



I've been pursuing the origin(s) of Sedalia's name for some time now since it is now synonymous with the birth of Classic Ragtime and is recognized as a place where America's music began. But, of course, there are all those other Sedalia's chartographically sprinkled over the continental United States like pepper flakes ground from a single peppercorn so as to raise the question of the name's origin.

So far I have located over 15 states with Sedalia place names and one Canadian province. At this point streets, parks, golf courses, churches, cemeteries and schools bearing the appellation are too numerous to research. Thus, I begin by trolling for the origins of the state names. My first assumption was that cities West of Missouri and those on major rail lines established after 1860 probably simply appropriated the familiar name. So I went looking to fact check this notion. However, I only find two Sedalia towns west of Missouri.

First up is Sedalia, Colorado population 206 in the last census and but a burp on the Western Slope of the Rockies. The tiny ripple was on the Denver branch of the Denver and Rio Grande RR reached in 1871. Their dubbing story maintains that their town was originally Plum, Colorado. However, Henry Musick Clay from St. Francois County MO arrived there in 1859 and in 1871 became the first Postmaster. He disliked the name Plum and apparently had heard of our Missouri Sedalia and chose that name for his post office. However the railroad continued to use Plum and the community went by two names until the little berg was re-platted as Sedalia in 1882. Had I been there in those binomial years I would have simply settled on Plumalia and been done with it.

Next we will visit Sedalia, Texas as we check off the Sedalia namesakes and learn of their connection to the Missouri matriarch.

¹Trout, Craig; "Sedalia History response to Charles Wise 2004 inquiry";
<http://www.genealogy.com/forum/regional/states/topics/co/douglas/26/>