A HISTORY OF ALL THE POST OFFICES THAT HAVE EXISTED OR STILL EXIST IN SIERRA COUNTY!

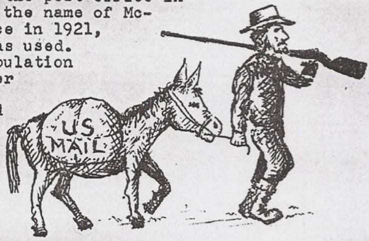
The information concerning post offices in Sierra County is taken from a more inclusive study of post offices in the Mother Lode area done by Mrs. Gladys M. Skinner.

ALLEGHANY POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on March 18, 1857, and was called Chip's Flat. The name was changed to Alleghany on November 19, 1857, and the post office has been in constant operation ever since. Alleghany was named for the Alleghany Tunnel, a gold mining facility, said to have been built by miners from Alleghany, Pennsylvania, in 1855. Here is the home also of the famous Sixteen-to-One Mine, no longer in operation.

BEVERLY POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on January 30, 1900, and was discontinued on November 30, 1901. After it was discontinued, the mail was handled through the post office at Johnsville. It is not known how the post office got its name.

BRANDY CITY POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on November 26, 1909, and was discontinued on June 30, 1926; after which the mail was handled through the post office at Camptonville.

CALPINE POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on November 29, 1921, and was discontinued on December 31, 1942. Mail was handled through the post office at Sattley. The post office was reopened as a Rural Post Office out of the Sattley Post Office on June 17, 1963, and it is still in operation. There was a large lumber mill in Calpine and most of the people living in Calpine were employees of the mill. The community developed in 1919 around the mill and yards of the Davies-Johnson Lumber Company, and it was first known as McAlpine. When the post office in Washington D.C. rejected the name of McAlpine for the post office in 1921, the new name, Calpine, was used. In 1939 Calpine had a population of some 600 people. After the mill closed the population dropped to around 100 people.

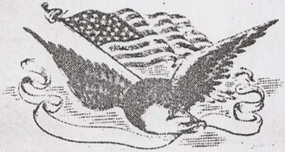


CHIP'S FLAT POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on March 18, 1857, and was known as Chip's Flat. The name was changed to Alleghany on November 19, 1857. Just below the present town of Alleghany, following the line of the ancient Blue Lead River channel across Kanaka Creek Canyon, auriferous gravel deposits are found on the opposite slopes of Chip's Flat, and again at what was once the mining camp of Minnesota Flat on the other side of the ridge. An outcropping of blue gravel at the latter location was discovered in July of 1852, by an old English sailor, known to his fellow friends as "Chips" because he had previously been employed as a ship's carpenter. Later "Chips" located even richer diggings on the northern slope of the same ridge and they called the camp Chip's Flat. (For some reason the official spelling was Chip's and not Chips'.)

DOWNIEVILLE POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on October 7, 1851, and has been in continuous operation since that time. At first it was established in Yuba County, and then into Sierra County when that county was created in 1852 from the eastern part of Yuba County. The earliest official spelling in the cancel of mail was "Downerville", but the present form was soon adopted without formal change of name. This post office was named for Major Downie.

ETTA POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on April 16, 1883, and was discontinued on September 5, 1895, and the mail was then handled through the post office at Sierra Valley (now known as Sierraville). It is not known how the post office got its name, as the community in which it was located was called Randolph. Often, when a post office was first established, the new postmaster would take the name of his wife or of a friend, because when making application for a post office some name had to be given.

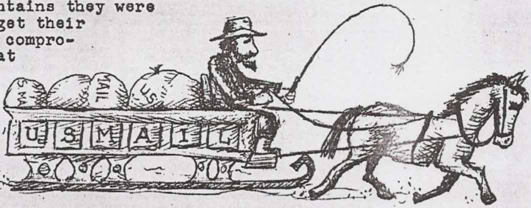
EUREKA NORTH POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on November 19, 1857, and it was discontinued on December 20, 1861. There are no records as to where mail was forwarded. The Greek expression for "I have Found It" was Eureka, and is associated with the great geometrician, Archimedes. As a geographical term, it apparently originated in California. The motto became popular after the Calif. Constitutional Convention, on October 7, 1849, approved it for use in the great seal of the State. There was a Eureka South, later known as Graniteville, but it never had a post office called Eureka South.

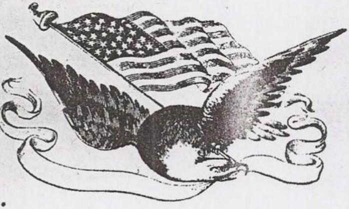


FIR CAP POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on January 17, 1869, and was discontinued on November 3, 1886, and the mail was then handled through the post office at Downieville.

FOREST CITY POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on November 16, 1854. The name was changed from Forest City to Forest on January 17, 1895. The post office was discontinued on March 15, 1947, and the mail was handled through the post office at Alleghany. Forest City was at one time called "Brownsville" but there was no post office then. The present name may have no connection with the pine trees that surround the community. There are some who hold that a busy newspaper-woman was the source of the name. She was Mrs. Forest Monney, who reportedly signed her stories "Forest City". When the miners established the town, it bore the Indian name "Yomana", said to describe a high bluff or holy ground nearby. It was also called "Forks of Oregon Creek" at one time, but there was no post office at that time.

GIBSONVILLE POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on June 18, 1855, and was discontinued on October 25, 1869. It was reopened on December 16, 1869, and was discontinued for good on July 30, 1910, after which the mail was handled through the post office at La Porte. This remote section of Sierra County was first prospected in the spring of 1850, when gold was found along the ridge between the North Fork of the Yuba and the South Fork of the Feather River by an old sea captain named Sears, whose name was later given to the ridge. Returning to the Yuba, Sears prepared to lead a company of prospectors to the scene of his discovery. But the news that Sears had "struck it rich" spread, and before proceeding very far, his party found that they were being followed by a group under the leadership of a man by the name of Gibson. When ordered to turn back, Gibson's men refused, saying that the mountains of California were as free to them as to any man, and that if there was gold beyond those mountains they were going to get their share. A compromise was at length reached and the two parties





proceeded to Sear's Ridge, where operations began at a place afterward known as "Sear's Diggings". There never was a settlement or a post office by the name of Sears. Very rich deposits were found nearby, and this site developed into the large thriving camp of "Gibsonville".

GOODYEAR'S BAR POST OFFICE: This post office first opened on October 7, 1851. It was discontinued for lack of revenue on April 11, 1888, but was reopened on August 10, 1888, and has remained open ever since. Goodyear's Bar, settled in the summer of 1849 by Andrew and Miles Goodyear and two companions, was one of the first mining camps on the North Fork of the Yuba River. Nearby were the Ranse Doddler and the Hoodoo Bars, with St. Joe's Bar two miles below, and Woodville (at first known as Cutthroat Bar) farther up the river. The diggings in the vicinity yielded rich returns. Goodyear's Bar prospered through the 1850's, but in the early '60's, with the gradual exhaustion of ore deposits along the river, its decline set in.

LA PORTE POST OFFICE: This post office was first called Rabbittown, and the post office was first opened as Rabbit Town on September 13, 1855. The name was changed to La Porte on November 19, 1857. La Porte was first in Sierra County, but became part of Plumas County in an 1868 boundary adjustment. The post office has been open continuously.

LOYALTON POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on January 8, 1864, and has been open continuously. Loyalton was named during the Civil War by mountaineers who were loyal to the Union Cause. An ordinance unusual in an early Western town forbade the sale of liquor within the "city limits", with the result that Loyalton became California's second largest city; its incorporators spread the town as widely as possible to discourage lumberjacks from walking beyond the city limits for a drink.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on June 24, 1874, and was discontinued on September 15, 1911. The mail was then handled through the post office at Goodyear's Bar. There was also a Mountain House community in Butte County and one in Contra Costa County; however, only the settlement by that name in Sierra County ever had a post office.

ONEIDA POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened in June of 1882 and was discontinued on February 17, 1885; the mail being handled through the post office at Loyalton.

PIKE CITY POST OFFICE: This post office was first called Plum Valley, and was first opened on July 31, 1855. It was changed to "Pike City" on December 13, 1877, and then on January 17, 1895, the name was changed to just Pike.The post office was discontinued on March 31, 1954, and mail is now handled through the post office at Camptonville. It is not known how it got the name of Pike. Mrs. Mary Edith Godfrey, a native and lifetime resident of Pike, passed away on March 31, 1968. She had served as the Postmaster of Pike for almost thirty years.

PORT WINE POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on August 19, 1861, and was discontinued on April 5, 1865, for lack of revenue. It was reopened on May 18, 1870, and was discontinued for good on January 15, 1918. Mail was then handled through the post office at La Porte.

PURDYS POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on June 6, 1889, and on March 4, 1911, it was put into Washoe County, Nevada.

RABBIT TOWN POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on September 13, 1855, and the name was changed to La Porte on November 19, 1857.

ROCKY POINT POST OFFICE (Rockypoint): This post office was first opened on May 9, 1876, and the cancel was one word. It was later changed to two words, but the records do not give the date of the change of wording. It was discontinued on September 9, 1897, and the mail was handled through the post office at Sattley.

SAINT LOUIS POST OFFICE: This post office first opened on January 15, 1855 and it was discontinued on July 11, 1895, for lack of revenue. It was reopened on May 4, 1898, and again discontinued for good on January 15, 1915. The mail was at first handled through the post office at Port Wine.

SATTLEY POST OFFICE: This post office first opened on May 5, 1884, and was discontinued on December 31, 1918, for lack of revenue. It was reopened on April 29, 1919, and has been open contin-

uously since. The town was named in 1884 for Mrs. Harriet Sattley Church, the oldest lady in the town at that time. Sattley, before 1884, was called "Church's Corners", but it never had a post office during that time.

SCALES POST OFFICE: The post office was first opened on February 12, 1880, and was discontinued on May 31, 1923; the mail was then handled through the post office at Strawberry Valley.

SCALES DIGGINGS POST OFFICE: The post office was first opened on June 15, 1871, and was discontinued on January 26, 1875. No further information is available.

SIERRA POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on April, 18, 1855, and was discontinued on January 4, 1856.

SIERRA CITY POST OFFICE: The post office was first opened on June 23, 1864, and then closed on September 20, 1865. It was reopened on March 19, 1867, and has remained open continuously.

SIERRA VALLEY POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on July 25, 1862, as Sierra Valley. The name was changed to Sierraville on April 6, 1899.

SIERRAVILLE POST OFFICE: The name (above) was changed to Sierraville on April 6, 1899, and this post office has been open continuously ever since.

TABLE ROCK POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on April 17, 1857, and was discontinued on September 30, 1922. The mail was then handled through the post office at La Porte.

NOTES ON THE AUTHOR: Mrs. Gladys M. Skinner is a noted authority on the post offices of the Mother Lode Country. She began her historical research as a hobby. Looking for something to do while her husband was busy at work, she decided on California historical research. Mrs. Skinner lives in Los Angeles with her husband, but she loves to travel through the Mother Lode Conntry, gathering information for her history research and just enjoying the countryside. She has had articles by and about her work in the *Los Angeles Times* and other publications.