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"little governor" from Arizona founded Tarpon

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



THE "LITTLE GOVERNOR" FROM ARIZONA FOUNDED TARPON

TARPON SPRINGS --- The large two-story frame house with wide verandahs at both levels is a landmark here. It's the original home of Anson Peacely-Killen Safford, usually written "A.P.K. " Safford, the founder of this community.

Safford came here after exciting careers in the East and out West. This area was part of the huge 4,000,000-acre "Disston land sale." The Internal Improvement Fund, headed by Gov. William D. Bloxham, sold the vast holdings to the saw manufacturer at 25 cents an acre. Safford came to Florida to help the Disston Syndicate develop the holdings and he founded Tarpon Springs in 1882.

A native of Vermont, Safford at the age of 20 made the hard cross-country trek to California. He was a gold miner and served in the California Legislature. Later he drifted to Nevada and was elected Recorder in a county there. He also was surveyor general for the state. His political connection got him appointment as territorial governor of Arizona by President Grant in 1869. He became known as the "Little Governor," fought the Apache Indians, and started the public school system in that state. Safford, Arizona, is named for him.

The 1873 Arizona Legislature handed Governor Safford a divorce through a law which passed with but one dissenting vote. The Governor himself signed it into law. He married again in 1877.

In Tarpon Springs, Safford was a real leader and was one of the founders of the Universalist Church. He died here in 1891 at the age of 61.

