

WILLIAM WYLIE GALT

1854 - 1945

Community Builder

INDIVIDUALS HAVE CONTRIBUTED to the development of Montana in many ways. William Wylie Galt (1854-1945), for example, led the civic development of Stanford, in central Montana. Further, he and his wife, Emaretta Robinson, bestowed on their adopted state a number of children and grandchildren as business and political leaders.

WILLIAM GALT WAS BORN IN WISCONSIN on May 8, 1854, to Scottish immigrants. Just after the Civil War, his family moved to Freeborn County, Minnesota, where they operated a successful farm. William was educated in local schools and quickly aligned himself with the fledgling Republican Party. He became a leader of public affairs in southern Minnesota and served three terms in the state legislature (1898-1904), where he specialized in creating progressive insurance laws.

IN 1910, AT THE AGE OF 56, Galt immigrated to Montana, settling at the town of Stanford, in the lush Judith Basin. Five of the couple's ten children subsequently followed - establishing local ranches, a town subdivision, a farm-implement concern, and a large hardware company. The Galts helped to found the local Presbyterian Church and consistently supported public-school development. William served as one of Stanford's first mayors (1912-1916). He then worked tirelessly for the creation of Judith Basin County (1920), with Stanford as the county seat. Though always conservative in financial affairs, Galt remained progressive in civic matters.

WILLIAM GALT'S DESCENDANTS have followed his civic, political, and commercial leadership in Montana. His grandson (namesake Captain William Wylie Galt) was killed in 1944, while leading a successful attack on Villa Crocetta, Italy, and posthumously received the Congressional Medal of Honor. Thus, by investing time and leadership in his community, and by raising an extended family with similar ethics, William Wylie Galt contributed significantly to Montana and to the nation.