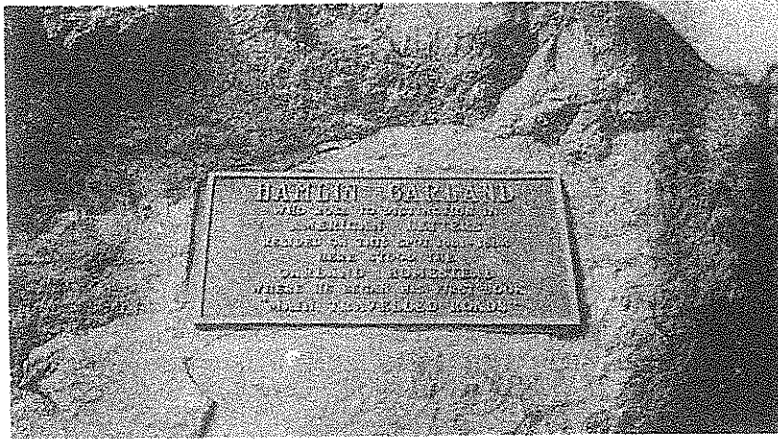


HAMLIN GARLAND MEMORIAL



MEMORIAL DEDICATION: 12 JULY 1936

[THIRD EDITION]

**PUBLISHED BY THE ABERDEEN/BROWN COUNTY
LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

***RE-PUBLISHED JULY 2010 BY HAMLIN GARLAND SOCIETY
ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA***

OBITUARY Hamlin Garland

Noted Poet

Funeral services for Hamlin Garland, the Dean of American letters, were held in Hollywood, Californian, yesterday. His body was cremated and the ashes will be taken to his birthplace in West Salem, Wis.

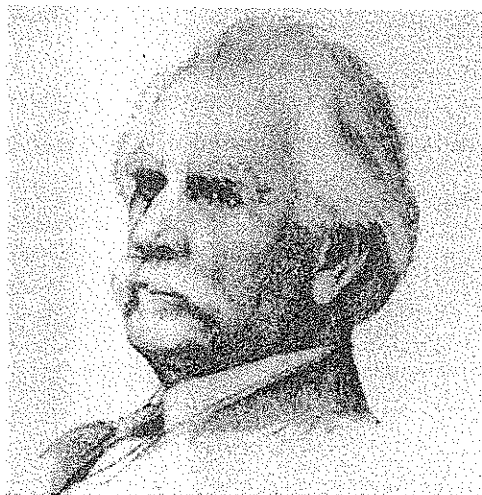
...Hamlin Garland was born in West Salem, on September 14, 1860. Hamlin's father, Richard Garland, came to Dakota in 1881 and took up a homestead near Ordway. Hamlin did not join the family when they left [Iowa] for the new home, but instead set out in search of a job as a teacher. He was not successful and in October bought a ticket for Aberdeen to join his family. Of his arrival, he has written "Aberdeen was at that time the end of the railway and when he came into that night I seemed a near neighbor to Sitting bull and the bison. And so indeed it was, for a buffalo bull had been hunted across the site less than a year before."

He walked the 12 miles from Aberdeen to his father's homestead which was located about [two and a half miles northwest] of Ordway. Here he remained for two weeks helping to build a house for the family, and left again in search of a job.

He returned in 1883. [In April he chose a claim nine miles south of present day Leola, McPherson County, about five miles west of his father's claim where Richard Garland has established a branch grocery store.] For several months. Hamlin was in charge of it. Garland went to Boston the next year intent to prepare himself for teaching literature.

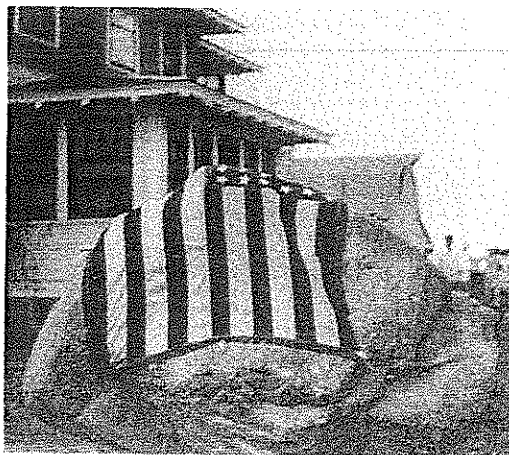
In July 1887, he returned to Dakota. During his visit here his mother told him a story which suggested a theme. He wrote a rough sketch of it while at the homestead and finished it in Boston. This was the beginning of *Main-Travelled Roads* but the book was not published until 1891.

His last visit to Aberdeen was early in the spring of 1915 when he spoke



Hamlin Garland

Shortly before his death on 4 March 1940, at his home in Los Angeles, Hamlin Garland became a co-sponsors of the Friends of the Middle Border Museum at Mitchell, South Dakota. The above image is from the last one of him made by his daughter, Constance Garland Harper.



*Hamlin Garland Memorial Dedication
Sunday, 12 July 1936
Site of Richard Garland Homestead*

to a large audience. On the following day he visited again, the old Ordway homestead, [which burned down a few years after the visit.]

A memorial now marks the spot of the Hamlin Garland homestead.

(Excerpted from the Aberdeen American-News, 6 May 1940.)

COMMENTARY ON HAMLIN GARLAND

Hamlin Garland, who made the study of American literature more interesting to Brown County and other South Dakota school children in decades past.

Like other authors of letters the early Brown County homesteader may well be forgotten by present day readers due to the lack of publications in local libraries.

But citizens of Brown County may gain some happiness from past efforts to honor him while he was still alive.

A road that is located past his old home was named Hamlin Garland Highway in 1936 and the Ordway Community Club erected a monument in his honor at the site of his homestead on a hot day in July of 1936. *These two signal honors were decades ahead of the other monuments and markers in Wisconsin and Iowa—Middle Border states.*

He acknowledged these tributes from the community which he at times dealt harshly in his realistic literature and in letters and messages sent by South Dakotans who had visited him he had expressed a desire to return to the "middle border" country. He didn't realize that ambition.

However, local pride will dictate that South Dakotans give him a place among the foremost American authors, a classification he rates among literary students whether they are prejudiced prairie folks or provincial New Englanders or West Coast folks.

It is hoped that this publication will stimulate renewed interest in Garland by visiting the local libraries, seeking out his any one of his 47 books he published in his lifetime. Again, an undying thanks goes to the late ladies of the Ordway Community Club.

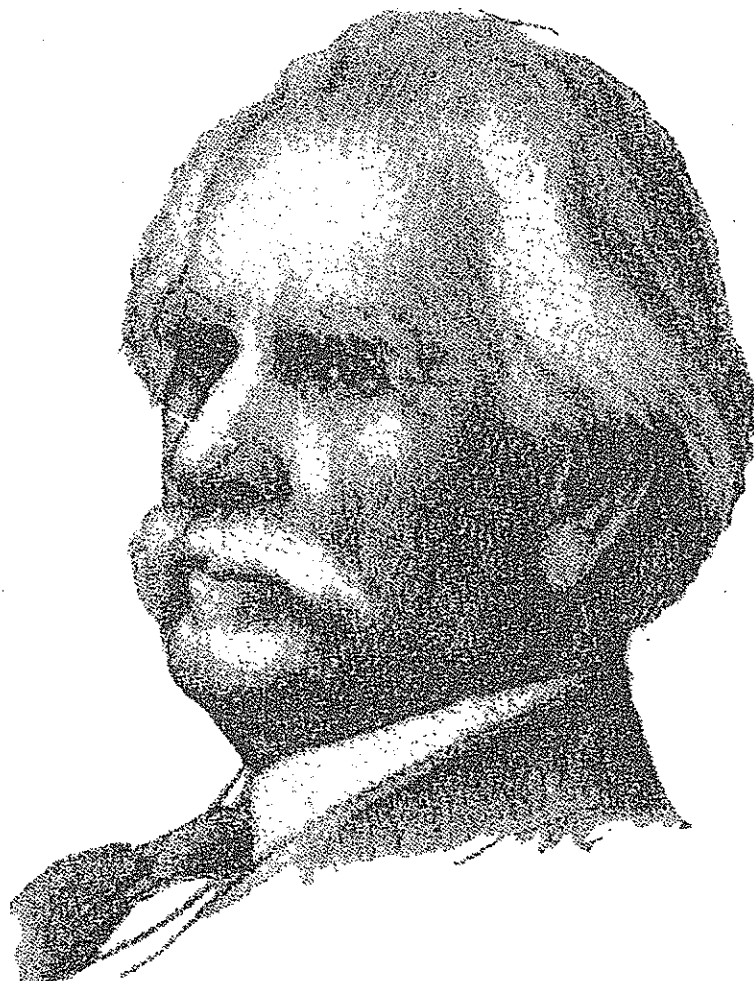


HAMLIN GARLAND Birthday Celebration

2:00 P.M.—Sunday,
Sept. 12, 2010

Dacotah Prairie Museum
21 S. Main St—Aberdeen
(FREE ADMISSION)

SPONSORS: Dacotah Prairie Museum;
Brown County Historical Society; The
Westerners—Dakota Midlands Corral;
John Ahouse, Long Beach, California



(1860-1940)

"A School-Day Afternoon With Brown County Author Hamlin Garland"

School Marm Sherri Rawstern

Curator of Education, Dacotah Prairie Museum

Program Presenters

Pauline L. Davies

Emily Buttaro

Esther Smith

"Punch" Podoll

Connie Podoll

Gene Aisenbrey

Art Buntin

Book Title

"Hamlin Garland Diaries"

"Prairie Songs (Poems)"

"Hesper"

"Trail-Makers of the Middle Border"

"A Daughter of the Middle Border"

"The Book of the American Indian"

"U.S. Grant His Life and Character"

Visitors to the School: Other members of the Garland Society—Vy Picotte and Pat Walz

Question and Answer Session
Refreshments and Birthday Cake

PROLOGUE

DEDICATE OLD GARLAND HOME BY MEMORIAL: Beneath a hot summer sun a large gathering of admirers, friends and neighbors of Hamlin Garland attended the dedication exercises Sunday, 12 July 1936, memorial marking the site of the Richard H. Garland home where the author lived and began writing his first book, *Main-Travelled Roads* between 1881 and 1884. This was reported by the "Northwest Journal" – Aberdeen, a weekly tabloid newspaper of that era.

Dr. A. H. Seymour of the Northern State Teachers College [presently Northern State University] was the main speaker at the ceremonies. Dr. Seymour pointed out there was no "Pollyanna" theme throughout the works of the Brown County author. "Garland," the speaker said, "portrayed a true picture of the prairies with their trials and hardships."

L. E. Falk, district supervisor of the WPA Writers' Project, delivered the welcome acknowledgement. It was through Mr. Falk's suggestion that the memorial movement started.

The memorial was unveiled by Mrs. C. E. Locker, intimate friend of the Garland family; she formally lived a short distance from the homestead.

Mrs. R. M. Van Winkle, chairman of the memorial committee read the address of the author, who was unable to attend. The pledge to the American flag was given by the children of Ordway and Garland townships' schools.

On the huge [15-ton] boulder which was donated by John Forsting, Brown County Commissioner, was a bronze plate with the inscription:

HAMLIN GARLAND
WHO ROSE TO DISTINCTION IN
AMERICAN LETTERS
RESIDED ON THIS SPOT 1881-1884
HERE STOOD THE
GARLAND HOMESTEAD
WHERE HE BEGAN HIS FIRST BOOK
"MAIN-TRAVELLED ROADS"

Among the prominent guests at the event were Lawrence K. Fox of Pierre, secretary of the State Historical Society, and his family, Mr. and Mrs. S. O. Hassenpflug of Groton, who formerly resided on the spot and were hosts to Hamlin Garland on his last visit here in 1915, were also present.

The following appeared in the Aberdeen American-News of 12 July 1936: A paper prepared by the great author in acceptance of the distinction was read into the

ceremony, as Mr. Garland was unable to attend as he is busy on his latest book, *Fortunate Exiles**, which deals with his life in Hollywood. Mr. Garland has approved a full biographic sketch of himself prepared by Miss Audrey Ellyson of the WPA Writers' Project. A booklet has been published under the direction of Mr. Luke Falk, who gave the official welcoming address. *Garland did not complete this book.

A few brief words about the folks of the Federal Writers' Project who played an important part in getting the memorial project going along with the committee-in-charge: Mesdames R. M. Van Winkle, Bert Warner and Felix Prunty.

LUTHER E. FALK—As Aberdeen supervisor for the Federal Writers' Project, he guided numerous publications. Mr. Falk was associated with the *Aberdeen American-News*. He was instrumental in the publication of "Territorial Pioneers of Brown County. He was born 17 February 1884 in Riverside Township, Brown County, South Dakota and died 27 February 1971 in Spokane, Washington.

AUDREY ELLYSON LIESHOUT: Graduated from Aberdeen Central High School, Class of 1933. She was living in Pierre at the time of the memorial dedication, and was unable to attend the event, although she had written the sanctioned biography of Hamlin Garland. The 2000 Aberdeen Central Alumni Book states: Retired Secretary/Newspaper reporter, Freelance Writer. Lives in Sunnydale, California.

MONTANA LISLE REESE: Edited South Dakota: A Guide to the State. Authored numerous articles and books. He was the "prime mover" of republishing the dedication edition of the Hamlin Garland Memorial in the form of the Second Edition; The 1939, 33-page edition is a rare collectible today. He is presently writing a book noting his ninety years of existence. He now lives in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. He is undoubtedly the only reporter-author alive today who interviewed Hamlin Garland when that author lived in Hollywood, California.



House lived in by the Richard Garlands and intermittently by Hamlin Garland, 1881-1884. It was here where he gained inspiration for his writing. The Hassenpflug family lived in the Garland homestead circa 1915-1918. This farm house was later destroyed by fire.

F O R W A R D
BY
Hamlin Garland

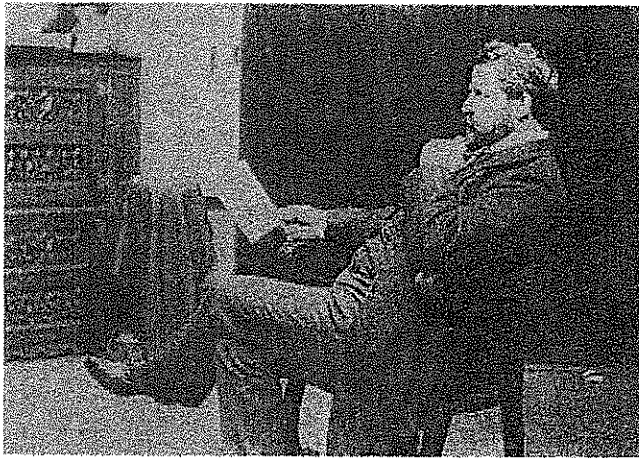
I HOPE I desert some part of the honor implied by the writing and the publication of this sketch. It is the most authentic brief account of my career yet made. Leaving out all its complimentary references, I can commend it to anyone who wishes to know—in outline—what I have busied myself about during more than sixty years. Its dates are correct, its citations are exact and well chosen.

As a man of seventy-eight, I feel the need of putting my house in order for my last journey, and I am genuinely grateful for this restrained yet sympathetic appraisal of my work as an author. I have no illusions concerning my achievements. Measured by those of my friends—especially those mentioned in this article—I make a poor showing. I realize all of my shortcomings and some of my mistakes but I leave others to make mention of them. To those of my readers who are young enough to outlive me, I say, "Report me fairly—when you think of me." With all their faults, I am content to have my books serve as witness of my good talent.

[Hamlin Garland wrote this forward for the second edition of Hamlin Garland Memorial which was published in 1939. We are using it for the Third Edition, 2003.]



HAMLIN GARLAND
Picture taken 1894
By Bessie Potter
[From Doheny Memorial Library
University of Southern California
Los Angeles]



Picture below from The Newsletter of the
Hamlin Garland Society



HAMLIN GARLAND

A Biographical Sketch

HAMLIN GARLAND was born in the little town of West Salem, Wisconsin, September [14] 1860. His earliest recollections, however, are of the Garland farm in Green's Coulee near Onalaska, Wisconsin, where he lived until he was eight years old. Richard [Hayes] Garland, his father, spent two years with the Union Army during the Civil War, [Company D, 14th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry regiment], and Isabel McClintock Garland, his mother, remained on the farm with her three small children, Harriet, Hamlin and Franklin.

In the spring of 1869 the Garlands moved to a heavily-wooded farm in Winneshek County, Iowa. The next year they moved again, this time to Mitchell County where the elder Garland had purchased a quarter-section of wild hay land five miles from Osage. To the west lay unplowed prairies.

By the time Hamlin was twelve he was doing a man's work on the farm, and he was pleased when, in 1876, his father became a wheat buyer for the Grange and moved the family into Osage. Hamlin entered Cedar Valley Seminary in Osage and began adapting himself to town life. The next year, however, the Garland's returned to the farm, but Hamlin continued to attend the seminary during winter terms. He took a teaching course and did outstanding work in oratory. In 1881 he completed the four-year course, and although he had an opportunity to enter a law office, he chose to travel and teach.

Farmers of Mitchell County suffered a series of crop failures, and the talk was of a new land of promise—"Dakota." Richard Garland, his eyes ever westward, set out to explore it in 1881. Upon his return he announced that he had taken a homestead near Ordway, Brown County, Dakota Territory, and that they would move in September.

Hamlin Garland, now twenty-one, did not accompany his parents to their new home. Instead, he set out in search of a teaching position. There were no vacancies, however, so in October he, too, started for Dakota. He purchased a ticket to Aberdeen over the Milwaukee Railroad which only four months before had run its first train over the track. On his way he passed through Milbank (in 1938 a town of 2,550), and in relating this experience in *A Son of the Middle Border*, he said: "I found a hamlet six months old, and the flock of shining yellow pine shanties strewn upon the sod gave me an illogical delight, but then I was twenty-one—and it was sunset in the Land of the Dakotas! All around me that night the talk was all of land, land! Nearly every man I met was bound for the 'Jim River Valley,' and each voice was aquiver with hope, each eye alight with anticipation of certain success."

In the same volume he told of his arrival in Aberdeen (in 1938 a city of 16,725): "Aberdeen was at the end of the line, and when we came into it that night it seemed a

near neighbor to Sitting Bull and the bison. And so indeed it was, for a buffalo bull had been hunted across its site less than a year before."

Hamlin Garland walked twelve miles from Aberdeen to his father's homestead, two miles northwest of Ordway. Of the latter he said: "The village itself was hardly more than a summer camp, and yet its hearty, boastful citizens talked almost deliriously of 'corner lots' and 'boulevards' and their chantings were timed to the sound of hammers. The spirit of the builder seized me and so with my return ticket in my pockets, I joined the carpenters at work on my father's claim some two miles from the village with the intent to earn money for further exploration."

He remained at the homestead two weeks, and then continued his search for a teaching position in Minnesota. December found him with relatives in Onalaska. In 1882 he worked as a carpenter in Rockford, Illinois, and Springfield, Massachusetts. In the fall he secured a teaching position in a rural school near Morris, Illinois.

In the early spring of 1883 Hamlin Garland again was on his way to Dakota to rejoin his father and brother at Ordway. The rush for homesteads is now centered in Edmunds and McPherson Counties, lying west of Brown County. As he recalled in *A Son of the Middle Border*, "The street swarmed with boomers. Hour by hour as the sun sunk, prospectors returned to the hotel room from their trips tired but jubilant...." Richard Garland had already staked a pre-emption claim thirty miles west of Ordway and built a rough shed which served as a branch grocery store. Hamlin caught the spirit of the homesteaders and turned westward afoot. He located a claim six miles beyond his father's—in McPherson County. While building his cabin he worked in his father's store.

The summer was hot and dry and "The tiny cabins were like ovens at midday." The winter of 1883-84, as recalled by pioneers, was especially severe. Four blizzards swept over the treeless plain. In *A Son of the Middle Border* Garland described a night during a snowstorm: "The frail shanty, cowering close, quivering in the wind like a frightened hare. The powdery snow appeared to drive directly through the solid boards, and each hour the mercury slowly sank... This may be taken as a turning point in my career, for this experience permanently chilled my enthusiasm for pioneering the plain." From his experiences he drew much of his material for subsequent stories. In *The Moccasin Ranch*, a novel, he described the departure of a homesteading family from Boomtown, his literary name for Ordway, with: "The town lay behind them on the level, treeless plain like a handful of block pitched upon a russet robe. Its houses were mainly shanties of pine, one-story in height while here and there actual tents gleamed in the half-light with infinite suggestion of America's restless pioneers... There was a poignant charm in the air—a smell of freshly uncovered sod, a width and splendor in the view which exalted the movers beyond words... One of the teams drew a load of material for a house, together with a few household utensils. The second wagon was piled high with boxes and barrels of groceries and hardware." The author pictured the characters, prototypes of whom he probably knew, as former storekeepers, farmers, and school teachers who yielded to the lure of free land. His characters' dreams of prosperity and

independence were stifled, as well as his own. When "The land of the straddle-bug had become a menacing desert, hard as iron, pitiless as ice. In this unsheltered land, where coal was high and doctors far away. Winter was a dreaded enemy... The depopulation of the newly claimed land had begun." It was his own experience as a homesteader. The incident in *Old Pap's Flaxen*, of the two bachelors who cared for a baby girl whose parents froze to death in a blizzard, was suggested by actual happenings in the community.

In October 1884 Hamlin Garland, having proved his claim, mortgaged it for two hundred dollars and set out for Boston. Intent on preparing himself for teaching literature, he found his funds would not cover a college course. The Boston Public Library, however, was free; there he studied daily during the winter. In the spring of 1885 he secured a position as instructor in the Boston School of Oratory. That fall the *Transcript* printed his review of a book by William Dean Howells, and the next year *Harper's Weekly* published *Lost in a Norther* which brought him twenty-five dollars, his first literary wage. The poem was based on his experiences while riding horseback from his father's homestead to his own during a Dakota blizzard in 1883. A stanza follows:

"My limbs were numb, I seemed to ride
Upon some viewless rushing tide—
My hands hung helpless at my side.
The multitudinous trampling snows
With solemn, ceaseless myriad din
Swept round and over me; far and wide,
A roaring silence shut the senses in!"

While in Boston, Hamlin Garland began lecturing on land reform. In the summer of 1887, when he returned to Dakota Territory after a three-year absence, his impressions induced a mood of bitterness against the country in which he saw his mother failing in health. He became, as he himself says, a militant reformer.

During the weeks he worked as a harvest hand on his father's Ordway farm in order to purchase a return ticket to Boston, he became aware, according to *A Son of the Middle Border*, that "Every detail of the daily life of the farm now assumed literary significance in my mind. The quick callousing of my hands, the swelling of my muscles, the sweating of my scalp, all the unpleasant results of physical pain I noted down... Labor when so prolonged and severe as at this time my toil had to be, is warfare... I studied the glory of the sky and the splendor of the wheat with a deepening sense of the generosity of nature and the monstrous injustice of social creeds. In the few moments of leisure which came to me as I lay in the shade of the grain-rick, I penciled rough outlines of poems."

One of Garland's best known poems, *The Color in the Wheat*, was written while he was watching the ripening grain from the doorstep of his father's house.

“ . . . the wind sleeps—
Then running in drizzling links and loops
A marvel of shadow and shine,
A glory of olive and amber and wine
Runs the color in the wheat.”

His first short story was suggested by his mother during his visit. She related an incident of an old woman who made a trip back to New York after having spent thirty years in the West. He wrote the sketch roughly one Sunday at his father's homestead, then returned to Boston where he finished *Mrs. Ripley's Trip*. He sold it to *Harper's Weekly* for seventy-five dollars, half of which he sent to his mother. The story was the beginning of *Main-Travelled Roads*, although the book was not published until 1891.

Following his return to Boston, Hamlin Garland made the acquaintances of William Dean Howells, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Walt Whitman, Edwin Booth, and other leaders in art and literature. He lived in an attic room where he wrote more short stories, and a play, *Under the Wheel*, which dealt with land monopoly.

Hamlin Garland made his fourth visit to Ordway in July, 1889. His description of Dakota and of the visit in a *A Son of the Middle Border* is as follows: “Another dry year was upon the land and the settlers were deeply disheartened. The holiday spirit of eight years before had entirely vanished. In its place was a sullen rebellion against government and against God. The stress of misfortune had not only destroyed hope, it had brought out the evil side of many men... Two of my father's neighbors had gone insane over failure of their crops. Several had slipped away ‘between two days’ to escape their debts... Graveyards, jails, asylums, all the accompaniments of civilization were now quite firmly established. On the west lay the lands of the Sioux and beyond them the still more arid foot hills. The westward movement of the Middle Border for a time seemed at an end... It was nearly sunset as we approached the farm, and a gorgeous sky was over-arching it, but the bare little house in which my people lived seemed a million miles distant from Boston. The trees which my father had planted, the flowers which my mother had so faithfully watered, had withered in the heat. The lawn was burned brown. No green thing was in sight, and no shade offered save that made by the little cabin. On every side stretched scanty yellowing fields of grain, and from every worn road, dust rose like smoke from crevices, giving upon deep-hidden subterranean fires.”

During his visit to Ordway his mother suffered a stroke of paralysis which he attributed to overwork and “the dreadful heat of the summer.” His mood became more embittered as he left his mother and sister on the hot, dusty plains and returned to Boston to write of the Middle West.

When *Main-Travelled Roads* appeared in 1891, there was an instant attack leveled against the book in the Middle West because it pictured the ugliness, endless drudgery, and loneliness of life on the farm. Reviewers in the East, however, praised Garland for his courage to give unvarnished accounts of farm and small town life. Especially friendly was William Dean Howells who said in *Harper's Magazine*: “The stories are full of

those gaunt, grim, sordid, pathetic, ferocious figures, whom our satirists find so easy to caricature as Hayseeds, and whose blind groping for fairer conditions is so grotesque to the newspapers and so menacing to the politicians. They feel that something is wrong, and they know that the wrong is not theirs. The type caught in Mr. Garland's book is not pretty; it is ugly and often ridiculous; but it is heart-breaking in its rude despair."

Main-Travelled Roads, for the most part, has Iowa and Wisconsin settings, but there are few references to Ordway, Aberdeen, and the newly opened homestead country of Dakota. In Boomtown, or Ordway, one of the characters, a homesteader, inquires if the Judge is "still lyin' " and "Major Mullins still swearin' to it?" Another character, an editor, replies that "railroad schemes are thicker'n prairie chickens." While no further explanation is given in the story, in real life there was a Major William Moore and a Judge James Barnes, who with L. G. "Ordway" Johnson comprised the trio of promoters seeking to make Ordway the capital of Dakota Territory. After thousands of dollars had been spent in laying out the proposed capital city, Bismarck was selected instead.

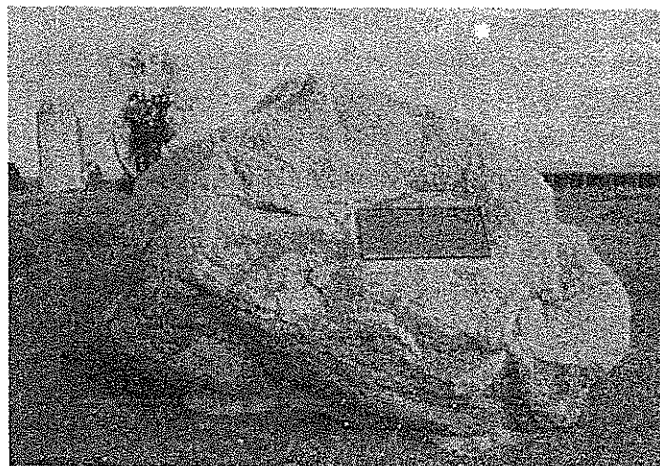
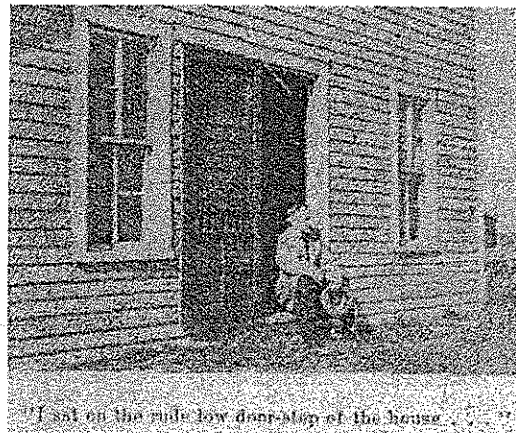
A young homesteader in *Main-Travelled Roads* returns to Wisconsin in search of a bride, and offers her this proposal: "I've got a good claim out near Boomtown—a rattlin' good claim; a shanty on it fourteen by sixteen—no tarred paper about it, and a sullen to keep butter in, and a hundred acres o' wheat just about ready to turn now. I need a wife." The scene of an incident when "a drug clerk chased a cut-up with a squirt pump across the street" was the old Lacey Drug Store in Aberdeen, then operated by John Firey, which was torn down in 1937 and replaced by a brick structure. [This drug store, located at 105 South Main Street, closed decades ago and is now occupied by a floral shop.] There was also a general store, now forgotten, where a farm woman's child "spent half an hour helping amuse himself around the nail-kegs." Incidents such as these were typical of the new frontier, and elderly people living in the Ordway vicinity in 1938 recalled how they themselves might have been the prototypes of Garland's characters.

In 1891 the People's or Populist, Party was active in the Middle West, and *The Arena* sent Garland on a tour to investigate labor and farm conditions. In Omaha he met [with] his father who was a convention delegate from Brown County, and the son gathered considerable information for his articles from his father. Instead of returning to the Boston School of Oratory in the fall, Hamlin Garland campaigned for the Populist Party, making a one-night stop in Aberdeen where he spoke at the old Opera House.

He received inspiration and material for more stories during his trip through the Middle West. Again he returned to Boston where he wrote *A Spoil of Office* which was based on the unrest in the agricultural regions.

While attending a convention in St. Louis in February 1892, he received a plaintive letter from his mother and left immediately for Columbia, South Dakota, where his parents were living. Columbia had been the county seat of Brown County, and a lively town until 1890 when Aberdeen won the county seat election. Hamlin Garland said in *A Son of the Middle Border* that in 1892 "The Village of Ordway had been moved away, nothing remained but the grain elevator. [This elevator stood until April 2002,

*The Richard Garland Homestead, Circa 1915
2 ½ miles northwest of Ordway
[This was Garland's last visit to the homestead.]*



when it was razed and replaced by a modern manufactured home.] Many of our old neighbors had gone 'to the irrigated country' and more were planning to go as soon as they could sell their farms. Columbia was also in desolate decline. Its hotel stood empty, its windows broken, its doors sagging."

It was Hamlin Garland's last visit to Ordway for twenty-three years, but during that time he frequently drew local color for his stories from his homestead country.

In 1893 he bought a cottage and four acres at West Salem, Wisconsin, and moved his parents there. His father, however, divided his time between South Dakota and Wisconsin. Richard Garland, after a winter in West Salem, would be impatient to leave for Ordway with the first sign of spring. In *A Daughter of the Middle Border*, Hamlin quoted his father as saying: "I turn this onion patch over to you. It's no place for me. In two days I'll be broadcasting wheat on a thousand-acre farm... These fellows back here are all stuck in the mud. They've got to wake up to the reform movements. I'll be glad to get back to Dakota where people are alive."

Hamlin Garland established his headquarters in Chicago, making many friends in literary and artistic circles, among them was a young sculptor, Lorado Taft. During the summers of 1894, 1895 and 1896, Garland visited Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona where he gathered material for mountain and Indian stories. In 1895 *Rose of Dutcher's Coolly*, a novel, was published. The same year he began work on a biography of General U. S. Grant for *McClure's Magazine*.

In 1897 Hamlin Garland decided to make a study of the Sioux Indians on the Standing Rock Reservation in North and South Dakota. With his brother Franklin, who was on a vacation, the tour began in Bismarck, North Dakota, the first of July. They traveled by horse and buggy to Fort Yates where thousands of Indians were living in canvas tepees. Sitting bull and Gall, famous Indian chiefs, were dead, but Garland met and interviewed Rain-in-the-Face. Several weeks were spent going over agency records and talking, through an interpreter, with the Indians. From standing rock the Garlands traveled to the site of the Custer battlefield in Montana. Hamlin Garland visited the Crow Agency and met many Cheyenne Indians on his way to Lame Deer, Montana, where he began a long friendship with Major George Stauch. Garland developed a lasting admiration for Sitting Bull, although it was years later that *The Book of the American Indian*, including a sixty-thousand-word history of Sitting Bull was published. [*The Silent Eaters*, Chapters I through XIV.] The experiences and impressions gained on this trip were also used when he subsequently wrote *The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop*.

The winter of 1897 he worked in Washington, D. C., on the Grant history, during which time he became acquainted with Theodore Roosevelt, John LaFarge, and Henry Adams. When *Ulysses S. Grant: His Life and Character* was finished, Garland joined the rush for the Klondike in Alaska. The result of his experiences was *The Trail of the Gold Seekers*, a book of prose and verse.

Hamlin Garland visited England in 1899 where he formed friendships with George Bernard Shaw, James M. Barrie, A. Conan Doyle, Thomas Hardy and Israel Zangwill. In 1938 he was still keeping up a voluminous correspondence with Shaw.

When he returned to the United States he married Zulime Taft, sister of his friend, Lorado, on November 18, 1899.

Two more visits to the Rocky Mountain region in 1900 and 1901 resulted in *The Eagle's Heart*, *Her Mountain Lover*, *Hesper*, *Mart Haney's Mate*, and *Cavanagh, Forest Ranger*.

A daughter, Mary Isabel, was born at the Wisconsin homestead in 1903 and a second daughter, Constance, was born in Chicago in 1907. During this period he organized the cliff Dweller club in Chicago and became vice-president of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. He wrote a novel, *The Tyranny of the Dark*, and a series of articles in *Everybody's Magazine* in 1908. The articles were later brought out in book form as *The Shadow World*.

In the fall of 1912, Hamlin Garland began writing *A Son of the Middle Border*.

His last visit to Aberdeen was early in the spring of 1915 when he spoke before a large audience at Northern State Teachers' College [presently NSU]. [In reality, the visit was 22 February 1915.] The next day he revisited the old Ordway homestead which he helped build, and an old acquaintance, Charles Kimball, took a picture of him seated on the doorstep. Of his visit, he relates in *Back-Trailers from the Middle Border*: "The country was at its best, green and pleasant, a level endless land, and as we motored over the road I had walked in the autumn of 1881, I found the plain almost unchanged. It was like a velvet-green sea. I sat on the rude doorstep of the house where the opening lines of *Color in the Wheat* were written, and one of my friends photographed me there. It was well that he did so, for in less than a year the cabin burned down. A small snap-shot is the only record I have of the home where my mother lived for so many years and which my little sister (Jessie) died. Western landmarks are impermanent as fallen leaves. Nothing endures but the sky and the silent waves of the plain.

"It was a sad revisitation for me. Everyone I met was gray and timeworn, and our talk was entirely of the past. No one spoke confidently of the future. All were enduring with fortitude, the monotony of sun and wind and barren sod."

Garland's reaction to the burning of his father's Ordway homestead cabin is also told in *Back-Trailers from the Middle Border*.

"It seems an immeasurable distance from me now and yet it is so near that the thought of its passing brings an illogical feeling of loss. It meant so much to me at that time; I hated it, and yet, as it was the only shelter my mother had, I dared not say so. From it my sister was married and in it she died. Flimsy as a pine box, it rested on the ridge, an ugly fungus of the plain. It floated for a time like a chip on the edge of a silent

land-swell and then—it sank, as the village of Ordway had sunk. Nothing on that inexorable plain is built to last. Dozens of other towns as vociferous as ours have found the same grave. One can hardly find on the sward the spot which they once polluted. This is the genius of our Middle West. Confident, ready, boastful, it is for a time only. It is tragic or it is humorous (according to the observer) when a people so hopeful and so vigorous dies out upon a plain as a river loses itself in the sand. Two thousand miles and several centuries of time lie between me in my New York study and the September morning when I first stepped out of the car upon that plain and saw the gulls harvesting the insects in the frosty grass. It was another age, another world, jocund with ignorance and youth. We expected wealth. We visioned something new and noble. It is no longer possible for anyone to be as confident, as joyously, foolishly confident, as we were—and this is the end! My only tie now is the lonely little grave in which lies the dust of my sister Jessie.”

A Son of the Middle Border was published serially in 1916, and the next year, after five years of writing and rewriting, Hamlin Garland saw it come out in book form. Reviews were favorable, sales were good, and membership in the American Academy of Arts and Letters was offered him. In 1921 he brought out *A Daughter of the Middle Border*, but it made little stir among reviewers and the sales were poor. He was disappointed in the lack of interest in his Middle Border series which he had hoped to enlarge, when he received word that *A Daughter of the Middle Border* had been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for the best biography of 1921.

The next year he took his family to England, and they were entertained by Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad, John Galsworthy, John Sargent, George Bernard Shaw, and James Barrie.

The popularity of Garland's books in England brought a general revival of interest in the United States, and he was able to purchase a summer home in the Catskill Mountains. *The Trail-Makers of the Middle Border* came out in 1926 and was followed in 1927, by *Back-Trailers from the Middle Border*.

In 1928 Hamlin Garland, who had kept a diary and file of his correspondence since his visit to Ordway in 1887, began a new series of literary comment based upon his dated records of personal contacts with most of the prominent authors, dramatists, and artists over a fifty-year period. The first of the volumes, presenting portrayals and contemporary critical opinion, was *Roadside Meetings*, a literary and cultural history of America from 1880 to 1900. It was published in 1930, and in 1931 he brought out the second volume of his literary logbook, *Companions on the Trail*.

Mr. and Mrs. Garland moved from their New York City apartment to an estate in McLaughlin Park, Los Angeles, in 1932. *My Friendly Contemporaries*, treating the period from 1915 to 1922 in his literary cycle, appeared in 1932, and two years later, *Afternoon Neighbors*, the fourth and concluding volume of his literary log, was published.

Honorary degrees from the University of Wisconsin, Beloit College, and the University of Southern California were bestowed upon him, and he was awarded the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Society gold medal in recognition of his "Middle Border" and literary log series.

In 1936 the community in which Hamlin Garland began his literary career invited him to return once again. The Ordway Community Club, which had been helping the Federal Writers' Project to identify local settings, gradually became impressed with Mr. Garland's literary importance. This group made arrangements for a memorial to mark the site of the Garland homestead, and a biographical sketch, *Hamlin Garland Memorial*, was prepared by the Federal Writers' Project.

A twelve-ton boulder was moved to the site of the Garland homestead, and on July 12 [1936] a dedicatory program was held. Copies of the *Hamlin Garland Memorial*, published in mimeographed form by the South Dakota Writers' League, were distributed, after which Dr. A. H. Seymour of Aberdeen [Northern State Teachers' College] spoke of the author's work. Mrs. C. E. Locker, long-time friend of Hamlin Garland's mother, unveiled the memorial. Hamlin Garland was unable to attend the program.

Hamlin Garland, hale, hearty and seventy-eight, was writing another volume in 1938 to be called *Fortunate Exiles*. It will contain a description of his life in California, literary figures who visit him, and observations made during fifty thousand miles of pleasure tours in Southern California.

His home, across the road from that of Cecil B. DeMille, motion picture producer, is of rambling Spanish style, secluded in trees. His desk in the windowed, book-lined study faces the observatory on Mount Wilson, and a patio, where he serves coffee afternoons to visitors, overlooks a landscaped garden in a grove of olive trees. He has many friends, lectures occasionally at the University of Southern California, and is the subject of a motion picture entitled *Hamlin Garland, Dean of American Letters*.

The Hamlin Garland of 1938 has the same husky physique and flowing hair that he had when he help build a Dakota homestead cabin in 1881; but while he attacked farm conditions and defended the Populist Party in his early years, he now condemns immorality in novels and defends Southern California weather.

He said in 1938 that he intends to come again to South Dakota, to see the changes that have taken place, the prosperous farms in the area where he and his father toiled fruitlessly, the modern towns with shaded streets and parks, and the people who acclaim and honor him after fifty-odd years.

[This biographical sketch was written by Audrey Ellyson Lieshout, mentioned previously, with the blessing of Hamlin Garland. The Third Edition of the sketch has been reproduced here and errors or omissions are noted by brackets. In the original 1936 mimeographed version, Mr. Luther Falk wrote an appropriate forward to compliment Mr. Garland's acknowledgment.]

EPILOGUE

HAMLIN GARLAND died on 5 March 1940 and his ashes are buried in the family plot with his wife and pioneer parents at the West Salem (Wisconsin) Cemetery. Just prior to his passing, he joined the efforts of South Dakota author O. W. Coursey and others to establish the Friends of the Middle Border Museum in Mitchell, South Dakota.

The Second Edition of *HAMLIN GARLAND MEMORIAL* was compiled by the efforts of the Federal Writers' Project in South Dakota. Through the leadership and efforts of Montana Lisle Reese, State Director, the 33-page booklet was re-published. He comments: "In the preparation of the second edition of the *Hamlin Garland Memorial* we are again grateful to Hamlin Garland, who criticized the manuscript, to Lawrence K. Fox, State Librarian, and to Luther Falk, commentator for radio station KABR, for their cooperation in helping to recall some of the local incidents, characters, and settings that appear in Hamlin Garland's books." Mr. Reese, in a letter dated 18 September 2000, states: "...Too bad there aren't more copies available of that (2nd) edition. I had promised Mr. Garland that he would be pleased with the new edition. The Writers' League (me) Workshop bought 24-lb. Paper and used a straight edge to make each page look deckle-edged. All type was hand set and each page printed on a hand-fed job press. The imitation leather cover was a special order."

As of this writing, Mr. Reese, living in Florida, is still writing and recently completed a theme about his ninety years of living; Audrey Ellyson Van Lieshout, author of the Garland biographical sketch, enjoys travel and relaxation in Sunnyvale, California. She wrote in a October, 1999 letter: "I hope the Hamlin Garland Society

flourishes—and that school children in South Dakota are still aware of his importance as a chronicler of life on the prairie.” (She graduated from Aberdeen Central High School in 1933.)

It should be noted that Audrey Van Lieshout’s biographical sketch was also published in the Dakota Territory Centennial Commission limited edition book *Hamlin Garland Dakota Homesteader* © 1961.

As mentioned, the Hamlin Garland Society was created on 10 December 1996 by William E. “Gene” Aisenbrey and Erling “Punch” Podoll, for the purpose of preserving the Hamlin Garland Memorial near the Ordway town-site and the re-establish interest in Garland’s writings. On the afternoon of Monday, 14 September 1998, the Society held a re-dedication ceremony of the Hamlin Garland Memorial using the 12 July 1936 dedication program as a format. Approximately 100 adults and school children were in attendance. Since that event, the Garland Society celebrates Garland’s birthday anniversary. The Society also has a monthly gathering to discuss Garland’s works—his novels, biographies and poetry at the Dacotah Prairie Museum in Aberdeen. The public is invited to attend.

A detailed biography titled *Hamlin Garland A Biography* by Jean Holloway is available at the Alexander Mitchell Library in Aberdeen, as well as other books by and about Hamlin Garland, a son of the Middle Border.

PHOTO CREDITS: Front Cover: Frances “Peg” Lamont; Inside Front Cover: Newsletter, Friends of the Middle Border Museum, Mitchell, SD; Frances “Peg” Lamont; Page 2: Dacotah Prairie Museum archives, Aberdeen, SD; Page 3: “Dakota Literature” by O. W. Coursey Page 4: Doheny Memorial Library, Information Services Division, University of Southern California, Los Angeles; Page 10: Second Edition, *Hamlin Garland Memorial*; Doheny Library, John Ahouse, Archivist. We wish to acknowledge Mrs. Harriet Dowdell Bantz of Aberdeen, SD, for furnishing us a copy of the Second Edition, *Hamlin Garland Memorial*.

Hamlin Garland Books

<u>Title</u>	<u>Date of Publication</u>
Under the Wheel	1890
Main-Travelled Roads	1891
Jason Edwards	1892
A Member of the Third House	1892
A Little Norsk	1892
A Spoil of Office	1892
Prairie Folks	1893
Prairie Songs	1893
Crumbling Idols	1894
Rose of Dutcher's Coolly	1895
Wayside Courtships	1897
The Spirit of Sweetwater	1898
Ulysses S. Grant: His Life and Character	1898
Boy Life on the Prairie	1899
The Trail of the Gold Seekers	1899
The Eagle's Heart	1900
Her Mountain Lover	1901
The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop	1902
Hesper	1903
The Light of the Star	1904
The Tyranny of the Dark	1905
Witch's Gold	1906
The Long Trail	1907
Money Magic	1907
The Shadow World	1908
The Moccasin Ranch	1909
Cavanagh, Forest Ranger	1910
Other Main-Travelled Roads	1910
Victor Ollnee's Discipline	1911
The Forester's Daughter	1914
They of the High Trails	1916
A Son of the Middle Border	1917
A Daughter of the Middle Border	1921
A Pioneer Mother	1922
A Book of the American Indian	1923
Trail-Makers of the Middle Border	1926
The Westward March of American Settlement	1927
Prairie Song and Western Story	1928
Back-Trailers of the Middle Border	1928
Roadside Meetings	1930
Companions of the Trail	1931
My Friendly Contemporaries	1932
Afternoon Neighbors	1934
Iowa, O Iowa	1935
Joys of the Trail	1935
Forty Years of Psychic Research	1936
The Mystery of the Buried Crosses	1939
(A total of 47 books are listed above.)	

This project received Federal financial assistance from the National Park Service. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, the U. S. Department of Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap in its federally assisted program. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire more information please write to the office for Equal Opportunity, U. S. Department of the Interior. Readers who may wish to contact the Landmarks Commission about this booklet may correspond to that Commission at the Municipal Building, 123 S. Lincoln St., Aberdeen, SD 57401. William E. "Gene" Aisenbrey of the Aberdeen/Brown County Landmarks Commission takes full responsibility for the narrative, interpretation and format of this booklet along with any inaccuracies or omissions that might surface in a work of this magnitude, and can be contacted at P. O. Box 405, Aberdeen, SD 57402-0405.

HAMLIN GARLAND'S BROWN COUNTY

