

## HENRY ATWOOD HASKELL PIONEER PRINTER OF THE WEST

How the Descendant of Peace-Loving Quakers Came to Take Part in the Stirring Events That Led to the Building of a Magnificent Empire in the Great Transmissouri Region

PIONEER printer of the west and northwest is "Harry" A. Haskell. When the "Great American Desert" was scarcely scratched by the most primitive instruments of civilization he carried that civilizing and educating art of printing into the wilderness. He worked with all sorts of presses, presses which are only memories now, and which even in the early days were out of date, Washington hand presses, clattering army presses and backbreaking drum cylinder presses. He worked for a long time on some of the pioneer newspapers of Omaha, he operated the first printing press in the wild northwest country, he set up and printed the first newspaper in Montana, the Montana Post, and he is now in the thirty-fourth year of his service on The Omaha Bee.

His somber, grey-dressed, high-hatted Quaker grandparents would have opened their eyes wide had they been able to look into the future half a century and see their grandson with a great, 48-caliber revolver in his belt, loaded and ready for use. Those peace-loving grandparents pursued their quiet lives among the hills of Wales and the sleepy villages of New England. Their descendant inherited little of their spirit for he pushed boldly into the wildest part of the country and took a part in some of its most hair-raising episodes.

Henry Atwood Haskell was born in Cumberland Hill, R. I., June 16, 1843. His parents with several other townspeople moved to Illinois when he was 7 years of age, going by rail to Buffalo and across the lakes to Chicago. There they chartered a canal boat and pushed on to La Salle, an extremely slow trip taking two weeks. Wagons were awaiting them at La Salle in which they were taken to "Indian Town," now Tiskilwa, Ill. There the boy went to school for the next seven years. At the age of 14 he first entered the printing business. A paper had been started in the Illinois frontier village. It was called "The Tiskilwa Independent." Young Haskell was carrier for this primitive journal. Later he became a "devil" in the office. Within a few months the paper was sold to a Baptist minister who moved it to the town of Galva, and young Haskell went with it. A year later he went to Princeton, Ill., and secured a position on the Bureau County Republican.

### Too Young to Be a Soldier

There he was when the war broke out. Sumter had been fired upon and the call came from Lincoln for 75,000 volunteers. Haskell, a boy of 17 at the time, was turning the press when the startling news was brought into the office. The press came to an immediate standstill and the boy was out of the building and down the street on the run to the recruiting place. But his employer and his mother were there nearly as soon as he. He lacked nearly four years of the required age and he went back sadly to the printing office. Six months later he returned to Rhode Island and worked for a time in Pawtucket. In 1862 he came back to Illinois. His brother had just returned from a trip to Omaha, had married and was about to move to the west. Young Haskell decided to accept his invitation and accompany him. They made the trip across Iowa in a wagon, arriving safely in Council Bluffs and coming across the river in a small boat.

Haskell worked on The Nebraskan two weeks and then took a position on The Republican. Miners were returning from Idaho at that time with sacks of gold dust and they told stories of great wealth to be had for the digging. The gold fever took firm hold on the young printer. He walked disconsolately up the street one day and found Joseph Kennard with two wagons loaded and ready to pull out for the west. He only wanted a driver for the oxen. He offered Haskell the position at \$15 a month. Haskell accepted, hurried back and settled with his employer at The Republican office and the next morning set out, walking by the side of the slow-footed oxen toward that Eldorado of which the miners told.

A journey of 110 days brought them to Bannock City, Idaho. They were part of a train of seventy-five wagons, a number of which belonged to John A. Creighton had joined the train near Denver. The gold excitement had died out at Bannock City. Young Haskell with the \$55 he had received as wages was at a loss what to do when he met five other men about to set out for Virginia City, seventy-five miles further on. He joined them and they walked to the new and "wild and woolly" western town built in a gulch amid the wildest surroundings entirely in harmony with the "bad men" who made up a large part of the population. His \$55 was nearly gone when he secured employment from a miner at \$3.50 a day. A day's trial showed him he could not stand the heavy work and he quit.

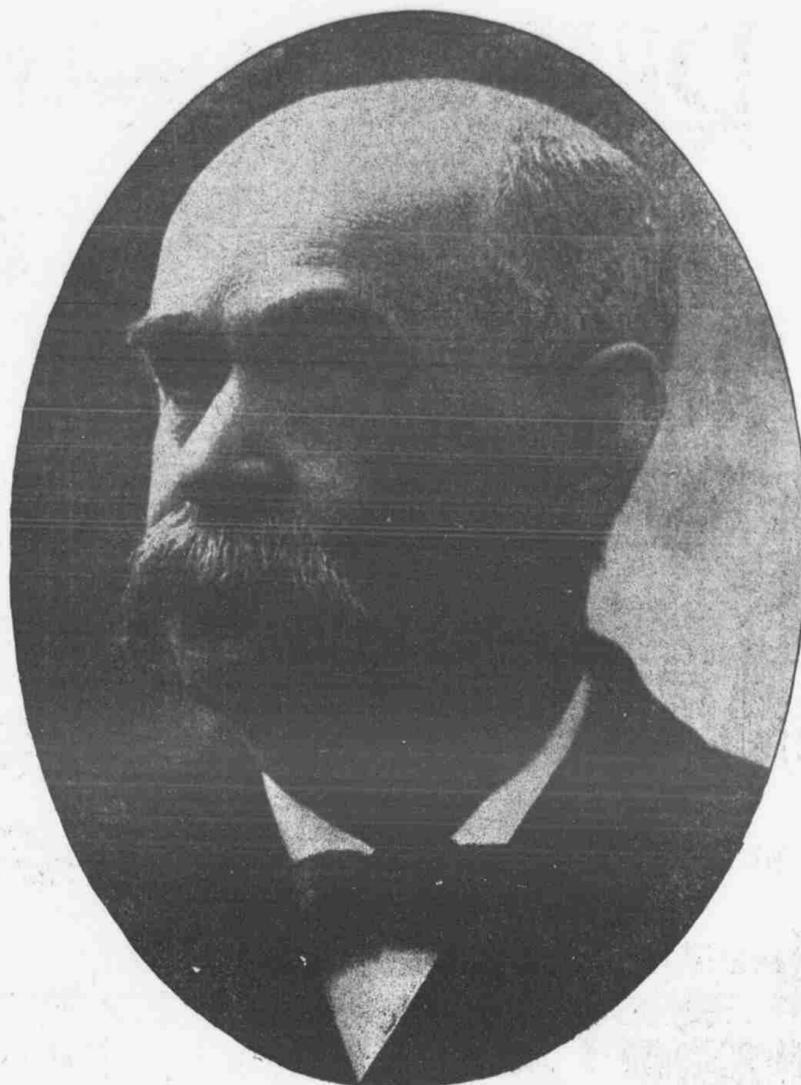
### Varied Activity in Montana

An optimistic man from Missouri asked him one day how he would like to go into the "lumber business." There was no sawed lumber within 350 miles and Haskell thought the proposition was a joke. But the Missourian imparted the secret that he was the possessor of a whip-saw which he had brought from Missouri and his plan was to cut down trees and saw them into boards by hand. Haskell accepted and the two with a helper went up on the hills, chopped down a tree, laid the log over a scaffold and set to work at it in a primitive whip-saw style. Haskell stood on top of the log with one end of the saw, the helper underneath and the Missourian man bustled himself all around. Haskell had a hatchet which he used as a wedge to keep the saw from binding. This fell from his hand and cut the Missourian in the arm, severing an artery. They succeeded in binding it with handkerchiefs and sent him to Virginia City, eighteen miles away. He never returned and Haskell sold the few boards cut and the saw for a substantial sum. Lumber was then worth upward of \$200 a thousand feet in Virginia City.

Another optimistic individual proposed to Haskell that he go into the "plastering business" with him. There was no plaster excepting ordinary mud, and the business did not prove profitable. That winter he spent with eight other men in a little hut owned by the town baker. It was largely due to the baker's kindness that the nine men were kept from cold and hunger that winter. In the spring Haskell became a waiter in a restaurant at \$80 a month. He even tried his hand at "tending bar." The proprietor of the restaurant demanded that he do it in spite of the fact that Haskell knew nothing of the business. The bars in the early days were built five feet high and were lined on the inside with sheet iron. This peculiar style of structure was for very good reasons for every man in those days "wore" one gun at least and some had three or four "barkers" in their belts and were ready and willing to use them at any time.

### Lawless Day at Virginia City

Things were about to become "interesting" in Virginia City. When a thousand men from all parts of the world, good and bad, largely the latter, are gathered in one town, far from civilization, far from the law's strong arm, far from the refining and softening influences of good women and laughing children, a reversion to barbarism, or at least to medieval civilization quickly occurs. "Clubfoot George" was a village shoemaker in Virginia City. But "Clubfoot George" seemed almost too good to be true. In fact, a number of business men believed he was not true, that he was two-faced. The reason for this was that the robbers who surrounded Virginia City and robbed men who went out from there, always knew where to find the gold dust no matter how cunningly it was hidden. One man bored out the axle tree of his wagon and filled it with gold dust, thinking thus to outwit the robbers. They met him eighty miles out of Virginia City. He calmly invited them to search his wagon. But the robbers threw off the wagon box and went immediately to the axle where the dust was hidden. This proved they had spies in the city who informed them where to find the valuables and "Clubfoot George" was suspected. A committee called one night and informed him that his time had come. They remarked they were sorry to lose so good a shoemaker because shoemakers were scarce. And "Clubfoot George" cursed their pleas-



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antries. The committee visited a number of other places in the town and when they had made the rounds five scowling, wicked, desperate fellows were in their midst, bound and on their way to the place of quick revenge.

### Work of the Vigilantes

Mr. Haskell was a witness of this famous deed of the Vigilantes. A log house half built was selected because the roof beams offered a good fastening for the ropes. The five men were led thither. Five boxes were secured from a store and each man was compelled to stand on a box until the ropes were adjusted to the proper lengths around the beams of the roof. While this process was going on the five stood on their boxes with that apparent lack of fear of death, said to be the gift only of beasts and savages. One asked for a drink of whisky and a friend gave him a quart bottle. All were good humored and treated their fate only as part of the "game." There were no prayers, no unusual emotions except on the part of "Clubfoot George," who angrily threatened to haunt every member of the vigilance committee. Finally the ropes were ready and adjusted around the necks of the five. The boxes were suddenly withdrawn and the bodies fell and swung writhing to and fro.

Two miles had been responsible for the organization of that terrible body, the vigilance committee. They had strayed or been stolen from a man who lived at the head of Alder gulch. He came down to search for them and was shot by some person unknown.

A young man named George Ives was arrested. There were no courts in those days and there was some dispute as to how to try him. Some wanted to use the "miner's law" and others advocated giving him a trial by jury.

"There was nearly a riot over this," says Mr. Haskell. "Possibly a thousand men were there in the street of Nevada City and you can imagine the tumult. Finally a majority decided to give him a jury trial. I can see that trial as though it had been yesterday. The jury sat in one wagon, the prisoner in another. W. F. Sanders, afterward senator from Montana, was prosecutor and J. Thurman of Kentucky acted as the defendant's lawyer. All wore six-shooters and the spectators to the number of a thousand or more were the same. Of course they sentenced him. A scaffold was erected and I think there were 5,000 people in the place when he was hanged next day. A guard of men surrounded the scaffold. Ives' wish to die with his boots on was granted. The drop fell just as the sun was going down. At the same time the guard turned toward the crowd and there was a click as they cocked their guns—there had been a rumor of an attempt to rescue him—and all that vast crowd for some unexplained reason ran swiftly from the place where that body was dangling from the scaffold with the waning light of day upon it."

Perhaps one of the "baddest" men ever hanged by the vigilance committee was the notorious Jack Slade. He was a good enough fellow when sober. He had a dairy farm and a beautiful wife.

Slade was a fine looking fellow, but when intoxicated he had a peculiar sense of humor. Haskell has seen him walk into a saloon and calmly shoot a dozen bottles off of the shelf with his pistol. He used to drive into town in a wagon, stop in front of the barber shop, get the "drop" on the tonsorialist and compel him to bring his chair out into the wagon and shave him. He also took delight in walking into a billiard hall and shooting at the balls. He was suspected of many crimes but finally was arrested on a specific charge and taken before a justice of the peace. He tore up the information papers and walked out of the court. That night several hundred men walked into the saloon where he was and seized him. He was taken down the gulch where a rope was flung over a limb and he was told to say his prayers.

"No one thought Jack Slade would ever live," says Mr. Haskell, "but he did beg then to see his wife. The men knew very well that if she came she would work on their feelings so they couldn't hang him. The power of a woman in that wild country was wonderful. There were so few of them that the men regarded one like an angel, and she could have just what she wanted. Well, they strung him up. The body was taken to the log house they called a hotel. Soon after it was brought in Mrs. Slade galloped up on a foaming horse. A dozen men helped her off. She was a handsome woman and she was almost frantic over her husband's death. She afterward married the richest merchant in Virginia City."

### Some Memories of Olden Days

Mr. Haskell also witnessed the end of the evil career of Henry Plummer, a brilliant, educated, handsome, clever man who attempted to combine the two occupations of leader of the road agents and sheriff. Mr. Haskell witnessed some of the big "games" which have made that country famous even to this day in the world of sport. He saw the prize fight between Hugh O'Neal and "Con" Orem. The fight lasted for 180 rounds and although the men wore no gloves, neither was knocked out. He saw the biggest faro game probably that has ever been played. The stake was \$160,000. The banker had come out from San Francisco with that amount. The local sports decided to "clean" him. They nearly broke the bank, but the man from Frisco cheerily bade them go on and a few days later he departed with his \$160,000 and some \$40,000 in addition.

The necessities of life were always expensive, but probably reached the highest pitch in Virginia City one winter while Mr. Haskell was there. Snow had blockaded the trail and kept provisions from coming in. Flour went up to \$140 a sack and salt to \$1 a pound. A council was held and it was decided to confiscate all flour found in anyone's possession beyond what he would need for his own use until spring. This was done, though it occasioned some fighting which was designated the "flour riot."

John A. Creighton was keeping a store in Virginia City a part of the time while Mr. Haskell was there. The latter frequently slept with Creighton in the store. Some nights they had \$50,000 to \$60,000 in a nail keg under their bunk and slept with one eye open.

Mr. Haskell decided to return east in the spring of 1865. With \$800 he had saved he purchased four mules and a wagon and joined a train of about forty wagons. All went well until one night when they camped on Pole creek, Wyo. The wagons were drawn in a circle and the horses driven a mile away into the foothills, with thirty men to herd them. Toward morning Haskell, who was one of the herders, was startled by coyote cries on all sides. An hour later the sudden rattle of musketry came from the direction of the wagon train and the Indians were seen attacking there. They were driven off and then came toward the horses, which the herders were trying to keep together. The Indians succeeded in their object and the animals were stampeded, only about forty being saved. Morning found the wagon train in an awful strait. Only forty animals remained to draw forty heavily-laden wagons. Haskell had saved his four mules. The most valuable freight was loaded on his wagon and several others. The rear wheels of some other wagons were taken and rude push carts made with them. All the remainder was then heaped in a pile and set afire. The total loss was reckoned to be \$140,000. The company arrived at Omaha several months later without further mishap.

### Back to Omaha and Printing

Unable to dispose of his outfit here, Haskell decided to drive on east. He did so and visited at his old home in Illinois. The following spring he drove back once more to Omaha, which was to be his permanent residence. He went to work in the Republican office first as a journeyman printer and later as foreman. It is a matter of pride that he "got out" the first set of blanks used by the Union Pacific railroad. He walked out with the strikers in 1874.

In that same year Edward Rosewater offered him the day foremanship on The Omaha Bee. He accepted the position and has been with The Bee continuously since that time. Today he is superintendent of the entire mechanical department, is a stockholder in both the Bee Publishing company and the Bee Building company and a director in the former.

Mr. Haskell married Miss Jennie L. Hardy in Omaha in 1868. They have three children, Mrs. W. E. Palmatier, Frank J. Haskell of the Brennan-Love company and Paul A. Haskell of the Sunderland Bros. company. Mr. Haskell has been a member of the Masons' blue lodge since his early manhood and has also taken the Scottish rite degrees.

## Extending Y. M. C. A. Work in Spain and Portugal

MY TRIPS to Spain and Portugal were the most expensive for the distance traveled and the worst accommodations, with barely one or two exceptions, in my whole world tour. I paid for first-class tickets for land and sea travel, but rarely received second-class accommodations. I was tempted to pass the nation by, but I wanted to visit them, and I am truly glad that I did so.

Oporto, or Porto Portugal, is an important city of 170,000 inhabitants, situated on a very romantic river which winds its way through a very deep ravine or valley. This river is navigable for the largest vessels. The city is built on high hills on both sides of the river, which are joined by great and high bridges. The Crystal Palace and the park about it occupy a most desirable place high up on the river bank, from which the whole river far beneath it, winding its way through the city and far out into the ocean, as well as the lofty bridges and the equally high banks on the opposite side of the river can be plainly seen. Nothing could be much more picturesque. The old cathedral occupies the summit of the old city. It can be seen from many places in the city and from it the finest panoramic view of the city, the river and the suburbs is afforded. Porto on one side of the river and Gala on the other in early days by making one word out of them gave the name of Portugal to the country. The chief business of Porto is wine, and from this city comes the name "Port wine." Enormous quantities of wine are stored here in pipes (very large barrels) and in open canals or channels in the storehouses. There are multitudes of storehouses for wine. I was told that there was stored in Porto millions of pipes of wine besides what is in the open canals or in bulk. I was told that 40,000 pipes of wine

were brought into Porto in two months. Much of it is stored for a long time to give it age. Porto has a large number of factories. It has also some splendid large buildings. The Crystal Palace, with its charming park about it and its magnificent outlook; the uncommonly large hospital, the Exchange is a most remarkable structure with its Arabic room that scarcely has a rival for its beauty and elegance. The old large cathedral, which crowns the summit of the city with its famous silver altar. It has also a very handsome Young Men's Christian association building, erected by one special friend of the association at a cost of \$15,000. The Protestant population is about 1,000. There are several very efficient and hard-working Protestant missions that are doing a great work.

Lisbon is situated on the north bank of the River Tagus nine miles from its mouth. The river is four miles wide. Lisbon is a contraction of a Phoenician word or words which means "Charming Bay of the Sea." The bay is beyond dispute a charming one. On entering from Cascaes bay to the anchorage ground may be seen the bathing sands, Belem tower, the Palace of Ajuda (the residence of the dowager queen, Dna. Maria Pia and the king's brother, Dom Alfonso) and of the Nececidades (the residence of King Carlos I and Queen Amelia) the dome of the Estrella Basilica the Belem cathedral, the ancient Convent of the Jeronimites, as also the Cathedrals of the Se and of St. Vincent de Fora. The new part of the city has wide and clean streets, but many are very steep, as the city is built on high hills. Lisbon with its suburbs has a population of 450,000 inhabitants. It was founded at such an early date that its origin is shrouded in mystery. A tradition claims that it was founded by a grandson of Abra-

ham in the year 3259 B. C. It has had a thrilling history, passing from one nation to another for thousands of years until it became a permanent possession of Portugal. It has been visited with devastating earthquakes, notably in 1531 and in 1755. During the latter 10,000 persons were buried in the ruins and half of the city was demolished. There are many cathedrals and churches. Indeed, there are 276 places of worship. The Catholic church has almost everything its own way and is very intolerant. I was told that the queen was very favorable to the Jesuits, and was affording them much help and encouragement. In view of the sympathy that the Catholics are claiming in France and in other quarters of the world where the power is passing from them, it seems to me that they would try to make friends for themselves in the countries where they are in full control by being less intolerant and more friendly to other Christian churches.

The Belem cathedral is a wonderful building. It has been in course of erection for centuries, yet incomplete. The carvings in stone on the doors on the outside, on the arches of the cloister and on the pillars which support the roof are exceptionally fine. This cathedral was founded in 1400 on the site of the hermitage in which Vasco de Gama and his company prayed on the eve of their departure to discover India. In the cathedral are buried the remains of Vasco de Gama and others with him.

There is also a Belem tower, which marks the place where these early navigators set sail in search of India, and were the first to discover Brazil, South America. From the efforts of these men Columbus learned his lessons that enabled him to become the acknowledged discoverer of the new world of America.

Lisbon has several notable squares. The Black Horse square, which is surrounded by government buildings, and in the center is the statue of King Jose I, who did so much to relieve the suffering occasioned by the earthquake, 1755. The statue contains eighty tons of bronze. The Rocio is a very large and beautiful square. In the center of it is the statue of Don Pedro IV, which commemorates the granting by that monarch of the constitution charter in 1820. The end of this square next to the great theater was once the scene of the Portuguese inquisition, which was more terrible than the Spanish inquisition. It was said that in the Spanish inquisition the victims were burned, but in the Portuguese inquisition they were roasted. Oh, what a change has taken place! The change, thank God, is going on.

In different parts of the city are steam and hydraulic elevators, very high, unlike any other city I know of, by which persons are raised and lowered from low streets to high ones and vice versa at a small cost. I scarcely see how they could get along without them. Portugal occupies a most favorable position in southwest Europe on the Atlantic ocean. While it is more or less cold in the north of Portugal, it is tropical in the south. Portugal is much better cultivated than Spain, so it appears. All of Portugal is well supplied with trees, orchards, vines and foliage, while Spain is quite bare of them. I am told that its colonies are many times the size of Portugal. There is not much friendliness between Portugal and Spain, while America and Americans are very much appreciated. I reached Porto after two days and night travel in very uncomfortable cars. Called at once at the new Young Men's Christian Association buildings

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