

Amelia City

By Susan Badger Doyle

The gold mining town of Amelia City, in northern Malheur County, was located about thirty miles southeast of Baker City and a few miles south of Mormon Basin, where miners rushed in after gold was discovered in 1867. It was one of the first mining settlements that sprang up when miners expanded into the area south of the basin in the 1870s.

Amelia City boomed for a short time and then quickly declined. As a transient mining town of mostly miners, its peak population was likely a few hundred. Amelia City appears on the map of General Land Office for the State of Oregon in 1876 and is shown on maps (sometimes as Amelia) until 1890. It disappeared from maps after 1900 and was presumably deserted.

Two explanations have been offered for the origin of the town's name. One is that it was named in honor of Amelia Koontz, a preacher's daughter who eloped with a miner. The second is that it was named for Mormon leader Brigham Young's supposed favorite wife, Amelia Young.

Sources

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