

Mining Towns-Bannack

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Bannack has always been known as a rough and lawless mining town since the mid 1800s. John White and other prospectors discovered hidden gold in the Grasshopper Creek in 1862. Miners rushed to the area in no time at all. Nearly 3000 miners lived in Bannack in the first few years. Robberies, gunfights, and murders were among the many things that happened every week in the small town.

Another mining town was Virginia City located about 80 miles away from Bannack. It became a popular place to purchase mining supplies. The road to and from the two towns became increasingly dangerous to travel. A group of men organized themselves into a group called the "Montana Vigilantes". They traveled the long road and terminated men thought to be involved in suspected gangs that would terrorize the road between the two camps.

The sheriff of Bannack, Henry Plummer, was also the infamous leader of the "Innocents" or more commonly referred to as the "Plummer Gang" who prowled the road between Bannack and Virginia City. At one point the gang had over 100 people in it. Henry Plummer was sited at several robberies and the people of Bannack and Virginia City started to become cautious and suspicious of the sheriff. A man who was about to be hanged was suspected as being a member of the gang accused Henry Plummer as being the head of the gang. The accusation confirmed the suspicion of the sheriff being an outlaw. In the winter of 1864 Plummer was hung on the gallows that he had built as sheriff of the town. The "Innocents" were suspected to of killed over 100 people and had been part of a massive robbery that took place between Bannack and Virginia City.

In 1864 Bannack was named the first Territorial Capital of Montana. A short time later the title of Capital was moved on to Virginia City. The mining town lasted until the 1940s and became a state park on August 15, 1954.

<https://www.goldrushnuggets.com/mogoru.html>

<https://www.legendsofamerica.com/mt-henryplummer/3/>

[https://billingsgazette.com/news/features/magazine/bannack-of-gold-and-early-day-montana/article\\_9f8fb7bf-0666-526d-8297-247c61f81cb5.html](https://billingsgazette.com/news/features/magazine/bannack-of-gold-and-early-day-montana/article_9f8fb7bf-0666-526d-8297-247c61f81cb5.html)