

# Capital of The Inland Empire

YEAR OF GROWTH FOR LEWISTOWN

A short time ago the official announcement was made that the Great Northern had decided to proceed with the construction of its long projected branch line from Great Falls to Billings, and no news more cheering to Lewistown has been heard during the year. The surveying parties are now in the field, and the assurance is given that there will not be a day's unnecessary delay in commencing construction work when the surveys and other preliminaries are arranged.

To be the capital of the great Inland Empire means a great deal now, but it will mean infinitely more when this new line of railroad is completed. It means that a vast area of the finest wheat land lying out of doors will be brought under cultivation, and all the section through which the line passes will be sustaining families of farmers and ranchers. Of course all of these people will not be direct patrons of the Lewistown markets, but indirectly

that the road entered upon the winter season well prepared for snow storms and the accompanying unfavorable conditions. This equipment has already been severely tested, and the results have been most satisfactory. The days when a train might be lost in the snow out on the range are over, and during the heaviest storms, the snow plows and powerful engines have kept the road open all the time, and the trains, with very few exceptions, have pulled in on time.

It has taken some time for the people of the state at large to realize even partially the part that Fergus county is destined to play in the future of Montana, but the business men of Lewistown are alive to it, and are preparing to make the resources and attractions of this section better known. Much good work has been done by the Business Men's association, and these efforts are now being

total, real estate foots up \$3,360,495. The acres assessed amount to 935,817, as compared with \$71,209 for last year, real estate, other than town lots, is listed at \$1,651,379, and improvements on the same \$710,630, a gain of nearly \$200,000. City and town lots made a total of \$391,288, and the improvements on them \$607,180, a gain of over \$200,000.

Personal property is assessed this year at \$4,776,929, a gain of nearly half a million over last year. Although the number of sheep assessed was somewhat under that of 1904, the valuation was higher, and the total showed a small increase for this year. Another encouraging feature shown by the assessor's books is a falling off in mortgages from \$238,125 in 1904 to \$211,239. This change is not great, but it is very significant.

**Good Description.**

"That girl has me where she wants

of most of the county fairs were taught a lesson last year that is being profited by. The fairs were held in the different localities without regard to those elsewhere, and the result was conflicting dates and poor attractions in several places. Fergus county suffered more from this, perhaps, than others, as, owing to the distance from the main line to this city, the horsemen preferred to enter their racers at the places nearest them, and in consequence the races here last fall were far below the desired standard. The exhibits were good and varied in character, but the number of them was small, and there was little to show what Fergus is capable of as a grain growing section.

**Will Work Great Change.**

All this is to be changed next year. A meeting of the secretaries of the county fair associations will be held at Helena next month, when the state will be divided into the east and west districts. The dates for the fair in each district will then be arranged so that there will be no conflict, and the attractions will make the round of the circuit, so that each county will get the benefit of the best there is to be obtained in the way of race horses and special features. Although it will help all of them, the plan is one that will result in special benefit to Fergus county, and overcome the feature of remoteness, which has always been a drawback.

**Will Commence Work Early.**

The work of preparation will be commenced early, and, indeed, the trustees are already laying plans for next fall. It is proposed to employ a competent man to devote his entire time for some weeks to making a canvass of the county and arrange for a full and complete line of exhibits of fruits, vegetables, grains etc., and if the dates for the fair are favorable, to ship this entire display to Helena immediately on the close of the fair here for exhibition at the state fair.

**Will Offer Good Prizes.**

Realizing that a successful fair cannot be held here without good races, the trustees have decided to offer liberal prizes, and they will aggregate about \$2,500.

The officers of the fair association are F. E. Wright, president; David Hilger, vice president; W. D. Symmes, treasurer; O. W. Belden, Secretary; D. M. Crowley, James Weaver, Samuel Phillips, L. W. Eldredge and George W. Cook, trustees.

The supervisors are: David Hilger, livestock; R. vonTobel, agriculture and Mrs. T. W. Warren, ladies and youths departments.

**IS A THRIVING TOWN.**

**Town of Moore is Growing Rapidly and Has a Bright Future**

The town of Moore, located 18 miles west of Lewistown, on the Montana Railroad, has gone ahead by leaps and bounds this year, and its ambitious citizens are confident that its growth will continue for many years. The center of the rich Rock creek bench region, it does a large trade, and is already a shipping point of considerable importance. A commercial club has just been formed there, and the business men are working together harmoniously to build up their town. Moore boasts of two banks, a news paper, a fine church, a grain elevator and many substantial structures.

## Year's Building Operations -- A City of Homes

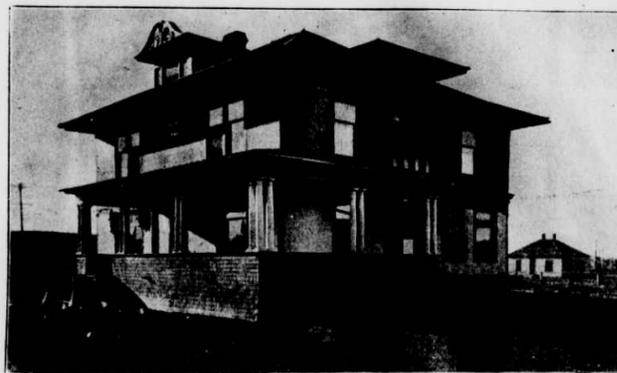
Lewistown is a city of homes, and the homes are owned by the people living in them to a larger extent, probably, than almost any other town in the state. It has been observed that whenever the people of a community are nearly all home owners, more attention is paid to those things that add to the attractiveness of community life than elsewhere. This is strikingly true of Lewistown. Of first importance to any city having an ambition to grow and become a

There is scarcely a secret or fraternal order of any standing that is not represented by a lodge in Lewistown, and practically "everybody belongs to something". These things all go to make life pleasant, to make the city an attractive one for the home seeker, and as might be expected in the metropolis of a great region whose resources are in process of development, Lewistown is a commercial center of no small importance. Its business men are progressive, and the

until everything is perfectly adjusted. John P. Barnes is the president of the company; H. A. Benner manager and secretary, and G. A. Steinberg vice president. The gentlemen constitute the company, and are all specially qualified for the work that falls under their direction. It is a magnificent enterprise, and adds to the prosperity of the whole community.

**The Carnegie Library.**

The Carnegie library, now in course of erection, will be one of the most



Residence of Hon. George J. Wiedema n. Lewistown. Erected by Tubb Bros.

center that will attract desirable residents is the school, and that is a feature to which Lewistown can certainly "point with pride". An exceptionally gifted corps of teachers, under competent direction, makes our public school system a model one. The splendid central school building would do credit to any town in the state, while the high school building is the finest of the kind in Montana. Yet better than all, the instruction given in these schools is in keeping with the physical surroundings, and the work done is thorough. In the truest sense it is education.

**A Commercial Center.**

The churches, another important factor in the development of communal life, are well represented and generously supported. This was strikingly illustrated only a few days ago, when at public meetings the sum of \$5,000 was subscribed to lift the entire indebtedness of the First Methodist church, a structure that is the pride of all members of that denomination, and one of the best examples of church architecture to be found in the state. The Presbyterians, Catholics, Methodists and Baptists all have congregations here, and with the exception of the Baptists, who organized but a few weeks ago, all have excellent churches.

big stores carry practically everything that can be bought in any city of the land. The total of the business done at this supply point for the great Inland Empire is enormous, and is constantly growing as its own population increases and as the surrounding towns and villages build up.

The present population of Lewistown is upwards of 3,000, and the population of the county over 10,000. New men are constantly coming in, the miner being attracted by the wonderful showing made of late in the mining districts, the agriculturist to secure a farm in this section so favored by all the natural conditions for his vocation, and the business man to secure an interest in the bright future that is dawning for this beautiful city of homes.

**Years Building Operations.**

The past year has been an active one in the way of building operations in Lewistown. In 1904, the amount of the improvements in the way of business structures and residences began and completed was \$145,000. This year the total foots up \$155,000, of which \$85,000 is represented by the Judith Basin Milling plant, the library and the McDonald & Charters business block; \$65,000 for residences and \$5,000 for improvements and alterations in residences and business structures.

The most important of these improvements is easily the Judith Basin Milling plant. The old plant having proved inadequate to meet the growing needs of the company, it was decided to put in an entirely new one, and Tubb Bros., the contractors, commenced work early in the spring. The first stone of the foundation was laid by contractor John Laux April 1, and the sum of \$5,000 was expended on the foundation alone. Today the ground is occupied by one of the most perfectly equipped milling plants to be found anywhere, having a capacity of 300 barrels of flour every day. Adjoining the mill is the new elevator, with a capacity of 70,000 bushels. It was connected with the mill by a steel spout, 5 inches in diameter, only last week, and now the cleaned grain is

beautiful buildings in the city. The fine site for this structure, opposite the court house, was bought by subscription, and presented to the library committee, and the entire sum given by Mr. Carnegie, \$10,000, is going into the building. Tubb Bros., the contractors, say the library will be completed about April 1. The recent heavy storms have delayed operations somewhat, but good progress has been made since the corner stone was laid.

**McDonald & Charters Block.**

McDonald & Charters are putting up a fine two story business block adjoining the First National Bank corner. They will expend at least \$15,000 on the building, which is to be of stone, with a front of Omaha pressed brick. George Wells has the contract for this building.

**Residences Completed.**

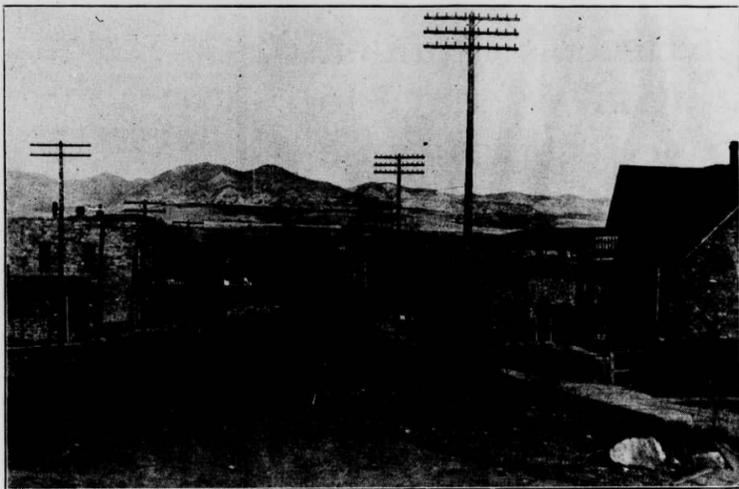
The residences begun and completed within this year number 40, and while none of these are mansions, they are all modern and attractive. Among them are three neat cottages on the hill, built by J. H. Charters a very handsome residence built by L. C. Wilson at a cost of about \$1,000; a cottage by Mayor Jesse Pinkley costing about \$2,000; two handsome residences on Main street by William J. Abel, costing about \$5,000, and attractive homes built by George Wells, Mr. McCullum, Marion Leach and others.

Altogether, the building operations this year have been very satisfactory both in extent and character. The limits of residence portions of the city are gradually being extended in all directions, and better than all, the outlook for next year was never brighter.

**SHOWS WHERE HE STANDS.**

**Head of Musical Family Asked to Define His Exact Status.**

There is a man living at Waterbury, Conn., who is the head of a large family, nearly every member of which is a performer on some kind of musical instrument, says Harper's Weekly. A Bostonian who was visiting at the house of the Waterbury man referred to this fact, remarking that it must



View of Main Street, Lewistown, Looking North From Near the Site of the Carnegie Library.

they will, and the commercial advancement of the city as a result of the railroad is certain to be rapid.

As projected, a branch will be built from the main line to this city, this undertaking being comparatively small in extent, as it will involve less than 20 miles of track.

The Great Northern also intends to build a branch line into Kendall in order to reap the benefit of the large tonnage waiting for it there, and it will be seen that the whole scheme is one that deeply interests and affects this city and its future.

Still another announcement that has aroused much local interest is that of the Milwaukee's plan to build on to the coast at once, crossing Montana on its way. While nothing definite has been given out as to the route, there are many who believe that it will tap Fergus county, the present and prospective tonnage being a magnet to draw it thither. Whether this will prove the case or not, it is certain that the most necessary, the most important and the most desired line is a certainty, and that the Great Northern will lose no time in opening up the fertile country which excited the admiration of Vice President Louis W. Hill on his recent automobile trip from Armington to Garnell.

The Montana Railroad, extending from Lombard to Lewistown, has made a fine record during the past year. A large sum of money was expended during the summer in improving the roadbed and bridges, etc., all along the route, and several new engines were added to the rolling stock, so

aided by a new organization, whose membership is representative of the younger business and professional men of the city and county. Its mission is to "boost for Fergus," and evidently it is going to fulfill it. Although in the field but a short time, it has started a campaign that will bring the Inland Empire to the attention of thousands. Committees are now at work preparing copy for a pamphlet soon to be issued dealing in a brief way with the agricultural, stock growing and mining industries, and showing the opportunities for the safe and profitable investment of capital, in large or small amounts, in these directions. The organization is known as the Fergus County Commercial Club, and the officers are W. J. Edgcombe, president; Halsey R. Watson, vice president; E. W. Mettler, secretary; Charles M. Kelly, treasurer.

These developments indicate the sort of field offered to investors and home seekers in this section, and show that the wide awake citizens of Lewistown are alive to the advantages of the Inland Empire.

**What Assessor's Figures Show.**

The figures on this year's assessment rolls give a hint as to the development that has taken place in one short year. The gain in the total assessed valuation of all property in the county over 1904 is close upon a million dollars, and the total stands at considerably over \$8,000,000, although during the summer in improving the roadbed and bridges, etc., all along the route, and several new engines were added to the rolling stock, so

me. She draws me out, and always sees right through me. And when she's had enough of me, she shuts me up in a hurry."

"Say, what are you—a telescope?" —Cleveland Leader.

**NEXT YEAR'S FAIR.**

**Trustees Arrange to Make it One of The Highest Merit.**

There is every reason to believe that the fair to be held here next fall will be the finest ever witnessed in this county. The trustees have already decided that neither effort nor expense shall be spared to bring about this result and the outlook is very bright. The managements of most

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Taken all in all, the sheep industry in Fergus county during the past year, has flourished as never before. Other years have seen a greater number of the "woolies" in the county, but it may well be doubted if the returns from all sources have ever equaled those of 1905.

**Commissioner White's Estimates.**

The preliminary estimates of Sheep Commissioner B. C. White, which are subject, of course, to revision when the complete returns are in, show that 4,450,000 pounds of wool was marketed last summer. The average price received was 22½ cents per pound, which made the sum realized from this source \$901,250. In 1904, the wool sold amounted to 4,758,916 pounds, but it brought an average of only 19.23 cents, so that the total received for wool was only \$853,272.64. During the present year, the number of sheep and lambs to driven out of Fergus county was 150,000, the average price received for all being \$2.87 per head, amounting to \$430,500. Last year 179,920 sheep were sold at an average price of \$1.80 per head, or \$323,856. The amount received for pelts this year was about \$20,000, as compared with \$10,626.60 for the year before. The total amount brought into the county this year through the sheep industry was therefore \$1,351,750, as compared with \$1,187,555.24 for last year. The number of lambs held over by growers is not included in these estimates, although the number of these was smaller this year than last.

**Sheep and Lambs High.**

The reason for this was that sheep and lambs brought a much higher price this year than for many years past—in fact, it may be doubted if more favorable conditions have ever prevailed in this county, so far as the sheep men are concerned. Early in the season the lambs sold at \$2.50 per head, as against \$1.80 last season. Later on they advanced to as high as \$2.50, while most of the sheep went at over \$5, some bringing as high as \$4.

**Decrease in the Sheep.**

While not all the sheep and lambs sold this year left the county, most of them did, and it is estimated that there are now about 15 per cent fewer sheep in Fergus than in 1904, when the number was 633,904. The wool clip next season is expected to show a corresponding falling off.

**Is a Great Industry.**

The figures given show what an important part the sheep industry plays in Fergus county. The greater part of the \$1,351,750 brought in through it was distributed by the wool growers in wages and for supplies, etc., and this industry has therefore contributed greatly to the general prosperity that has prevailed in this section of Montana during the past year.

**Is the Banner County.**

Fergus was long the banner sheep county of the state, and it is quite likely that it will retain that position next year, for heavy as the sales of sheep and lambs have been here, they have probably been quite as heavy in other sections. Not a few of the large outfits retained all their lambs this year. But even though the sheep in some other county should slightly outnumber those in Fergus, the fact still remains that Fergus wool is the best produced in the state, and it is quite safe to say that no other county realized so high an average price for its clip as was paid for the Fergus product. This is not due alone to the experience of the flockmasters. The county is especially adapted for successful wool growing, all the conditions making for an excellent quality.

**Outlook for Next Season.**

While some contracting has been done in various parts of the state for next season's clip, no transactions of this kind have taken place in Fergus county. The growers here are quite confident that prices in 1906 will be as high as they were last summer, and will not entertain any proposition to sell at a less price. The money

received during this season has given them plenty of capital to carry on their operations until next year, and they are not inclined to sacrifice anything in order to get ready cash. This condition of affairs appears to be well understood, as not a single buyer, either those operating in the state or from the east, has made his appearance here so far. While it is

expected that the 1906 clip will be somewhat smaller than it was this year, the indications are that it will be of the same high quality and will command top prices, whatever the quotations may be. Owing to the recent heavy storm, feeding was necessary for a time all over the county but the losses have been small, and the sheep are reported to be in the best possible condition. Under these conditions, the wool growers have reason to look forward to another very prosperous season.

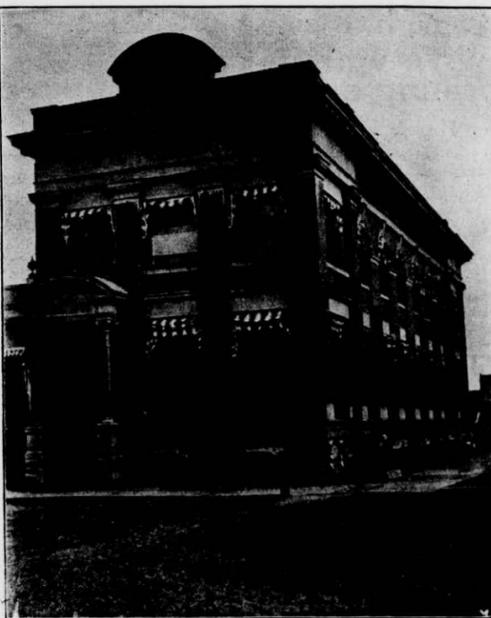


New Plant of the Judith Basin Milling Company, Lewistown. Erected by Tubb Bros.

dropped right into the top of the mill from the elevator. The grinding of wheat commenced this week, and the whole plant appears to be working perfectly. While the exact cost of the improvements is not known as yet, it is estimated that the mill and elevator and all the machinery, together with a neat residence erected on the mill grounds, represent not less than \$50,000. Four expert mill men, in addition to the chief in charge, have been employed steadily for some months installing the plant, and will remain

be a source of great pleasure to the family, but to this observation the father made no reply. "Really," continued the Bostonian, "it is remarkable. Your youngest son is a cornetist, both your daughters are pianists your wife is a violinist and, I understand, the others are also musicians. Now, what are you, the father of such a musical combination?" "I," replied the old man, sarcastically, "I am a pessimist."

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The Bank of Fergus County, Corner Main Street and Third Avenue.