

BIG GUSHER!

When oil was king in the Shelby area, pathfinders pushed a great sense of excitement and pay off for all the hard work that went into drilling a well.

Champion Times

SHELBY, MONTANA - JULY 4, 1921

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OIL STRIKE!

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GAS FIELD DISCOVERED

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Local farmer, Wade Hite, looks to the oil field for a way to supplement the income of his not-so-drinking wheat crop.



ECONOMIC BOOST

JOBS CREATED FOR FARMERS IN HARD TIMES

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The Champion Feature Story



THE FIRST CAR

in Shelby will now have a source of fuel with the recent oil and gas strikes in the region! James A. is highly pleased with the new developments as this will help him get around town and the region just in time to promote the upcoming Derrney vs. Gibbons Fight! James A. is highly pleased with the new developments as this will help him get around town and the James A. is highly pleased with the new developments as this.



KEVIN SUNBURST OIL FIELD EXPANDS

Growth in the oil field has lead to recent expansion and developments for the Shelby area. The discovery of Natural Gas and it subsequent production has lead to many businesses opening to serve the equipment needs of drilling, laying pipeline and also refining and distributing the oil and gas by products.

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~ A CHAMPION STORY ~

The Great Northern Railway

The first spikes of Jim Hill's Great Northern Railway were driven in Shelby at 1891. His idea to stretch a railroad across the northern tier of the United States to the Pacific would create a trade route with the Orient. Averaging 5-8 miles per day track was laid across the Northern Great Plains eventually reaching the Pacific Ocean in 1893. The Great Northern Railroad was intended to run south as a pass had not been located in the northern part of the state. As fate would have it, during the horrible winter of 1887-1888, one of his engineers came across Marias Pass.

The Birth of a Northern Town

Shelby was born with the coming of the Great Northern Railway. The builders threw off a bonfire at this site and named it Shelby Junction for Peter H. Shelby, then general manager in Montana for Jim Hill's railroad. Having been so honored, the general manager is said to have remarked: "That mud-hole, God-forsaken place will never amount to a damn!" Despite Mr. Shelby's prediction, Shelby became the distributing center for a sizable trade area with the railroad's arrival.

ARRIVAL OF THE RAILROAD

SHELBY ~ The Fastest Growing City in the United States

That's what the Great Northern Railway was touting in its public notice to encourage passenger travel to the infamous World Heavyweight Championship Fight of 1921. Special passenger trains were dispatched from Montana points; the Shelby station was extended 112 feet and three additional stations were constructed; additional side track was constructed in anticipation of all the incoming trains as well as create space for the city of sleeping cars that would be available to accommodate light goods. Immediately after the fight, special trains were then dispatched from the various stations not

less than 30 minutes apart, and it was expected that all special trains will have left town by midnight. Train service from Chicago to Shelby was afforded by the Great Northern Railway's steel "Oriental Limited" Pullman. "The Glacier Park Limited", another steel Pullman equipped flyer was dispatched daily from St. Paul, Minneapolis and the "Burlington-Great Northern" left St. Louis, Missouri daily.

JAMES J. HILL - Empire Builder

James J. Hill, railroad tycoon had a vision for his Great Northern Railway and Montana. Hill envisioned his railroad as a gigantic bridge to trade routes in Europe and the Orient and Montana was to be at the center of his huge trade empire. He encouraged people to settle along his rail lines, encouraging them to pack their belongings, purchase a \$12.50 ticket and head to the last great frontier to obtain "free land". That "free land" meant a \$20.00 fee for "locating" the homesteader on unoccupied land. Jim Hill induced immigrants to homestead in Montana. He brought them to their new homes on his rail lines, of course. He imported grain from Russia and sold this to farmers. He even sold wood to farmers in order to encourage them to buy his wheat. His railroad transported thousands and thousands of farmers and ranchers to Montana and then moved the crops they raised.



CHUGGIN' ALONG IN TODAY'S WORLD

The railroad continues to play a vital role in Shelby and the Golden Triangle region. Moving passengers to points nationwide via Amtrak and transporting goods across the country on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, rail service remains the back bone of the community.