diarrhea which was treated with brandy and sugar with "about fifteen drops of Laudanum." Huge storms rocked the vessel but mostly it was the lack of decent food that plagued the passengers. Stops in Rio de Janeiro and Valparaiso helped replenish the food stocks.

But the conditions on the ship remained so terrible that some of the passengers issued a formal complaint to the

American Counsel in Rio de Janeiro, and the captain and some of the crew were replaced.

Gordon detailed the day to day weather and progress of the ship and described the many activities the passengers participated in to pass the time. Along with the drinking and the gambling, which Gordon did not participate in, there were the exercising attempts, a debating society, a concert group, chess, dominos, card playing and trading of books.

Upon arriving in San Francisco in September 1849, Gordon continued to keep his journal. In these accounts he continued to keep track of his daily life. He and several companions headed right to Auburn Dry Diggings and then to the North Fork. They made their way down the sides of the canyon to the river by "cutting down boughs, tying our baggage on to them, yoking ourselves too and hauling like so many oxen, [and] after a couple of hours of hard pulling we reached the river."

Gordon reported making seven dollars a day most days but as winter approached the mining grew more difficult. Gordon wrote, "the conditions of many along this river is truly pitiable," tents were blown down, and barrels and boxes of provisions carried off in the rising river waters. Fevers, ague and scurvy were prevalent.

Gordon would spend the winters in Auburn but continued mining along the American River and the Yuba River with enough success to keep him going. Eventually though, the gold was increasingly harder to find and the competition more fierce.

Finally in April 1852, giving up on finding his fortune in mining, Gordon returned to Auburn and in partnership with Thomas McCormick purchased a small house for \$500 and set up "storekeeping." But throughout his life he would continue to have interest in gold mines in the area.

Gordon would become a stable and solid citizen of Auburn and kept his store here for over twenty-five years.

He met an untimely death in 1877 when he shot himself, either by accident or on purpose, in his kitchen garden.

King and Rachel Gorham

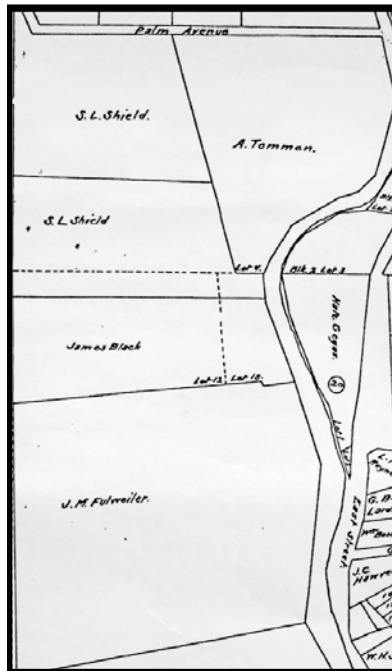
about 1802-1868 & about 1811 - ?

Not much is known about the early lives of King and Rachel Gorham but Rachel claimed in a document filed with the Commissioner of the U. S. Land Office that she and King arrived in Auburn in 1850.

King was born in Kentucky and Rachel was born in Maryland. In the 1860 census they are both listed as "colored." King was 58 and Rachel was 49 in that census.

Whatever their background, when they were in Auburn they were substantial land owners. King claimed 60 improved acres (sometimes it was 70 acres) and 20 unimproved acres. The land covered part of Spanish Flat and Auburn Ravine. They had 2 horses, one cow, 30 swine and six tons of hay.

*Gorham's property
once encompassed all
the properties shown
on
this 1907 map*



King sold most of his property in 1859. As well as being a farmer, King was a teamster. In fact, his death was a result of that profession. In 1868, he unknowingly hauled a cargo that included smallpox infected clothing. He died from smallpox that year.

Rachel lived in their house along the Ravine and evidently was not doing as well as before, for in 1874 it was reported in the newspaper that she was allowed to “purchase goods where she choose up to \$10 a month” which was paid by the Hospital Fund. A county fund for the needy.

The date of Rachel's death is unknown.

Nancy Six McCormick Green

1819 - 1906

Nancy Six was born in Kentucky but the family moved to Illinois when she was a child. She grew up there and when she was 17 years old she married John McCormick. John was a tanner by trade and they would eventually have five children.

In 1849, the McCormicks and several of their neighbors packed up and headed overland for California. They brought with them a large supply of boots and shoes, extra horses and milk cows. Likely, the journey was a little easier for Nancy and her five children than for many other women since they had the ability to hire several men to help with the livestock and the wagons. Nancy would also have been surrounded by other women and children.

They arrived safely in Sacramento in September 1849. They headed immediately to Auburn where John quickly built a cabin and opened a store to sell his leather goods. As winter approached, John went to Sacramento to replenish their supplies and got caught in the flood waters of the American River. He and his team were never seen again.

It is not known how many of Nancy's friends and relatives were also in Auburn at the time but we do know from several chroniclers of the time that she was one of two white women in Auburn in 1849.



Nancy quickly obtained a liquor license and opened a hotel on the corner of present day Main and Commercial Street in Old Town Auburn.

By the time John McCormick's probate was settled in 1852, it was Placer County's probate case # 1, her brother Danny Six and Paul Cox (probably her cousin) posted bond for settling the estate. In that same year Nancy had filed homestead claims on two parcels of 160 acres each on Dry Creek. By December of 1852, Nancy married Hiram Green. He was a wheelwright and wagon maker.

Nancy and Hiram were married in Nicolas, on the Feather River in Sutter County. During 1853-54, Hiram was billing the estate of John McCormick for the boarding of the five children with a teacher in Nicolas. It is not known why the children were not living with Nancy and Hiram.

In 1854, there was a large fire on the Dry Creek homestead. The house and furniture were destroyed. Nancy and the three youngest children, Irvin, Elizabeth and Isabel were in Coon Cork, near Nicolaus in the 1860 census. Hiram was listed as living in Virginiatown.

Over time, the locations of the Greens and the McCormick children are diverse and they appear to have at least two more children, Mary and Hiram, Jr. In the 1880 census, Nancy and Hiram are both listed as living in Tehama County along with the youngest Green children.

By 1900, Nancy was living in Shasta County with her eldest daughter Elizabeth and Hiram was living in Glenn County with his son Hiram.

Nancy died in 1906 in Ono, Shasta County. It is not known when Hiram passed.

William Gwynn

1822 - 1895

William Gwynn was 26 years old when he left Baltimore for California in December 1848. He arrived in San Francisco in May 1849. He was in business for only a short time in Sacramento before heading east to the new mining camp at Wood's Dry Diggings, later to be named Auburn.

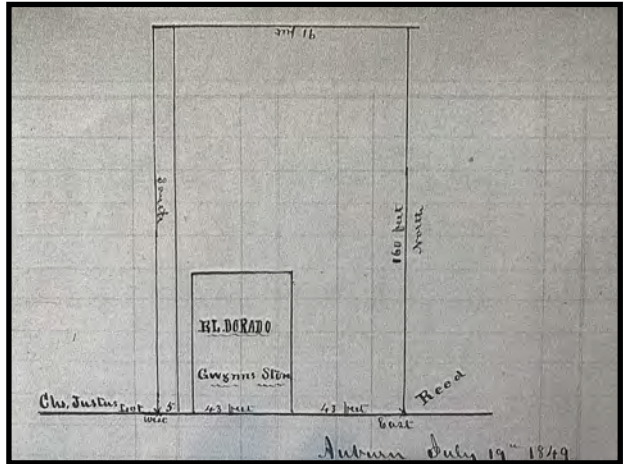
Gwynn and Hudson House opened the first trading post/boarding house/saloon in the camp.

The first establishment was merely a calico tent. Later they built a more substantial log structure and it became the hub of the small camp. It was the site of the murder of the first Sheriff, R. A. Echols,

and the site of the first criminal trial. One 49er recalled the place as “a rough log store with a floor of rough clapboards, [it] laid on sleepers beneath a capacious bar room and restaurant kept by a Frenchman named Prenard.”

Gwynn set up a saw mill on the Bear River and in 1850 used lumber from his mill to build the first hotel in the village, the National Hotel.

Gwynn operated the first post office and the first stage office. By 1851, Gwynn was appointed as one of the



five Commissioners to oversee the organization of newly formed County of Placer.

Gwynn seemed to have had his hand in so many enterprises that he wrote to his family to come and join him in California. Gwynn's father, John, would take over the store.

Gwynn was busy developing the first telegraph line in the county. His father, John Gwynn also discovered a lime ledge about one mile from Auburn and it was a huge success.

Gwynn married Cornelia Stow in Napa in 1860 and they moved to Marysville. Gwynn was still active in Placer County, building a wire suspension bridge at Rattlesnake Bar to help move lime from his quarries.

In 1865, the Gwynns moved to Sacramento. While there he helped promote the erection of the Pioneer Hall. He became heavily involved in the reclamation of land in the Lisbon District. Raising miles of levees, he sunk most of his fortune into the project and watched it wash away when the Sacramento River flooded its banks.

Undeterred, Gwynn left for Mexico in search of another fortune and found it in a silver mine in Durango. He developed it into one of the most successful mines in all of Mexico. Unfortunately, he died there in 1895. He left a wife and five children.

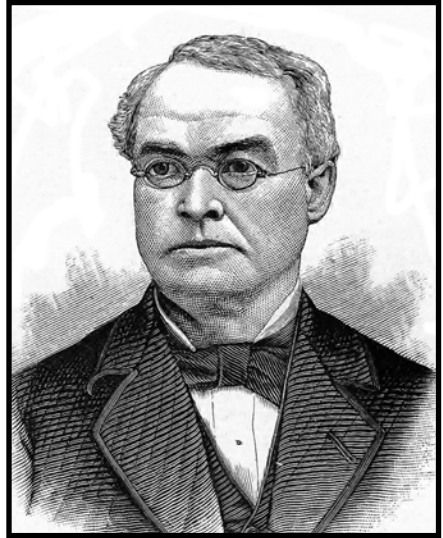
from the *Placer Herald* September 18, 1852

Oh! Don't you remember '49,
Billy Gwynn,
'49 when the floods came down
And smashed the top of your calico shop,
And did you exceedingly brown!
Billy Gwynn,
And the remains are no more to be see,
For a statelier building calls you
its Lord,
And proud may she be who is queen.

Judge James Ellery Hale

1824 - 1895

James Hale was born in Smithfield, Pennsylvania in 1824. He had a stable family life and was able to attend college in Pennsylvania where he studied law and was admitted to the bar. In 1846 he moved to Illinois where he practiced law. In the spring of 1849 he packed up and set out across the Plains with an ox team and wagon, headed for California. He arrived in Sacramento on October 26, 1849. He mined for a short time but quickly returned to his profession and set out his shingle in the booming mining camp of Yankee Jims.



In 1854, he was elected as the County Judge and was a prominent member of the Republican party. In that same year he was elected to the State Senate.

In 1855, he had a house and his law practice in Auburn. In 1856, he took a leave from his practice and went to Knox County, Illinois where he married Mary Hart Pierce. They immediately returned to Auburn and James became part of the law firm of Hale, Mills and Hillyer.

Judge Hale had a successful public life. He had various law partners over the years, he was a judge, a state senator, and was on the committee that framed the code of laws for the Auburn Quartz Mining District. He was the Reporter to the Supreme Court of California, he was a presidential elector and went to Washington to cast his

vote; he was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1878 and helped draft the new California constitution.

It was not a golden life, however. The Judge and Mary lost two children, daughter Nellie age 6 and son Clayton age 2. They would both die after contracting scarlet fever.

One more child would be born to them in 1868 and live to adulthood. In fact Mary Hale was visiting her daughter in San Diego when the news came that the Judge had a sudden stroke and died in 1895.

C. A. TUTTLE.

J. E. HALE.

H. H. FELLOWS.

TUTTLE, HALE & FELLOWS.
Attorneys at Law,

WILL PRACTICE in all the courts of Placer and adjoining counties, and in the Supreme Court. Office in brick block opposite 'Temple.'
Auburn, June 11th, 1864--6mos.

Edward Massar Hall

1829 - 1906

E. M. Hall was born in Sunbury, Pennsylvania in 1829. He attended and was valedictorian of the Sunbury Academy. When news of the Gold Rush began circulating on the East Coast, Hall was immediately intrigued.

He paid for passage on the ship *Xylon* out of Baltimore. On board were several other passengers who would eventually become associated with Auburn; John Boggs and Robert Gordon.

Hall came armed with letters of recommendation by several of his Congressional Representatives including one from a new Representative, Abraham Lincoln.

After a horrific sea journey, Hall came immediately to Wood's Dry Diggings in search of gold. He mined for a while and was seemingly successful for he was able to purchase a hotel. In 1852, he opened a branch of the express company and gold dust buyers, Adams and Company. The company was successful until 1854 when there was a financial crisis. The company went bankrupt and Hall was instructed to remit any assets at the Auburn branch to the bankruptcy court. There are two versions to this story, one in which Hall felt he owed his allegiance to the local depositors and returned the money to the community members, but in another version of that same story two local men, S. Roussin and Mr. Duncan, arrived at the branch office, pulled their revolvers and forced Hall to return the local depositors money - some \$60,000.

Whatever the truth is, Hall maintained his good reputation in the community and soon helped to establish the Placer County Bank with branches in Todd's Valley, Yankee Jims, Dutch Flat and Gold Run.

PLACER BANK.
Auburn, Todd's Valley,
and Dutch Flat,
PLACER COUNTY CALIFORNIA
HALL & ALLEN.
Exchange for Sale Drawn by
WELLS, FARGO & CO.,
Checks on Sacramento and San Francisco.

PAY THE HIGHEST PRICE FOR GOLD
DUST. Make advances on Gold Dust con-
 signed for Assay or Coinage. Attend to collec-
 tions and remittances, and transact a **GENERAL**
BANKING BUSINESS.

In 1857, he married Virginia (Jennie) Walker. They would have four children.

In 1858, he opened a private bank with Benjamin Allen in Auburn and in 1861 he and Allen took over the Wells Fargo Express Company in Auburn. During this time he was also involved in the Gold Run Ditch and Mining Company's mines which were very profitable. Later Hall moved to Oakland and helped open the Oakland Bank of Savings. He then purchased the home of one of the bank's founders, Samuel Merritt, on Lake Merritt.

*Hall house in
Oakland*



Never forgetting his first California home, Hall donated a two hundred pound bell to adorn the new schoolhouse in Auburn.

Hall stayed in the banking business until 1878 when he purchased the Glendale vineyard and ranch near St. Helena in the Napa Valley.

Eventually, Hall moved back to the Bay Area and was an active stock broker with an office in San Francisco. He retired in 1891. When Hall fell ill at the age of 78, he went in search of treatments at various sanitariums and at the end of his life was living in the Freeman Hotel in Auburn. He died in his old home town surrounded by his family in 1906.

Hiram Randall Hawkins

1826 - 1866

Hiram Hawkins was a man of character and popular among his peers but he could never seem to catch a lucky break in life.

Hiram was born in Lansingburg, New York in 1826. He came to California around the Horn on the ship *Tameroo* arriving in July 1849. He and his friend from Lansingburg, Henry Holmes, made their way to Deadman's Bar on the North Fork and mined for a time. By 1851, he was in Auburn and running for the County Clerk position, which he lost. He was appointed Deputy Clerk and afterwards was named a Justice of the Peace and was said to be an excellent officer.

In 1852, he married one of John Echols' daughters, the sister of Sheriff R. A. Echols. Sheriff Echols had been shot in 1850.

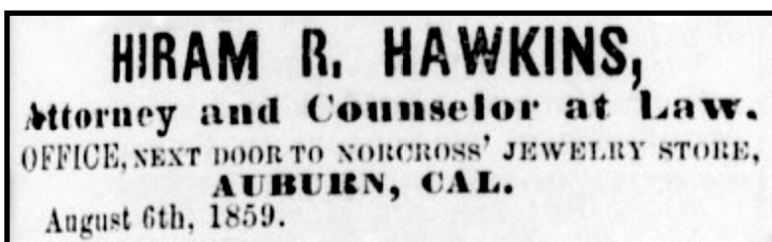
Hiram and a partner ran the Temple Saloon in 1853.

For a while he was editor of the Auburn *Whig* newspaper but when that political party died out so did the newspaper. He was editor of the *Placer Press* for a short time.

In May 1855 tragedy struck when his wife Eliza died at the age of 22, just after giving birth to their second son. To add to the pain, his eldest son then two years old died in August of that same year. In between the two devastating deaths, Hiram's newspaper building with the press and all the printing equipment was destroyed in the fire of June 1855.

Hiram was forced to take his infant son John back to New York to be raised by his family.

Hiram tried his luck at various professions. He opened a law office and bought a drug store in town but nothing seemed to bring him much success.



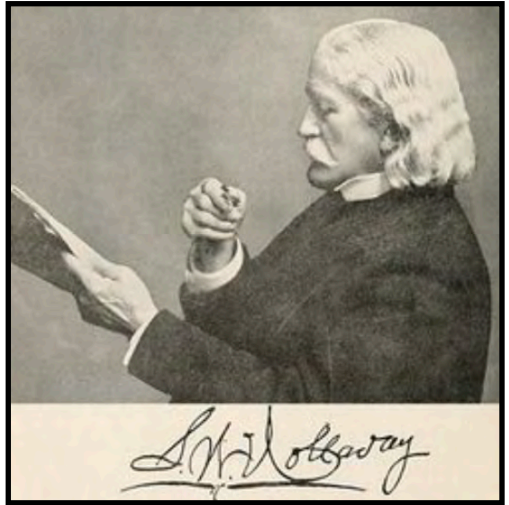
In 1863, Hiram moved to Gold Hill, Nevada and became the editor of the *Gold Hill News*, a Republican oriented paper. As a reward for his loyalty, he was appointed Counsel to Tumbez in Peru. In 1865, the citizens of Gold Hill, presented him with a “gold watch, a purse of nine hundred dollars and a square meal before he left town.” The Auburn newspaper later reported that “Mr. Hawkins had not been successful as a business man, and a Federal appointment was sought in the hope of bettering his fortune.”

Hiram's luck did not hold and he died in Peru in 1866, the newspapers noted that “the locality was unhealthy.” In his obituary the newspaper account claims that Mrs. Hawkins was buried in Auburn with two of their children. Nothing is known about the second child that died. Young John who was taken to New York. He lived there at least until age 19.

Samuel Wirt Holladay

1823 - 1915

Sam Holladay was born in Duansburg, New York in 1823. He studied law and was admitted to the bar in Ohio in 1845. When the news of gold began to circulate, the young lawyer was one of the first to take leave of his East Coast roots. He came to California via the Isthmus of Panama. He arrived in June 1849.



Holladay and Hudson House and several other men headed right to Woods Dry Diggings. Holladay is another pioneer who later wrote down his memories of his time in California. His stories do much to inform us about life in the early days of the Gold Rush.

Holladay mined right in the heart of what is now Old Town Auburn. Holladay was elected Alcalde of the camp. As such he helped settle any disputes and acted much as an early day mayor would.

In his memoirs, Holladay recounted that he was the one responsible for renaming Woods Dry Diggings to Auburn.

As the ravines in Auburn dried up, Holladay headed to Rich Bar on the North Fork where he was making fifty dollars a day. In spite of the good diggings, a longing to hear from home led Holladay to walk to Sacramento then take a steamer to San Francisco to look for any letters

from home. He also wanted to send back the money he had borrowed to make the California trip.

From San Francisco, Holiday went to the Trinity River to mine but returned to Auburn in October where he spent the winter.

As soon as spring arrived, Holladay and three partners headed to Murderer's Bar on the Middle Fork. They were very successful and Holladay walked away with over \$3,500 in gold. With that, he left the mining life.

By April 1850, he was in San Francisco. Like so many other would-be miners, Holladay reverted to his previous profession. He married Georgina Ord (Fort Ord is named for her brother) in 1857. They would have three children.

Holladay quickly made his way into the political and social world of San Francisco.

He was the San Francisco City Attorney for many years. He had a mansion in the city. He was a member of the Society of California Pioneers and for many years attended the annual Placer County Pioneers Reunions.

Holladay died in San Francisco in 1915.

Holladay House in San Francisco



Henry Thomas Holmes

1829 - 1902

Henry Holmes was born in Lansingburg, New York in 1829. He and his friend, Hiram Hawkins, made the decision to come to California and booked passage on the ship *Tameroo* in January 1849. They arrived in San Francisco in July. They immediately headed to the North Fork of the American River to try their luck at mining. They stayed until fall then decided to spend the winter in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). It would have taken about two weeks to sail to Hawaii. One can only imagine what the two young men from rural New York must have thought about the exotic islands.

When they returned, they opened a store near Missouri Bar then built the Long Valley House. Holmes was a deputy sheriff for a short time before traveling back to New York in 1852. He returned to California with his brother Gershom.

Holmes worked with John R. Gwynn who had the main store in Auburn and Holmes was the postmaster. Later he purchased Gwynn's business and ran it with his brother.

In 1852, he married John Gwynn's daughter, Laura Virginia. While working with Gwynn, Holmes purchased several lots in Auburn. Sometime before 1855, Holmes opened a brickyard between Auburn and Millertown (now the Edgewood area). His timing was fortuitous as almost the entire town of Auburn burned in the 1855 fire. Holmes and his brickyard did very well in rebuilding the town after the fire.

Being involved in the building business led Holmes and John and William Gwynn to enter the lime business. They had quarries in Clipper Gap, Applegate and Sacramento. Lime from their quarries are estimated to have supplied seven-eighths of all the lime used in building in all of Northern California during the early years of statehood.

In 1857, Holmes moved to Sacramento and was soon elected County Supervisor and then a City Trustee. More importantly, he was influential on the Board of Levee Commissioners that initiated the building of the great levee system in Sacramento and raised the street level in the entire downtown area. During this time his lime business expanded into Santa Cruz and El Dorado Counties.

Holmes was one of the organizers of the first telegraph line ever built in California, The Alta California Telegraph Company was organized in 1852 and the first line laid in 1854.

Holmes and Laura traveled to Europe and spent several years making a "Grand Tour."

Holmes and Gwynn would later clash over a reclamation project. While Holmes and his wife were traveling in Europe, Gwynn invested all of the company's money in swamp land. When Holmes returned, the company was bankrupt and the partnership dissolved in 1881. Holmes went on to form his own lime business and again made it profitable.

Laura and Henry settled in Pacific Heights in San Francisco. Holmes died in 1902 and Laura died in 1912.

Alabaster Lime.

THOMAS JONES is now under contract with us for burning lime at our Alabaster Lime Works, for the lime delivered at Newcastle.

Mr. Jones' name will be a sufficient guarantee for the excellence of the lime burned by him, and which is for sale at Newcastle, and at the kilns, by the H. T. Holmes Lime Co. No one is authorized to contract any debts on account of the H. T. Holmes Co., except on written order from our General Superintendent Wm. Russell, or from our office in San Francisco.

H. T. Holmes Lime Co.,

fb11-m2

No. 24 Sacramento St., S. F.

Hudson M. House

?

So very little is known about Hudson House. We know that Samuel Holladay, another 49er, recalled that he met House in New York when he was on his way to California via the steamer *Northern*. They traveled together to the Isthmus and then went by the steamer *Panama*, first to San Diego and then to San Francisco, landing in 1849.

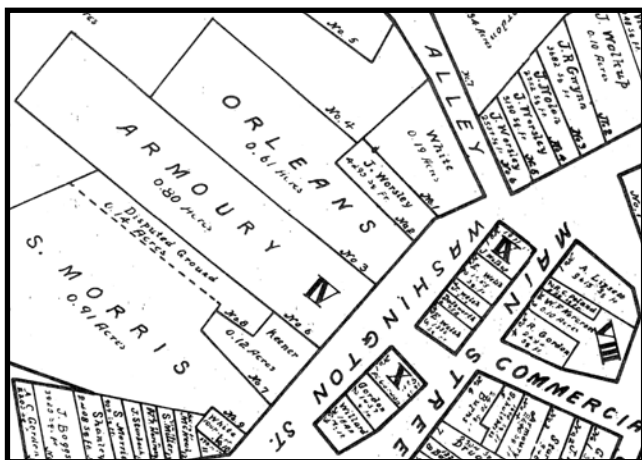
The steamer *Panama* is noteworthy for the number of well-known people on board. The entire board of Commissioners of the California/Mexican Boundary Commission under the leadership of W. H. Emory, whose account is told in Volume Two of Auburn's 49ers: Col. Joe Hooker, later of Civil War fame: Mrs. Jessie Benton Fremont, wife of the famous adventurer John C. Fremont: and several other men who would become judges and senators.

After landing, House and Holladay and their companions headed right for Wood's Dry Diggings. They found the camp "much dug up" and Holladay reported that they were disappointed to "find no coarse gold laying around loose on the surface." They brought out the extravagant gold washer that they brought from the East Coast and it only took a few minutes to realize how foolish their purchase had been. Holladay related that the miners did not make too much of a joke about them. They quickly discarded the useless piece of machinery.

From Holladay's account, "House and I went to digging with indifferent success and so continued till I found that work was not his strong suit, so I went by myself and he went to merchandising."

House soon became owner of the Empire Hotel with Eliza Elliott holding the mortgage on the place. Over the next few years, the property would change hands between the two of them as House would not be able to repay the loan to Eliza.

The Empire Hotel was on the site of the Armoury (Armory) Building in the 1870 map of Auburn. Lot 6 Block 4.



By the time of the 1855 fire, House had possession of the hotel and with the rest of the town watched the whole area burn in June 1855. Hudson had enough resources to rebuild although there were several liens against the property. By 1856, the *Placer Herald* reported “the new Empire rises from the ashes.” House gave a huge ball to celebrate.

The fun didn’t last too long and House lost the hotel in a Sheriff’s sale in 1857.

The last account we have of Hudson House is again from Holladay’s memoirs. Holladay recounted that the last he heard of his old friend, House was a “burnt out old cuss” living in Sacramento and Holladay recalled that gambling had always been his (House’s) vice.

House was one of the many men for whom the Gold Rush adventure was their downfall.

Dr. Henry C. Hubbard
1823-1865

Dr. Hubbard was born in Killing, Connecticut in 1823 and came to Woods Dry Diggings in early 1850. Like most men, he mined for a time but eventually returned to his profession.

In addition to running the Placer County Hospital in the 1850s, he was involved with a livery stable, was part owner of the Auburn to Illinoistown Turnpike, the Auburn and Yankee Jims Turnpike, the Whisky Bar bridge, and a bridge at New York Bar. He owned some "China houses," and part of a ditch company, he was part owner of the Sacramento to Carson City road, and was a banker and Wells Fargo Agent.

*Site of the Whisky
Bar Bridge on the
American River*

Hubbard was married in Rhode Island in 1845 to Mary Allen, the sister of Benjamin Allen.

Mary disappeared from public record soon after. Ben Allen and Henry would both come to California but there is no record of Mary coming. In 1860 Henry was living with Ben's family in Auburn.

In 1861, Henry married Anna Russo in Auburn and they had a son, Henry Calvin.



At various times, Hubbard was involved in business with his former brother-in-law Benjamin Allen, with Moses Andrews, the banker and jeweler and with E. M. Hall, the banker.

*Hubbard
House, now
Oakwood Avenue*

Hubbard died at the early age of 42 years in 1865. He left a very large estate, about \$70,000 which in today's money would be well over a million dollars.

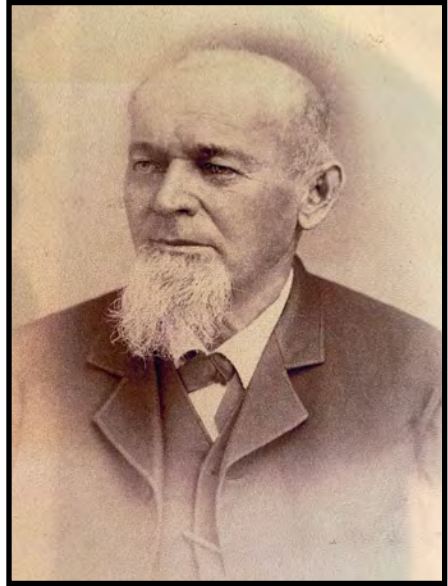


George Adam Keehner

1822-1900

George Keehner was one of the many Germany born immigrants that settled in Auburn. Born in Baden, Germany in 1822, his family came to Pennsylvania in 1835.

When the Gold Rush began, Keehner was among the early men to “catch the fever,” and crossed the plains by ox team. His party arrived in Hangtown (present-day Placerville) in early 1850. He mined for a short time near Iowa Hill but soon came to Auburn where he would live the rest of his life.

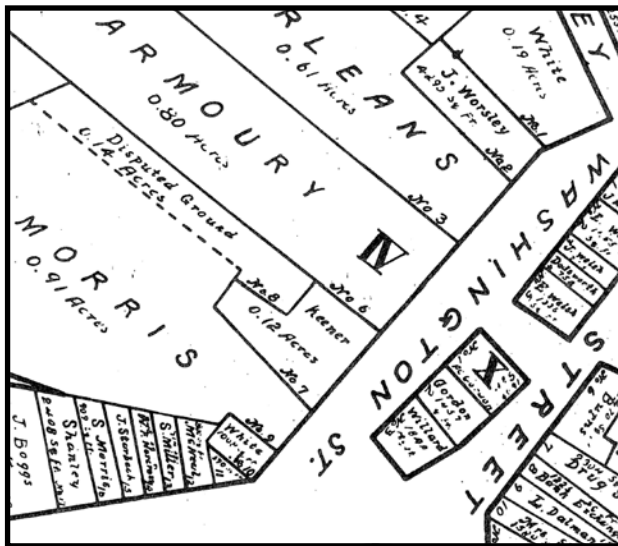


Keehner initially owned the Eagle Bakery, like many early businesses, the Bakery also served as a saloon. He lost the building in the fire of 1855 but rebuilt very quickly. For a short time, he also owned the Auburn Brewery and the Auburn Steam Flour Mill.

In 1855, he married Caroline (Carrie) Foster of Ophir. They would have two daughters.

In the 1860s he owned the Empire Livery Stable. Later he would open another saloon. Like so many Auburn businessmen, Keehner kept his hand in the mining business and owned a very profitable mine near Ophir, the Lone Star Company.

Keekner property. Lot 7 Block 4.



After George died in Auburn in 1900 at the age of 78, Caroline kept the saloon open. She would die in 1905.