

City History

Gold was discovered in the Blue Mountains in late 1861. A rush of gold miners came to the area with three men arriving that winter. “Hookey” Burke, a freight hauler, was the first who decided to spend the winter at what is now the city location. Andrew Jackson Sturtevant, pushing a wheelbarrow towards the gold fields, decided to stop at the location in 1862. Finally, John Alta Sylvester, also settled, thinking to cater to the wintering miners. The Pilot Rock post office was established in December of 1868 with Andrew Sturtevant was the first postmaster. Of the three, he was the most instrumental in founding the city. Born in England, Sturtevant arrived in America and headed westward, arriving in Salem in 1861. After obtaining a position as a teacher, he decided that teaching was not for him and headed for the Blue Mountains. After establishing the Post Office, Pilot Rock was platted eight years later in 1876 and incorporated in 1912.