

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section _____ Page _____

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 05000885

Date Listed: 8/10/2005

Hecla House

Beaverhead

MT

Property Name


County

State

N/A

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

8/10/05
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

Significance:

Criterion B (Association with significant individual) is deleted, as is *Significant Person: Henry Knippenberg*. [The connection between the nominated resource and Knippenberg is tangential at best; reflecting but a minor component of his broad contributions as an industrialist, site manager, and civic leader. The residence is merely representative of Knippenberg's all-inclusive operational responsibility in association with the local mining operation and reveals no directly identifiable physical connection between the man and the specific property. Resources under *Criterion B* should document much stronger, direct connections between the individual, his significance, and the resource. The building's associations with Knippenberg and the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company are best recognized under *Criterion A*.]

The Period of Significance is revised to read: *1881-1904*.
[This reflects the period of establishment and prime industrial importance of the mining community of Hecla. The period can not predate the date of construction for the nominated resource, which is here estimated as circa 1881 and the founding of Hecla.]

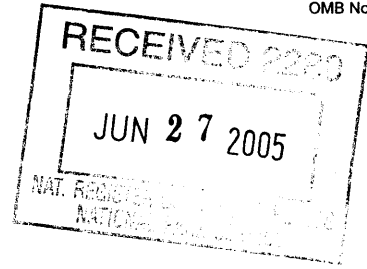
These clarifications were confirmed with the MT SHPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

885

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Hecla Residence

other name/site number:

2. Location

street & number: Approx. 11 miles west of Glendale on Trapper Creek Road #188,
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

not for publication: N/A
vicinity: X

city/town: Melrose

state: Montana code: MT county: Beaverhead code: 001 zip code: 011

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark F. Baumer / SHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title

JUNE 24, 2005
Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency or bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register see continuation sheet
- removed from the National Register see continuation sheet
- other (explain): _____

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

8/10/05
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property:	Private	Number of Resources within Property	
Category of Property:	Building	Contributing	Noncontributing
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:	0	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> building(s)
Name of related multiple property listing:	N/A	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
		<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
		<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> TOTAL

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:	DOMESTIC/single dwelling COMMERCE/TRADE/business	Current Functions:	VACANT
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7. Description

Architectural Classification: OTHER/Rustic

Materials:

foundation: STONE/fieldstone
walls: WOOD/log
roof: WOOD/shingle
other:

Narrative Description

The Hecla Residence is located in the historical townsite of Hecla, a company-mining town at the base of Lion Mountain in Beaverhead County, Montana. The building is situated at the northwest corner of a twenty-acre terrace below the imposing, white-marble glacial cirque headwall of Lion Mountain, the location of numerous mineshafts associated with the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company activities. The terrace is surrounded by Sheriff Mountain to the north and Lion and Keokirk Mountains to the west, and the 10,400-foot Granite Peak to the south. The townsite of Lion City is located approximately one mile below in the narrow valley to the east. Sappington Creek drains Lion Mountain and Keokirk Mountain to the south and west. Trapper Creek is located further south and east, and Canyon Creek circles the area to the north. A narrow two-track road provides access to Hecla from the town of Melrose, approximately seventeen miles to the east-southeast. Located at the timberline (8600 feet), the terrace is open and grassy, with scatterings of evergreen trees at the edges of the valley and in groves down the slope to the east.

Hecla was once a busy mining town, which included residences, boarding houses, a company store, utilitarian and industrial buildings. Avalanches, snow loads, deterioration, and souvenir collectors have taken out nearly all the structures and equipment in the town. The last standing building, the Hecla residence, measuring 18 feet by 28 feet, is a one-story rectangular log building with a side-gable roof, constructed on a dry-laid fieldstone foundation. The squared logs feature dovetail notching and daub chinking. The roof is covered with vertical milled sheathing and cedar shingles, and an interior fieldstone chimney pierces the ridgeline just off-center to the east. Vertical milled wood planks fill the gable ends. Vertical log posts are located near the center of the south (front) and north (rear) elevations, suggesting piece-sur-piece construction, or that the west side of the building was constructed or enclosed at a later date. The doors and windows have been removed, and the openings are trimmed with narrow milled lumber.

Hecla Residence

Name of Property

Beaverhead County, MT

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, B, C

Areas of Significance: EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT;
INDUSTRY/MINING; ARCHITECTURE

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Period(s) of Significance: 1867-1904

Significant Person(s): Henry Knippenberg

Significant Dates: 1882, 1900, 1904

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Hecla Residence is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its association with the development and settlement of Hecla City, an intrinsic part of the Hecla Mining District. The building is evocative of the establishment of the town of Hecla at the base of Lion Mountain that would not only serve to make the company more profitable, but also would allow workers and families to be separated from the rowdy atmosphere of Lion City. Henry Knippenberg, general manager of the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company, became an influential regional politician and industrialist. He oversaw the construction of the Hecla townsite as part of his overall plan for the economic good of the company, but also as an extension of his moral code. For these reasons, the Hecla Residence is eligible for listing under Criterion B, as the only remaining residence in Hecla and the last vestige of Knippenberg's vision for the town. The building is eligible for listing under criterion C as well, as an example of rustic log architecture common to mining camps.

The Establishment of the Hecla Mining District

The townsite of Hecla is one of several camps, towns, and industrial complexes associated with the operations of the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company in the Trapper and Canyon Creek areas of Southwestern Montana. During the last decades of the nineteenth century, the Hecla Mining District was one of the most profitable in the world. Its operations included the extraction from several adits at Lion Mountain, transportation along roads and tramways, settlements such as Hecla and Lion City that provided services to the miners, processing centers at Greenwood and Glendale, and the transportation hub at Melrose.

Discovery

During 1860s, prospectors working from the established settlements at Alder Gulch (Virginia City), Bannack, Vipond, and Argenta doubtless searched close by Trapper and Canyon Creek for placer gold. Gold might be expected in a setting like Trapper Creek, but "...virtually none [was] found."¹ Whatever the geologic or mineralogical reasons for the lack of free gold, miners did not give up on the area. By the early 1870's lode mining was increasing in importance, and Trapper Creek was a natural prospect situated as it was between the established Districts of Argenta and Vipond.

P.J. Grotevant and James A Bryant, with a number of partners, filed on the Trapper Lode August 16, 1873. Actual discovery had occurred a year earlier when William Spurr found the Lode, calling it the Forest Queen. Spurr and Bryant were partners. They did not work on the claim, but during the following year when the discovery was open for relocation, Bryant organized a trapping expedition to the headwaters of Trapper Creek. While there he relocated the original claim. Grotevant was out searching for strayed horses when he accidentally came upon the outcrop of the Trapper Lode. He returned to camp and convinced his trapping partners that they should remain and stake out the area.² Many silver lodes were staked before some of the men returned to Bannack to have the claims recorded. News of the strike spread, and men rushed to the new diggings.

Among these was Noah Armstrong, who had been at Birch Creek (adjacent to Trapper Creek) a few days prior to the Grotevant discovery. Armstrong, and men working for him, quickly located the Cleve, Avon, Alta, and Atlantis lodes in September 1873. The Atlantis proved to be the richest mine in the District. This nucleus of mining properties allowed Armstrong to play a major role in the development of the Bryant (later Hecla) Mining District. On the day Armstrong located the Atlantis, R.E. McConnell and D.S. Dewey located the Cleopatra lode. The Cleopatra produced the largest quantity of ore in the District.³

¹ Charles J. Lyden, "The Gold Placers of Montana", *Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology Memoir 26*. (Montana School of Mines, Butte, 1948) p. 11.

² Oren Sassman, *Metal Mining in Historic Beaverhead*, unpublished thesis, (Montana State University, Bozeman, 1941), pp. 232-5.

³ *Ibid.*, 234.

Hecla Residence

Beaverhead County, MT

Name of Property

County and State

9. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one

UTM References: Zone: Easting: Northing:
 12 349579 5051588

Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)): Unsurveyed; Extrapolated location (approximate): NE ¼ NE ¼ SW ¼ of Section 2, Township 3 South, Range 9 West.

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is drawn to include the footprint of the building and 100 feet surrounding it.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to include the residence and sufficient property surrounding it to convey its setting, feeling and association.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Tom Gignoux
 organization: Concordia LLC date: March 20, 2001
 street & number: 2755 Lower Lincoln Hills Rd. telephone: 406.239.0909
 city or town: Missoula state: MT zip code: 59802

name/title: Kimberly Lugthart
 organization: date: March 20, 2001
 street & number: 28 Willowbrook telephone: 406.542.7520
 city or town: Missoula state: MT zip code: 59802

Architectural Significance by

name/title: Rachel Manley
 organization: MT SHPO Intern date: April, 2005
 street & number: 1410 8th Avenue telephone: 406.444.3647
 city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59620

Property Owner

name/title: University of Mississippi Foundation/ Lessee: Tom Gignoux
 street & number: 2755 Lower Lincoln Hills Rd. telephone: 406.239.0909
 city or town: Missoula state: MT zip code: 59802

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The façade (south elevation) contains a centered door opening, two evenly-spaced window openings to the west, and one window opening centered in the east half of the elevation. Originally, a small shed roof sheltered the entrance to the house, but that roof has since been removed. Fenestration in the west elevation is limited to a door opening at the south side and a window opening centered in the gable end. A early 20th century photograph shows that the residence featured a lean-to addition on the west elevation, but that addition is no longer present. There is a single window opening at the south side of the east elevation, and another centered in the gable end above. The north elevation contains three window openings, two evenly spaced across the west half, and another centered in the east half.

The interior floor plan includes a central stairwell that leads down to dugout basement and up to the attic area. The south half of the building features a large room on either side of the stairs. There are three smaller rooms across the north side of the house, including a pantry at the northwest corner. Throughout the building, the floors are unfinished wood plank, and the walls are covered with lathe and plaster. Deteriorating wallpaper still covers the walls at the main story level, and shows evidence of wainscoting that has since been removed. The attic space is one large room that could have been used as a sleeping area.

Condition

Cold, dry air has preserved the building despite deep winter snow and the loss of windows and doors to souvenir collectors. The logs are sound and, except at the ground, show little rot. The building needs leveling, chinking, and new doors and windows to be serviceable. The chimney needs repairing above the roof level and the north side of the roof needs new shingles. The south side shingles were replaced in 1998. Detailed work is needed to restore the wainscoting, trim, and wallpaper to its original elegance.

Integrity

Although the residence has lost some integrity of association in that the rest of the Hecla townsite is no longer standing, the building does retain integrity of location, setting, feeling, workmanship, and design. Some loss of materials has taken place due to the removal of the doors and windows. Also, an early 20th century panoramic photograph of the area shows the building with a small lean-to addition on its west elevation, and a shed roof over a stoop leading to the front entrance. Despite the loss of these features, the building retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance.

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Log cabins, and probably tents and various other types of shelter, sprang up immediately, and Trapper City was born in 1873.⁴ Sassman lists "miners cabins, several saloons, and a 'hurdy gurdy'" as the main structures in Trapper City.⁵ Glendale, several miles down the mountain to the east, was also established in 1873 when Armstrong had John Langley build the first cabin. Armstrong constructed a smelter at the site of Glendale during the same year. It had two blast furnaces of 70-ton capacity each.⁶ Apparently before the smelter was operational, the mines in Trapper Creek shipped 10 tons of high-grade silver-lead ore to Swansea, Wales, for refining that first year. The ore averaged 35% lead, 140 ounces of silver, and 1 ounce of gold.⁷ One of the early needs recognized by the miners was for improved access to outside markets. They constructed a road from the Trapper Creek and Lion Mountain diggings to the main roadway along the Big Hole River in 1873-1874.⁸

Early Development

Trapper City flourished for a brief period. It became apparent that the properties located about a mile up the gulch on Lion Mountain were potentially more important. When Noah Armstrong began shipping ore from his Atlantis Mine, a new settlement called Lion City grew one mile below the adits. The Trapper Mine shut down as mines on Lion Mountain were coming into prominence. The last inhabitant of Trapper City gave up and moved to Lion City in 1878.⁹

Lion City boasted two general stores, three saloons, two hotels, boarding houses for miners, a school, and a post office by 1878. Inhabitants included miners, merchants, gamblers, prostitutes, and a small number of families. There were also many teamsters and common laborers not considered skilled miners.¹⁰

Lion City served the immediate needs of people at the mine mouth. Glendale, several miles down the mountain to the east, served a very different function, and it too was steadily growing. Early lode miners were forced to deal with a number of serious, interrelated, problems. After securing sufficient capital for development, they had to get heavy mining and milling machinery to the lode. Once equipment was in place and working they had to haul tons of ore to distant places for eventual processing. Hauling ore great distances was very expensive. The mining records are replete with examples of ore being hauled from southwestern Montana to Corrine, Utah, and shipped by rail for eventual smelting in Swansea, Wales. This option worked only for very high grade ore that could pay the cost of transport. A preferable solution seemed to be establishing smelters as close to the ore body as possible, although this was also expensive. That is exactly what Noah Armstrong did. Consolidating and strengthening his mining, milling, and smelting interests, Armstrong formed the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company in 1877. He purchased the Cleopatra, True Fissure, Hecla, and a number of other properties. This gave him control of a majority of the important mines on Lion Mountain. He continued to build up the Glendale smelter, and with the smelter, the town.¹¹

The Hecla Consolidated Mining Company

Affairs seemed to be going well for Noah Armstrong, and the Hecla District, as the 1880's dawned. Ore from the Silver Quartz Mine was smelting at \$1000 per ton. "The ores are chiefly galena, gray copper and yellow carbonates, easily fluxed with iron, lime, and charcoal, a very little of them requiring roasting".¹² Base bullion from the Glendale smelter was sent to Balbach and Sons in Omaha

⁴ Muriel Sibell Wolle, *Montana Pay Dirt: A Guide to the Mining Camps of the Treasure State*, (Sage Books, Denver: 1963), p. 187.

⁵ Sassman, p. 23.

⁶ *The Atlantis*, February 16, 1881.

⁷ R.D. Geach, "Mines and Mineral Deposits (Except Fuels) Beaverhead County, Montana," *Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology Bulletin 85* (Montana College of Mineral Science and Technology, Butte: 1972), p. 112.

⁸ Sassman, p. 235; Wolle, p. 187

⁹ Michael A. Leeson, ed., *History of Montana, 1739-1885*, (Warner, Beers & Co., Chicago: 1885), p. 487; Sassman: p. 237; Wolle: p. 187

¹⁰ Sassman, p. 238; Thor N.V. Karlstrom, "Geology and Ore Deposits of the Hecla Mining District: Beaverhead County, Montana," *Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology Memoir No. 25*, (Montana School of Mines, Butte: 1948), p. 4.

¹¹ Sassman, p. 241; Wolle, p. 188.

¹² *The Atlantis*, October 13, 1880.

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for final refining. These shipments averaged \$100,000 in value over a period of many months. For example, during a two-week period in September of 1880 the smelter shipped 126,000 lbs., and 156,500 lbs of bullion to Omaha.¹³

Armstrong's company was also constructing improvements to the mining operation. "The Hecla Company is building a tramway from their lime quarry to the wagon road [from Lion Mountain] where the main tramway will evidently intercept it."¹⁴ This tramway conveyed ore from the mines to Glendale via narrow gauge rails and ore cars. The main tramway was built at a cost of \$96,000. Two years earlier Armstrong had constructed 1,100 feet of snow sheds to the Atlantis and True Fissure Mines. He also built a large two-story boarding house near these mines.¹⁵

Despite its apparent vigor, Armstrong's company was \$77,785.13 in debt as of January 1881.¹⁶ Armstrong decided to sell his interests in the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company to E.C. Atkins of Indianapolis, who owned the Atkins Saw Works.¹⁷ Henry Knippenberg, who was a particularly able businessman, managed the saw works. Knippenberg accepted the position of general manager of the Hecla Company and arrived in Glendale in April of 1881. He established his headquarters and residence in Glendale, and immediately set about reorganizing the Company.

Knippenberg divided Hecla Consolidated into three operations, each with a resident superintendent. The mining operation was managed from Hecla, a new camp Knippenberg established at the foot of the Lion Mountain cirque wall, about a mile closer to the adits than Lion City. The smelter works were managed at Glendale.¹⁸

That Knippenberg was an able general manager, and his reorganization successful, is seen from the Company's balance sheet. By December of 1881 Knippenberg had erased the Company's debt, and showed a profit of \$237,729.76.¹⁹ It was well for the people of the Hecla Mining District that Knippenberg straightened out the Company's business. Armstrong employed between 200 and 800 men during the two years immediately before he sold. His payroll amounted to between \$530,000 and \$90,000 a month.²⁰ Mining Historian Oren Sassman, quoting an 1882 source, put the number of men employed at the mines and smelter at 150 to 200, with a monthly payroll of \$50,000.²¹ At least the lower of these estimates are supported by a contemporary document. The Lion Mountain Mine ledger for August 5, 1879 lists the following workforce of miners at various mines: Atlantis, 59; True Fissure, 49; Cleve, 3; Cleopatra, 1. Four additional men were doing construction work.²²

Establishment of Hecla

Knippenberg built the town of Hecla as a company town in 1881. It was about one mile above Lion City at the base of the Lion Mountain cirque wall. It served the needs of miners and others with boarding house, dwellings for Company officials, an office, warehouse, stable, powder house, and a number of commercial establishments.²³ The Hecla post office opened in 1881 and first closed in 1892. It reopened and closed as Hecla's fortunes rose and fell: 1894 to 1900, and 1913 to 1914. One of Hecla's chief functions was to facilitate mining operations throughout the winter. Knippenberg employed two men full-time to keep the trails on Lion Mountain shoveled clear so miners could get to work.²⁴

¹³ *The Atlantis*, February 16, 1881; *The Atlantis*, September 1, 1880; and *The Atlantis*, September 8, 1880

¹⁴ *The Atlantis*, September 8, 1880.

¹⁵ Sassman, p. 243; Leeson, p. 482.

¹⁶ Sassman, p. 242.

¹⁷ Atkins and Armstrong were financially involved as early as 1875. A letter from Armstrong to Atkins accompanied four "promissory notes" for deferred payments to Philip Grotevant-one of the original discoverers. Armstrong and Atkins were purchasing Grotevant's interests in the Trapper Mine. (Jim Eighorn Collection, letter from Noah Armstrong to E.C. Atkins, October 25, 1875).

¹⁸ Wolle, 190.

¹⁹ Sassman, p. 242.

²⁰ *The Atlantis*, February 16, 1881.

²¹ Sassman, p. 244.

²² Beaverhead County Museum, Lion Mountain Mine ledger.

²³ Wolle, p. 190.

²⁴ Roberta Carkeek Cheney, *Names on the Face of Montana*, (Missoula, MT: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 1990) p. 133; Karlstrom, p. 5.

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Other motives also played a role in the establishment of "Hecla City." Knippenberg was convinced that Lion City represented an economic, and no less important, moral threat to his company. As late as 1880 Lion City served a positive need in the mining community. It had a population of 250 with another 228 living outside of town in the mining district. In addition to the three saloons, two hotels, Post Office and Hecla Company boarding houses, it was home to substantial mercantile businesses such as "W. Armstrong and Company" and Thomas and Armstrong.²⁵

But, the saloons and prostitution houses in Lion City offended the teetotaler Knippenberg. He chose to build boarding houses, a superintendent's residence, utilitarian buildings and several family residences at the base of the Lion Mountain cirque, in hopes of separating his mine workers from the influences at Lion City. He also wanted to be sure that his workers were able to work the grueling long days and double shifts necessary to keep up production. He named the company town Hecla.

The Hecla Residence that stands today is representative of the lifestyle Knippenberg envisioned for Hecla City. Although the residents of the building are unknown, its comfortable size, interior architectural details, and sturdy construction are indicative of Knippenberg's desire to lure his employees away from the rowdiness of Lion City to the cleaner, more family-oriented atmosphere of his company town. It is important to note the Knippenberg was not interested in the welfare of his individual workers, and did not seek to make his employee's lives easier for any other reason than to improve production of the company. Indeed in 1883, he wrote to his stockholders: "Duty alone keeps me here and here I mean to remain so long as you will stand by me. I care for no one here..."²⁶

When Armstrong built the tram connecting Glendale with the mines on Lion Mountain he bypassed Lion City for a destination more convenient to the mines. This action effectively cut off Lion City from the mainstream traffic and made the future site of Hecla a more advantageous location for commerce. By 1883 most of the business and residential activity had relocated to Hecla. Lion City was left as a collection of saloons amidst decaying abandoned buildings. These saloons (run by "Whiskey men" as Knippenberg called them) were a constant source of trouble.

A series of three letters written in 1883 illustrate Knippenberg's frustration with the influence of the saloons. In an April 14 letter to the Merchants of Lion City, Knippenberg responds to their request for help in collecting past-due bills from Company miners. He agrees to take the cost of "store goods" purchased by single men and families out of wages each payday. He ends the letter with this admonition, "You shall include in your collections in no way directly or indirectly Whisky bills, Gambling bills, Whore bills or Saloon bills..."²⁷ Knippenberg's mid-western Gilded Age sensibilities were already at odds with Lion City's wide-open mining camp atmosphere.

A letter to Atkins two days later mentions that a Hecla miner was shot "in cold blood" by "Dutch Mike," a Lion City saloonkeeper. Knippenberg notes this is the second murder in Lion City in four months. Fortunately for "Dutch Mike" the Justice of the Peace was another saloonkeeper: "...he had a little trial...and was soon released."²⁸

Knippenberg had other problems rooted in Lion City. On April 20, 1883 several ore tramcars ran away, jumping the tracks and killing two men. Operations were suspended for repairs. Moreover some of the men refused to ride the tram out of fear for their safety. This fear was egged on by Lion City's solicitous saloonkeepers who urged that the tram be shut down for good. When Knippenberg and his mining Superintendent arrived on the scene they found most of the men drunk. Inspection of the tramcars revealed several kegs of whisky and beer being smuggled to the saloonkeepers at Lion City. They concluded that the men operating the tram were drunk (one of the kegs was tapped) and running much faster than the four miles per hour specified. Excessive speed caused the cars to jump the rails. Knippenberg ends his account to Atkins by saying Lion City consists mostly of saloons and he wouldn't give \$10 for the whole place.²⁹

²⁵ Leeson: 488.

²⁶ "Knippenberg to Hecla Consolidated Mining Company," April 10, 1883, Letterbook # 2, page 328-9, Jim Eighorn Collection, Maiden Rock, MT.

²⁷ Jim Eighorn collection, letter from Henry Knippenberg to the merchants of Lion City, April 14, 1883.

²⁸ Jim Eighorn collection, letter from Henry Knippenberg to E.C. Atkins, April 16, 1883.

²⁹ Jim Eighorn collection, letter from Henry Knippenberg to E.C. Atkins, April 20, 1883.

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Knippenberg soon turned his attention to the growing amount of lower grade ore coming from the mines. In 1882, he built what Sassman claimed was the first concentrating mill in Montana.³⁰ It "concentrated" 100 tons of low-grade ore at a time into a product with less bulk and greater value. The small settlement of Greenwood grew around the mill. It consisted of a boarding house, four dwellings, an office, stable for Company horses, and blacksmith shop. Knippenberg had Greenwood connected by telephone to Hecla four miles above, and Glendale seven miles below.³¹ The Greenwood Mill successfully treated 177,092 tons of second-class ore between 1882 and 1898, when it ceased operations.

The arrival of the railroad meant growth for the town of Melrose, seventeen miles east of the Lion Mountain mines. The town was founded as a transshipment point between Glendale and its markets and suppliers outside Montana Territory. The Hecla District received general supplies, mining supplies (such as Pennsylvania coke at 19 cents a pound, and mining machinery) through Melrose.³² The present Melrose Mercantile building was originally the Company-owned Hecla Mercantile and Bank building.³³ The Hecla Mercantile acted as Company agent in dealings with the railroad.

Certainly the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company was the dominant industrial and social force in the mining district. In 1885 Hecla Consolidated owned the Hecla, Trapper, Franklin, Cleve and Avon, Marc Anthony, Cleopatra, Adriane, True Fissure, and Atlantis Mines, the biggest and best producers in the District. But Hecla Company mines were not the only producers adding to the District's wealth and influence. The Monroe Mining Company owned by the Pride of the West, Wall Street, Condor, Minnie Gaffney, Moffat, and Maynard Mines. Young and Company owned the famous Keokuk. Joe Keppler and Company owned the Oneida and Lion Mountain. Another important mine, the Elm-Orlu, was owned by Driscoll and Lord.³⁴ Together these mines brought the Hecla District a prominence that rivaled any silver district in Montana, and many in Colorado and Nevada.

Decline

The 1890's began well enough for the Hecla Mining District. Glendale was important enough to appear on a map of Montana's leading towns and cities in 1892.³⁵ The Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890 was a boon to the silver interests in Montana. It required the United States Government to purchase twice as much silver as it had previously. It also added to the amount of silver money in circulation. However, the Act threatened to undermine the nation's gold reserve. President Grover Cleveland was convinced that the Act helped precipitate the Panic of 1893. The President called Congress into special session, and in 1893 the Sherman Silver Purchase Act was repealed. This was a serious blow to the silver producers in the Hecla District.

These external forces were only the beginning of Hecla's problems. Production from the mines declined rapidly after 1893. The Cleopatra Mine played out in 1895. The Atlantis followed soon after-although it continued small-scale production until 1903. The reduced level of ore production supported only two blast furnaces at the smelter, and they ran at a loss in 1893.³⁶ The end was in sight for Hecla Consolidated. Ore reserves were depleted, and national trends greatly reduced the price of silver. Yet the Company managed to show a profit for stockholders. It had paid annual dividends of 6%, with 1% extra for every year except 1898, between 1870 and 1900.³⁷ By 1896 \$2,145,000 had been paid out to investors.³⁸ The decline of Hecla Consolidated can be traced in Company employment. In 1893 Knippenberg's work force was 125 men, who were paid about \$25,000 per month. By 1895 the work force for a Company that had once employed upwards of 800 men had dwindled to 70.³⁹

³⁰ Sassman, p. 244.

³¹ Leeson, p. 478; Wolle, p. 190-191.

³² Wolle, p. 192.

³³ Leonard Lively personal communication.

³⁴ Karlstrom, p. 5-6.

³⁵ *The Daily Tribune*, March 27, 1892.

³⁶ Sassman, p. 247-249.

³⁷ Karlstrom, p. 6.

³⁸ Beaverhead County Museum, Ephemeral Files, "Industry, Mining, Hecla/Glendale;" "Hecla Consolidated Mining Company, 16th Annual Report, 1896.

³⁹ Sassman, p. 248-249.

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The Glendale smelter was finally closed down and dismantled in 1900. Low-grade ore, and slag, were then shipped to the American Smelting and Refining Company in Omaha. Litigation brought a final end to the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company. In 1904 a Company foreman brought what amounted to a class-action suit on behalf of 40 miners who had gone unpaid in the amount of \$26,544. The Company did not contest the suit, and the Court found for the plaintiffs in the full amount.⁴⁰ These miners were virtually the sole remaining inhabitants of Hecla and Glendale when they left the District during the summer of 1904.⁴¹

After Bankruptcy

The Company stockholders ordered the board of directors to sell the assets of Hecla Consolidated. Knippenberg was owed \$28,000 by the Company, and purchased it from the other stockholders for that amount. He quickly resold his interest in the property.⁴² Hecla had become a "leaseholders camp." Mining activity between 1904 and 1923 was carried on by leaseholders shipping slag from the Glendale smelter, and concentrator tailings from Greenwood. The single notable development during this period was the introduction of electric power to Hecla in 1912 by the Montana Power Company. The electricity supported an effort to make low grade ore pay through modern milling technology.⁴³

In 1923 out-of-state investors formed a new Hecla Consolidated Mining Company. The new Company paid \$230,000 for the major claims in the District. Another \$152,000 was poured into development work at the mines.⁴⁴ The effort was a financial failure. George B. Conway, a former officer in the original Hecla Consolidated, purchased the property in 1928.⁴⁵ He shipped smelter slag, and ore from the mine dumps for a year. Conway sold the property in 1929 for half a million dollars to the Foundation Company of Utah. Their efforts to revitalize the mines also ended in failure.⁴⁶ The intervening years have seen this once wealthy property sold to a number of owners, and worked by small leaseholders. One of the more recent owners, who held the property for a considerable period, was Leonard Lively of Melrose. He maintained that the mines have always continued to produce, although on a much reduced scale. Recently these famous old mines came to the University of Mississippi in the estate of the last owner. Today a single leaseholder works the property.

Henry Knippenberg

Knippenberg was born December 27, 1843 in Hamm on the Rhine in Germany to Jacob and Elizabeth Knippenberg. His parents were from prominent families and were active in the German (students) Rebellion of 1848. The uprising was lost and the two families fled to America via sail ship. In 1854 his parents died and left Henry an orphan at eleven. He took a position in a small grocery at \$40 a year and board. His second year he earned \$50 and board. At the end of two years he had saved up \$50, which he paid to the Bryan and Stratton Commercial College in Cleveland, Ohio. This was all the schooling the boy ever had.⁴⁷

He worked as bookkeeper, and then superintendent, of a coal-mine near Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, from 1860 - 1865, at which point he had a breakdown and his doctor urged him to make a change. He went to Indianapolis, visited his relations, Prof. and Mrs. J. H. Kappes, and met E.C. Atkins. He formed a partnership in the E. C. Atkins & Co. saw business that remained unbroken until 1881.

Henry Knippenberg was a citizen of Montana from 1881 to 1914. He arrived as General Manager of the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company at Glendale in March of 1881. He set about immediately to reverse fortunes in the company's ability to earn a profit for its shareholders. He changed the entire management and administration, and with this change the company was launched upon two decades of success and profit. He built the town of Hecla at the base of the mines at Lion Mountain, one mile above Lion City. He had the 100-ton Greenwood concentrator built between Hecla and Glendale in 1882. A four-mile narrow-gauge tramway was built to

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 243, 251.

⁴¹ Ibid.; Wolle, p. 191.

⁴² Ibid., p. 252.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 6.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

⁴⁵ Sassman, p. 252.

⁴⁶ Karlstrom, p. 8.

⁴⁷ "Henry Knippenberg," vertical file (Helena, MT: MT Historical Society).

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convey ore from Hecla to the concentrator. A telephone line connected Hecla to Greenwood and Glendale. On January 15, 1881, the company was in debt \$77,785; and on December 31 of the same year, there was a profit of \$237,729. The Hecla Company was reputed to have taken out ores valued at over \$22,000,000 in the twenty-year period 1880–1900.⁴⁸

Henry Knippenberg was an industrialist of great local and regional importance, and became involved in the politics of the territory as well. He served in the Territorial legislature, and was only a little less influential than the "Copper Kings" in Butte. In 1889, Knippenberg was elected to represent Beaverhead County at the Constitutional Convention to draw up Montana's constitution. The territory became the 41st state on November 9, 1889. December 31, 1890, Knippenberg published a short history of the Society of the Framers of the Constitution of the State of Montana. He served as Secretary on the Executive Committee, and later on the State Finances Committee. In 1895, he was elected to the fourth Montana Legislature for Beaverhead County. That same year he was appointed County Commissioner to fill a death vacancy. In 1896, Knippenberg was made one of the three McKinley Electors.⁴⁹

Henry Knippenberg is a significant character in the history of Montana, and was intrinsic to the success of the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company during between 1881 and 1904. That company was responsible for the development of the large area from Lion Mountain to the Railroad hub at Melrose. Knippenberg oversaw the construction of the Hecla townsite as part of his overall plan for the economic good of the company, but also as an extension of his moral code. For these reasons, the Hecla Residence is eligible for listing under Criterion B, as the remaining residence in Hecla and the last vestige of Knippenberg's vision for the town.

Architectural Significance

The Hecla Residence is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as an excellent example of log architecture found in late 19th century mining camps throughout southwestern Montana. The building exhibits squared logs and careful, tight notching, typical of company towns that sought to provide housing for their employees. Indeed, Montana mining communities such as Garnet and Granite exhibit similar construction. These company towns offered a nearly urban environment to employees working in very remote areas. Small architectural details, such as plaster walls, wainscoting, built-in cabinets, and arched doorways are often featured in the homes of company officials, and made these residences much more pleasant and conducive to a family lifestyle. The residence at Hecla exhibits all these features, as well as a quality of construction that has allowed it to withstand the elements over 100 years.

A comparison of the Hecla Residence to other residences in the company-mining towns of Granite and Garnet, Montana, show that it is not a typical miner's residence. The Hecla Residence is more likely the former home of a company official, or someone in a privileged position. It is more similar to S.I. Richie's home in Garnet or the Weir Residence, in Granite, than to any average miner's lodgings; Richie was the owner of the Nancy Hanks Mine and Thomas Weir was the superintendent of the Granite Mountain Mining Company.

The earliest miners and their families often lived in tents. However, as camps grew into towns, more sturdy accommodations became necessary—log cabins were the most popular and practical style of residences. There are numerous examples of miners' log cabins in Garnet, a company-mining town in present-day Granite County from the 1890s to its decline in the 1920s and 30s. The exteriors of the cabins are simple—generally square or rectangular in shape and have only one story. It was not unusual for the cabins to be built on inclines that necessitated the use of logs for propping on either the front or rear. In general, the foundations were made of either logs or earth and chinking was equally rustic: clay, masonry mortar, and even moss. Roofs consisted of a ridgepole and roof poles with sawn boards placed across the roof poles. Sometimes shingles or corrugated metal replaced the sawn boards. The standard log cabin was small, with a single room, low ceilings and few windows.

S.I. Richie's house differs greatly from that of the average miner. It is L-shaped, with a gabled roof, multiple windows, front and back porches, chimneys, and drop-lap siding on a foundation of broken stones without mortar. It too is built on an incline but the foundation compensates for that. The roof is shingled. On the interior, the Richie house has vertical board walls, one bedroom, a parlor, a kitchen, and a pantry. The parlor was decorated with wallpaper and brass and the windows were double-hung.

⁴⁸ Sassman, p. 252.

⁴⁹ *More History of Beaverhead County Montana, Volume 2*, published by Beaverhead County Museum Association.

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The company-mining town of Granite, Montana, also in Granite County, has a similar history to that of Garnet. Silver was discovered in 1879 and by 1884, Granite was at her peak in production. The masonry building's origins are unclear but by 1889, Thomas Weir and his wife were living in it. The exterior of the residence is granite; it has a gabled roof, a brick chimney and two-stories. There is also a 3 by 7 foot entryway. The foundation is granite and the structure is without chinking. The roof is made of wood shingles. On the first floor of the interior, believed to be the residential area, there is a bedroom, a dining room, and a kitchen with a plastered brick food vault. The walls are lath and plaster and covered with wallpaper. The windows, like the Richie house and likely the Hecla Residence, are double-hung. The ceiling is also plastered. The Wiers used woodstoves for heating. The second story is believed to have been an office area. The walls are of random width boards. Unlike the first floor ceiling, the rafters and sheathing are visible.

The Hecla Residence from the town of Hecla at the base of Lion Mountain is similar in size, scale, and architectural details to the superintendent's residences at Granite and Garnet. The Hecla Residence is a one and one-half story, rectangular log house with a dry-laid fieldstone foundation. It is 18 by 28 feet. The chinking is daub and the roof is side gabled. The cabin has more windows than the typical miner's and there is a stone chimney. The interior of the cabin is spacious—four rooms and a pantry. The floors are made of unfinished wood planks and the walls are covered with lath and plaster. There is also decorative wallpaper and wainscoting. A central stairwell leads to both an attic and a basement.

By comparing these residences, it is clear that the Helca Residence has more in common with the Richie House and the Weir Residence than with the standard miner's cabin. Their foundations are more solid; they are larger; they have more windows and chimneys, and multiple rooms. All three buildings feature finished interiors with lathe and plaster walls, wainscoting, and decorative wallpaper. As a well-preserved local example of a rustic, yet comfortable mining town residence, likely occupied by a person of authority, the Hecla Residence is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C.

Summary

The Hecla Residence is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the development and settlement of the townsite of Hecla, an important mining center in southwest Montana. Under Criterion B, the residence is eligible for its association with Henry Knippenberg. The building gains additional significance, and is eligible for listing under Criterion C, as an important and well-preserved example of mining camp architecture and quality log construction.

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View From Cleopatra Portal, 1880s with Steam Engine Stack

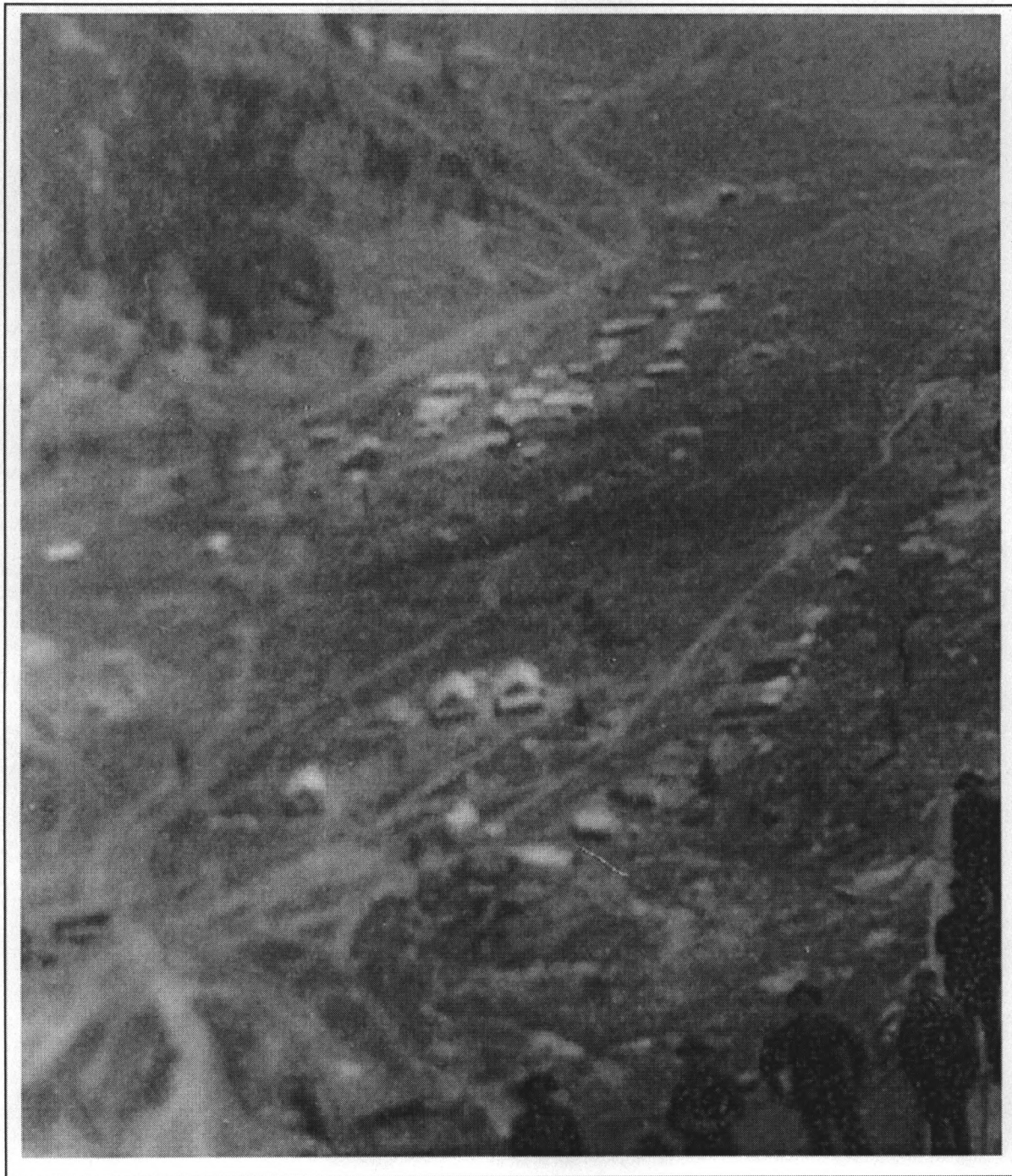
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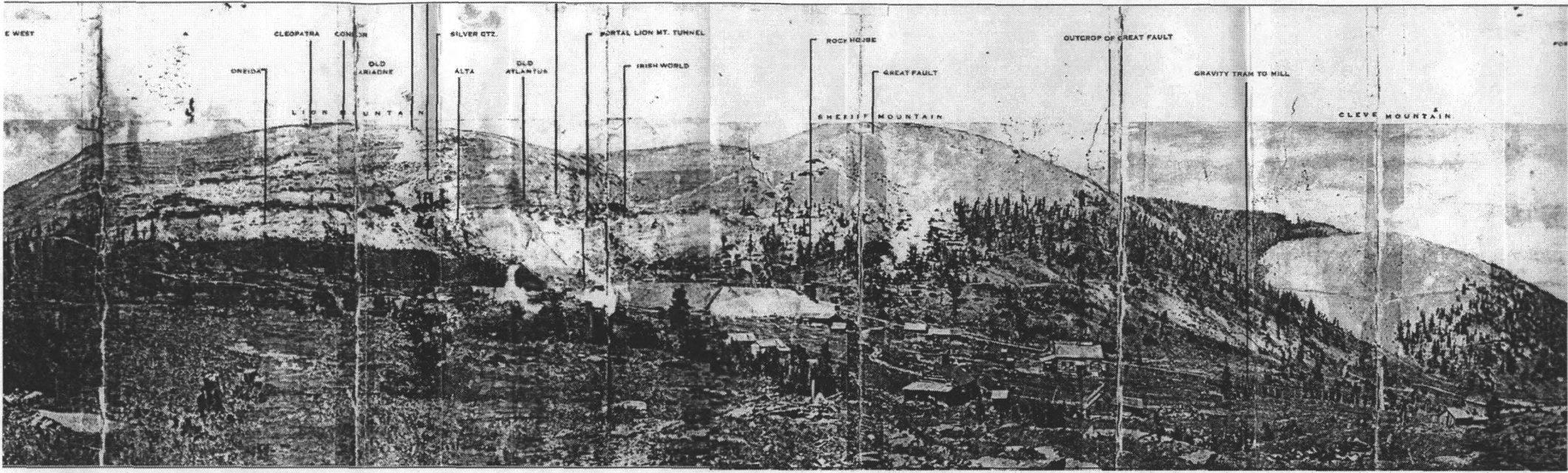


Lion City from Cleopatra Portal. Late 19th Century

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Panorama of Lion and Cleve Mountains with Annotations. Early 20th Century?

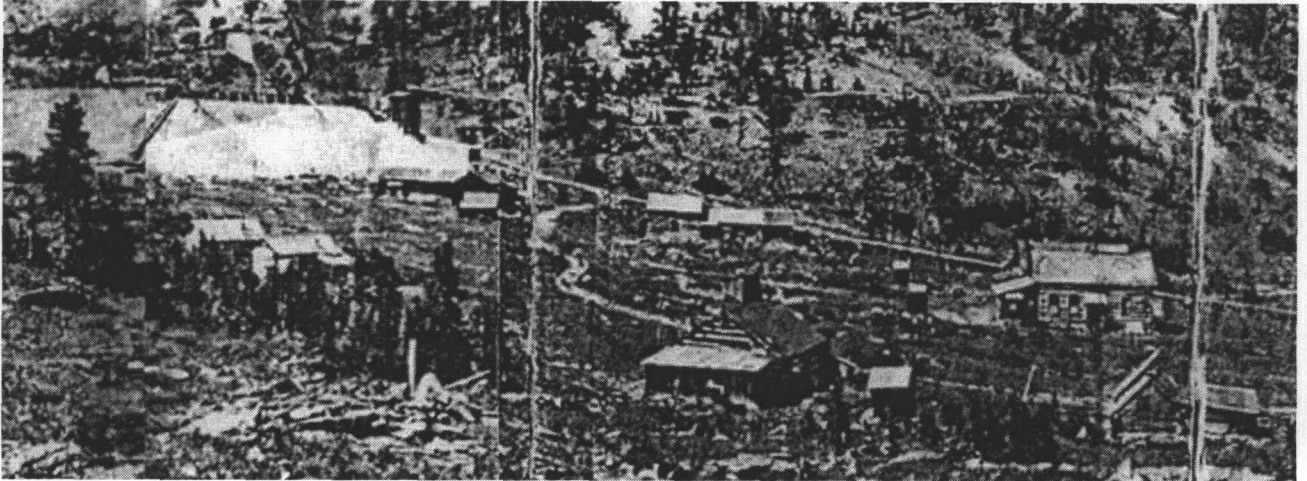
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Enlarged, cropped detail from early 20th century panorama of Lion and Cleve Mountains. The photo shows the town site of Hecla including the tailings pile to the west (left side of photo) and the Hecla Residence to the east (right side of photo).



Enlarged, cropped detail from early 20th century panorama of Lion and Cleve Mountains. Photo shows the Hecla Residence. Note the shed roof above the entrance and the lean-to at the west side of the building.

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Hecla Boarding House, late 19th century. This building was located at the base of the tailings, west of the Hecla Residence.

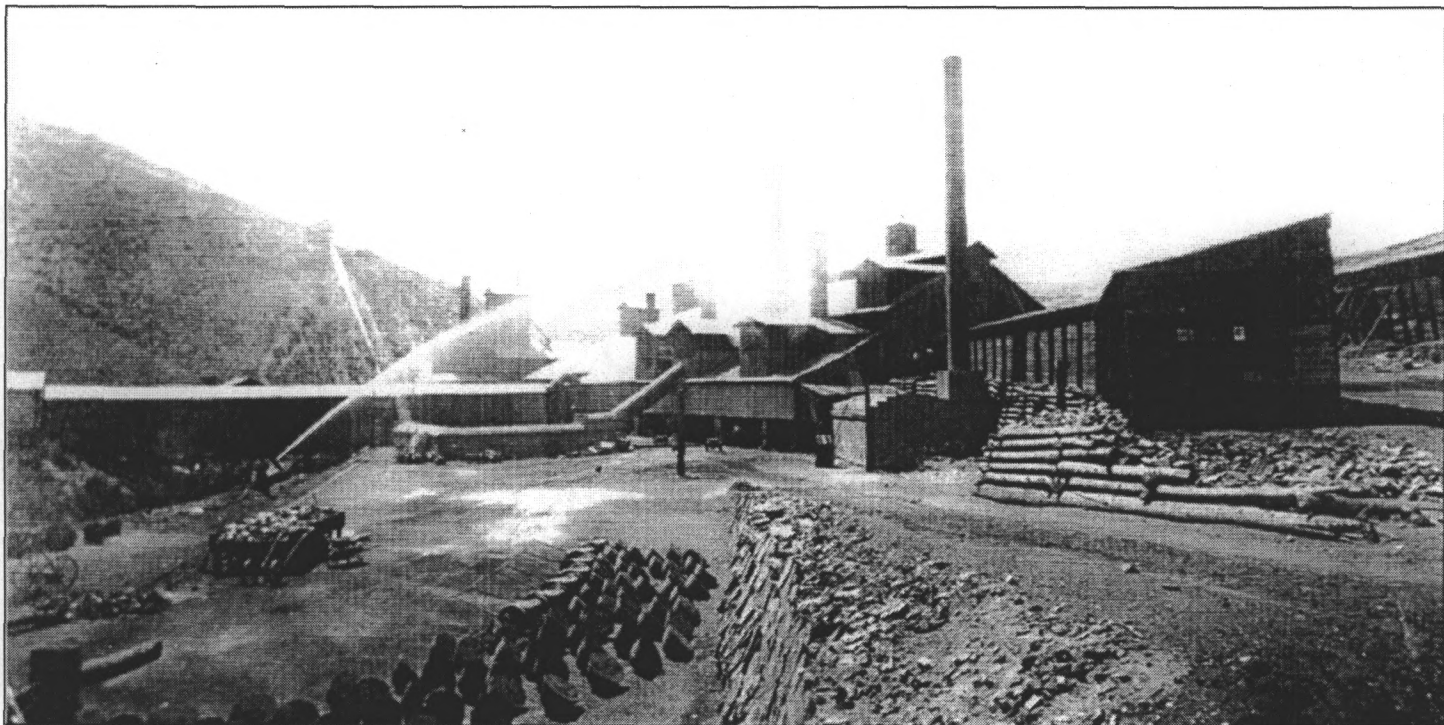
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Glendale Smelter, Glendale, Montana
19th Century. Looking West

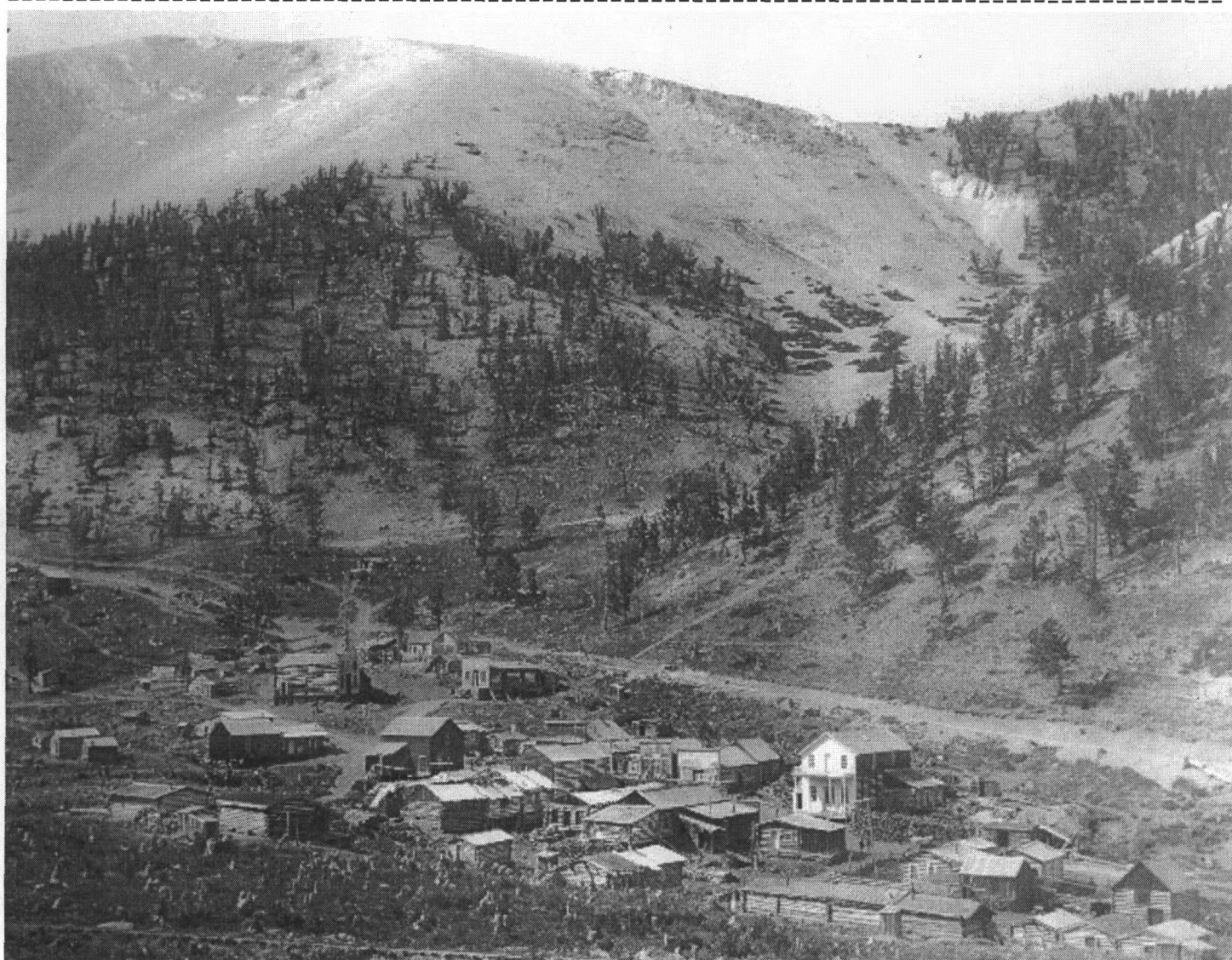
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Lion City, late 19th century. This town grew up below the mines on Lion Mountain, but its saloons and prostitution houses offended the religious Henry Knippenberg. He ordered the construction of a company town at Hecla, one mile west at the base of the mines.

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Henry Knippenberg in Glendale, late 19th century. Knippenberg is the second man from the right, wearing a fur coat.