



History of nearly all the towns along the coast extension of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad is brief and startling, covering periods of time from five to ten years. Some have been connected at an earlier time with the stage routes that meandered through Montana and North Dakota in different directions. Some were trading posts long before the advent of the road that tapped the rich valley of the Musselshell.

Among the towns in Montana thus favored with traditions of stage days, are Roundup, situated on the Lower Musselshell, Martinsdale on the Upper Musselshell and Harlowton, at the junction of the Milwaukee and Montana roads. Of the three, Harlowton has the most imperfect halo of early tradition. The quaint old town of Marino robs her of this glory, for Marino was a typical Montana stage town at the ford of the Musselshell where the new steel bridge is now located, long before Richard Harlow ever gave birth to the idea of building a road in central Montana that would thus connect the Northern Pacific with the thriving town of Lewistown in the Judith Basin, and thus make possible the new and more modern town which bears his name. Harlowton came into existence with the Montana, or Jawbone road as it is frequently called for the reason that the road was built on small capital and largely by maxillary action.

But the plateau upon which the town is built is historic ground. Here for years before the shrill whistle of the locomotive startled the wolf, the bear of the buffalo, even long before the most progressive mind had conceived the enterprise of opening an artery of commerce along the Musselshell, the hardy cattlemen had made this a favorite spot for camping while on the roundup, and the picturesque cowboy regarded it as a convenient place to bring the drive together.

So the plateau that is now so alive, was used as the stamping ground of the cowpuncher, while the little town of Marino was the postoffice, trading post and stopping place of this section.

Marino was first settled by Charles Severance, who established a ranch home in the later eighties on this side of the river near the present site of the bridge. Archie McEhnie and Russell Long built a saloon and the farmer was made post master, so that for some time the post-office was kept in the saloon. In 1888 Bart Brown started a store in a log building, this was the first store established in the community. His stock was purchased at Big Timber and was brought overland by freight teams, a distance of fifty-five miles. Marino was then the typical stage town. Two

routes passed through, one ran from Martinsdale to Waukegan and the other from Lavina to Marino, and the picturesque little town soon became well known in this section.

But the fate of Marino was sealed with the advent of the Montana road which reached the present site of Harlowton in the spring of 1890, and here the road terminated. A town immediately began to grow at the terminus of the road, and was named Harlowton in honor of Richard Harlow who was the principal promoter of the new line. The postoffice was soon moved from Marino to the new town. Marino was soon depopulated and today there are only a few log cabins left to mark the site of the old stage town.

The first person to erect a building in Harlowton was Thomas F. Hanzlik, who is now the proprietor of the barber shop in the Uner building. At ten o'clock on June 19th, 1890, he began to build the building which is now occupied by the McDonald sisters as a tailoring establishment. He in company with George Marrow launched in the store business. It was a small beginning. At first they had tobacco, cigars, fruits and other small articles, but the trade grew. Other people moved into the new town. Trapanian Hale came from Castle and started the first restaurant which was conducted in a tent just back of where Albert Plethen's barn now stands. The Hensley brothers, also of Castle, built the livery barn now occupied by J. J. Hall, J. J. Fisher and Ira B. Gordon opened up a saloon in a tent near Hall's restaurant. In July the Melville Mercantile Co., afterwards the Uner Mercantile company started a store on the site now used by that company. Honorable C. P. Tooley, now of Twodot, began a store on the present site of the Mint saloon. Herbert Rowe erected a store where the Home restaurant now stands and soon sold out to H. E. Marshall, who placed E. F. Ross in charge of the new enterprise. Albert Plethen started the third building in the new town. He built the barn he now owns, and began doing blacksmithing before the shingles were placed on the roof. The sturdy blacksmith lived in a tent on the bank of the river while his home was being built.

So Harlowton was built in a hurry. Carpenters worked day and night, and business was prosperous. The Montana road continued to make Harlowton its terminus for three years, during which time a stage line was operated between here and Lewistown, and the town grew steadily while the road was being extended into the Judith Basin.

#### THE FIRE OF 1907.

Prosperity could not continue to come always. The town must have its re-

verses. On June 17th, 1907, a disastrous fire occurred that nearly cleaned up the whole town. It started about 5:30 in the afternoon in Marshall's store and rapidly spread to other buildings, while the citizens worked gallantly with the means at hand to prevent a total loss. Building after building went down. Hank Weber's saloon, the Mint saloon, the Valdson hotel, the Uner Mercantile company's store and the State Bank, Fisher and Kirby's saloon, which occupied the spot where the bank now is, were all consumed, thus cleaning out one entire street. The flames then jumped across the street and soon the building owned by the Harlowton Business Association occupied on the first floor by A. C. Graves for a butcher shop, and on the second floor by the I. O. O. F. as lodge rooms and public hall, was enveloped in the flames. The little building belonging to T. F. Hanzlik now occupied by R. B. Stevenson as a real estate office, was turned on its side to prevent the fire from extending farther eastward. It was a hard blow for the town that was destined to become the pride of the Musselshell.

#### THE MILWAUKEE ROAD.

But the darkness of ruin seemed to be the darkness that precedes the dawn of greater things. At the time this disastrous fire swept through the town, a new project was being launched, that was to make Harlowton one of the best towns of Montana. The Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul was building its coast extension, and the rails had been laid to within a few miles of the round town. In March 1908, the trains began to run, making Harlowton the terminus of the road for the summer. A transfer was made from the new line to the Montana which was used to make the western trip until the Milwaukee had been extended to Butte. In August work was begun on the new road bed from Harlowton to Lombard. The railroad company looked favorably upon the sturdy town that rebuilt and outstripped its former self in less than a year, and so made it a passenger division point, at the junction of the C. M. & St. P. and the branch line of the Montana running to Lewistown.

These railroad facilities have made Harlowton a favorable shipping point, and have a tendency to induce investors to erect substantial buildings. The advent of the new road put renewed vigor and life into the town, and it is today experiencing a rapid growth in population, capital is being freely invested, and public improvements of various kinds are giving the town a progressive appearance.

But the railroad is not the only source of Harlowton. Just beyond the hills that surround the town are broad

fertile plains and bench lands well watered by numerous creeks and rivers, capable of producing the best quality of wheat, barley, oats or flax. Successful grain raising in the vicinity of Harlowton is no longer an experiment, it is an established fact. It seems incredible but it is true that irrigated land has produced forty-two bushels of No. 1 hard wheat, and that dry land farming averaged for the season of 1908, a dry year thirty-seven bushels of wheat that weighed over sixty pounds to the bushel. The stand of oats and barley in the fields last summer surprised farmers from Iowa, Missouri and Illinois. Timothy and alfalfa are grown in abundance and this accounts for the fat stock that is supplied to Chicago and Omaha for which the Musselshell Valley has become noted.

Professor Shaw in his report on the soil of this region, stated emphatically that the fine formation in the soil in the vicinity of Harlowton made it the best wheat producing land to be found in the northwest. This rich soil has a depth which averages about four, and one-half to five feet, leaving out the hills. The bench and bottom lands have a soil depth that seldom is less than ten feet.

#### TERRITORY.

The trade at Harlowton is not hampered and cut off as it is in cities farther east by rival towns, or towns that compete with other railroads that run through the country. The town has a tremendous territory to draw from. It is sixty miles to the Northern Pacific on the south. It is seventy miles eastward to Roundup, a good-sized town with no competition between. Twodot, a growing town, is twelve miles west on the Milwaukee, but much of her trade comes to Harlowton. Judith Gap, a new and rapidly growing town, on the Billings & Northern, is twenty-five miles to the north. Harlowton has undisputed sway over the trade of the intervening territory. The topographical nature of the country makes it improbable that any further railroad will cut off any of this territory in the near future.

#### FUTURE GROWTH.

The future growth of the town is assured. Backed by an unlimited amount of good land and the prestige of being a railroad and shipping center situated at the gateway of the great Judith Basin, with rich mineral deposits in the surrounding hills, there can be no doubt that Harlowton's population of eight hundred will soon be five thousand. Already business and professional men and artisans of all classes are coming to take advantage of the splendid openings. The big ranches containing as high as thirty thousand acres are being irrigated and cut up to be sold

in small farms. The tremendous influx of home-seekers is turning vast surrounding region into a second Red river valley. There is land and room for happy homes for thousands yet to come.

## Schools

The Harlowton school building has not kept pace with the other improvements of the town. An attempt was made to issue bonds for the erection of a \$21,000 school house this summer, but the plan was abandoned for the reason that the assessed valuation of the district of a year ago, and which according to the state constitution must be the basis, was not sufficient to erect the kind of a building that was desired. The school board plans on building the school next year, which will be a splendid structure, with capacity for a first class high school. The present building will be used until the fall of 1911.

The teachers for the school year recently closed are Miss Leska Laughlin, and Miss Mary J. Davis. These two young ladies have been retained for next year, and a third teacher will be added to the force. The board of trustees are I. S. McQuitty, chairman; Mrs. Harry Cosgriff and Joseph Buchard. Mr. A. T. Anderson has been appointed clerk. The school is growing rapidly, and the present quarters will likely be inadequate to accommodate the increased attendance of next year. The school board expect to make arrangements for more school room if the present building will not seat all comfortably.

## Churches

The Presbyterian church was the first church to be erected in Harlowton. It is a neat stone building situated south of the opera house. At present the Presbyterians here have no pastor, Rev. Balston, who was here during the winter and late in the spring, was placed in charge of a pastorate in the west.

The Wilson Memorial Methodist church is nearing completion. It has been erected on Eekles avenue. The church is built of cement blocks with galvanized iron roofing. Besides the auditorium, there is a Sunday school room and basement which makes the building convenient and comfortable. Rev. Krieger, of Garnett, has supplied this charge, whenever his duties would permit him to come. Rev. Percy R. McMahon who comes to us highly recom-

mented, has assumed the pastorate at this point, and it is expected that the Methodist church here will soon be a strong working organization for the up building of Harlowton along the spiritual line.

The Roman Catholic church people have been active during the past year. Father Artz of Townsend, has been here and held mass on several occasions. The Catholics are making preparations to build a splendid church in the near future. Already a good-sized fund has been collected, and there are bright prospects that the church will be dedicated free of debt.

## City Government

The town of Harlowton was incorporated a little over a year ago. The first election of town officers occurred on the 6th day of June, 1908. The first meeting of the town council was held about ten days after the election. The officers elected in June, 1908, were: Mayor, A. T. Anderson; aldermen from the first ward, Henry Schmidt and B. L. Moody; aldermen from the second ward, T. E. Porter and Thomas E. Kirby; from the third ward, W. O. Straight and Logan Fowell. At the first meeting of this council, Arthur Weston was made city clerk, and Len Weber town marshal. These officers controlled the affairs of the city until the first annual election, which was held last April, when the following were elected for the ensuing year: Mayor, A. T. Anderson, first ward, Joe Buchard and Arthur Weston; second ward, T. E. Kirby and Lee Haas; third ward, Rezin Wesley and M. W. Lewellin. This council appointed Dr. S. K. Campbell town clerk, J. Karnop marshal, and retained Attorney W. C. Husband to look after the legal matters pertaining to the city's interests.

The mayor and councilmen are representative citizens of Harlowton. All are active for the town's best interests.

They have had sidewalks laid in different parts, and in the near future there will be sidewalks on all the principal business streets. The grade of the streets has been established, and it will not be long before the work on the streets will be completed.

The marshal, Jacob Karnop, is making a pronounced success as marshal of the town. He preserves good order, and residents say that there is better order in the town today than there has been since the town was first built.

The city has also established a sys-