



**435 S. Atlantic
Dillon, Montana 59725**

THE COUNTY SEAT BAR

Built in Eau Claire, Wisconsin...1870. Shipped via railroad to Corrinne, Utah (Salt Lake) where the railroad ended...was carried on to Bannack by wagon train. Although, we do not know yet which place it served in Bannack, there is a shipping tag attached to the back of the bar verifying Bannack as its destination point.

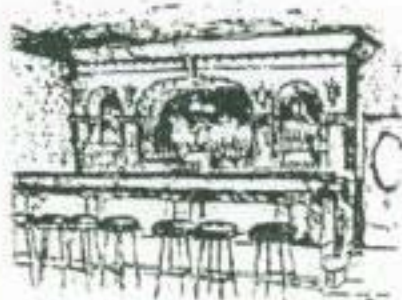
No. The bar did not serve Henry Plummer and his gang for Plummer was hanged 6 years before the bar reached Bannack. Most of Plummer's gang preceded him on the ropes. Certainly, the bar heard a wealth of stories told by survivors of those vigilante days.

By 1910, Bannack, which had lost its popularity as well as its population, was folding businesses rapidly. The bar, was brought to Dillon by a fellow named Chris Snyder. Snyder set it up in a place on Montana street called the Eld Saloon. There, it served until 1917, when Dillon's newest hotel, the Andrus, was built. Snyder partnered with Andrus and the bar quickly became the "business office" for ranchers' cattle and sheep deals.

The bar served in the Andrus through early Dillon days through prohibition as a soda fountain and again a bar until 1981 when it was moved here.

After 220 diligent hours of refinishing, the bar was turned over to us as it stands right now.

Entirely of oak except for the solid 22 foot mahogany board which makes the bar top, it weighs approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons and will continue to serve for years to come.



Historic backbar from Montana's territorial capital, Bannack. Bar built in 1870...



MONTANA'S



GRANDEST

HISTORIC HOTELS OF THE TREASURE STATE



BY STAN COHEN



This photo was taken before the neon addition on the roof and the removal of the front balcony. The house next door, which is now the home of the hotel's owner, was built at the same time as the hotel. BEAVERHEAD COUNTY MUSEUM ARCHIVES, 111.11 M-7

Could put some modern photos on this page

This photo was taken in the 1950s after the neon sign was put in place and the balcony removed. BEAVERHEAD COUNTY MUSEUM ARCHIVES, 111.11 M-4



rounded them. The hotel is beautifully furnished, and this fact escaped the notice of none.

"At 9 o'clock in the evening, The Metlen was crowded with guests. The first speaker to address the people was Gov. R.B. Smith, who paid high tribute to the city of Dillon and the enterprising gentlemen who had constructed such a fine institution as The Metlen in our midst. Chief Justice Pemberton next addressed the company in his usual jovial strain. After the speaking had been concluded, the Dillon Orchestra, under Prof. Sullivan, struck up the grand march. The march was led by Mrs. J.C. Metlen and Governor Smith, followed by Mrs. John Howard and Chief Justice Pemberton and Miss Carrie Metlen and J.C. Metlen. Dancing was then commenced and continued until the early hours of the morning.

"Over two hundred guests were present and the lovely gowns worn by the ladies lent much to the enchantment of the occasion. At midnight a tempting supper was served. Among the prominent out-of-town people who were present were Gov. R.B. Smith, Chief Justice Pemberton, Attorney General Nolan, State Auditor T.W. Poindexter, Hon. L.A. Walker, Hon. T.W. Collins, of Helena, H.J. Wilson of Butte.

"The Metlen is a fine, large, three-story brick building. In the basement is the furnace room, store-room, club rooms, and tonsorial parlors. On the first floor is the office, bar room, public parlor, private parlor, bedrooms, bathroom, dining room, kitchen and sample room. On the second floor is the ladies' parlor, bedrooms, etc. The third floor consists entirely of bedrooms. The hotel is beautifully furnished throughout and possesses all the modern conveniences, such as steam heat, hot and cold water and electric lights.

"J.C. Metlen, the genial proprietor, is well-known all over Montana, having come here in the early '60s. He is an experienced hotel man, and understands the wants of the traveling public. The people of this vicinity have long felt the need of a first-class hotel, and should now do their part in maintaining the same. Mr. Metlen has best wishes of his friends throughout the state for the success of his new enterprise."

Metlen continued to operate the hotel until his death in 1906 and it continued to operate for many years although the business declined in the latter part of the 1900s due to changing travel conditions and the popularity of inexpensive motels on the periphery of Montana cities. In the mid-1990s local resident Sandra Iverson came to the rescue of the old landmark. She is slowly bringing back the hotel

to its 1890s look and has meticulously restored the rooms, mainly by herself. Most of the 50-some rooms have or will have original furniture and beds. The front bar still has the original call board and key rack and part of the original bar with beetle woodwork. In the back barroom is perhaps the most ornate and most valuable back bar in the state. It is worth a visit just to see the workmanship and Sandra is very proud of this artifact, which she installed in 1995, and the other historical memorabilia in the room. Although the restaurant is no longer open the bar is busy and if gaming is one's interest, live poker games can be found in the hotel bar.

It is a shame that there are not more people like Sandra in the state to save some of the hotel buildings that are still in existence.



Cornerstone set in 1897.

METLEN HOTEL

DILLON



The Metlen Hotel has, for close to 100 years, played a prominent role in the history of Dillon, Beaverhead County, as an architectural landmark dominating the downtown skyline and in the social lives of local citizens. One of the finest extant examples of commercial architecture built in the Second Empire style in the state, it pays tribute to a time when its owner and the community envisioned Dillon's rapid growth and development.

The hotel was constructed on the site of the Corinne Hotel, the first hotel in Dillon, which was described as a "flimsy structure, a combination of thin lumber, cloth-lined partitions, and other combustible materials. It had been transplanted along the railroad, having originally been down in Utah or Idaho." By the time of construction, Dillon was enjoying a position as the most significant railroad stop between Butte and the Idaho line and was well-established as a ranching and agricultural center. Gold mining in the area also contributed to the town's economic importance.

Joseph C. Metlen arrived in Montana in 1867 and with his brother settled on Horse Prairie and engaged in freighting from Corrine, Utah, to the gold fields at Bannock. Metlen became prominent in Beaverhead County in business and politics in the 1870s and '80s. He purchased the Corrine Hotel in 1884 and operated it until it burned down in 1892. He began construction of his new 60-room hotel in 1897 at a cost of \$30,000.

It was a grand hotel for its day. It is two stories in height, with an additional story tucked under the gentle concave curve of the mansard roof, and built of sandstone and brick. An article from the Feb. 18, 1898, issue of the

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50 ROOMS

TWO BARS

Dillon Tribune tells of the grand opening:

"Amidst pomp and ceremony, the newly completed Metlen Hotel was opened to the public last Friday. The occasion was a memorable one and is the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Dillon.

"At the public reception given in the afternoon, the Dillon Brass Band was in attendance and opened the ceremonies with the well-known piece, 'A Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight,' that being the most appropriate selection that could be made.

"The reception rooms and parlors were artistically decorated with American Beauty roses, carnations and simlax in profusion. The hostess, Mrs. J.C. Metlen, was assisted in receiving by her daughter, Mrs. John Howard of Butte, and Mesdames Hodgens and Fyhrie, Misses Long and Poindexter. From 2 to 5 the beautiful edifice was thronged with guests. The reception gowns worn by the ladies were in keeping with the beauty of all that sur-

