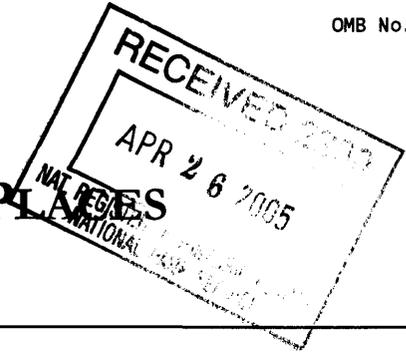


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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM



### 1. Name of Property

historic name: Abraham and Carrie Erb Residence

other name/site number:

### 2. Location

street & number: 110 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue

not for publication: na

vicinity: na

city/town: Laurel

state: Montana code: MT county: Yellowstone code: 111 zip code: 59044

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide X locally.

*Mark F. Saunderson / SHPO*  
Signature of certifying official/Title

*APRIL 25, 2005*  
Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency or bureau

(    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register    see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register    see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register    see continuation sheet
- removed from the National Register    see continuation sheet
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*John Deall*  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action 6/9/05

**5. Classification**

|   |          |  |                      |
|---|----------|--|----------------------|
| <b>Ownership of Property:</b>   | Private  | <b>Number of Resources within Property</b> |                      |
|   |          | Contributing                               | Noncontributing      |
| <b>Category of Property:</b>  | Building |  |                      |
|   |          | <u>3</u>                                   | <u>1</u> building(s) |
| <b>Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:</b> | na       | <u>0</u>                                   | <u>0</u> sites       |
|   |          | <u>0</u>                                   | <u>0</u> structures  |
|   |          | <u>0</u>                                   | <u>0</u> objects     |
| <b>Name of related multiple property listing:</b>                                   | na       | <u>3</u>                                   | <u>1</u> TOTAL       |

**6. Function or Use**

|                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Historic Functions:</b>    | <b>Current Functions:</b>     |
| DOMESTIC/single dwelling      | DOMESTIC/single dwelling      |
| DOMESTIC/secondary structures | DOMESTIC/secondary structures |

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:**

OTHER: Folk Queen Anne

**Materials:**

foundation: CONCRETE/cast block  
 walls: STEEL; WOOD/Clapboard; WOOD/shingle  
 roof: ASPHALT/shingle  
 other: WOOD(spindlework); BRICK; STUCCO; METAL (chimneys)

**Narrative Description**

The Abraham and Carrie Erb Residence is located in a residential neighborhood near downtown Laurel, Montana, just a few blocks from the railroad tracks and Main Street. The streets of Laurel are laid out in a north-south, east-west grid, except for the eastern blocks of Main Street and Railroad Avenues, which follow the southwest to northeast orientation of the tracks. Constructed within the original townsite in 1905, the house predates the railroad by a year. The house is reported to be one of the first in the community, and its construction date affirms this claim. The property includes two historic outbuildings. The carriage house/garage dates to between 1920 and 1944, and the hired man's house was constructed in 1917. Both of these buildings contribute to the significance of the property. A carport, constructed in 1968, faces the alley and does not contribute to the significance of the property.

**Residence (one contributing building)**

The gable-front and wing, generally "L" shaped building is simple in plan, but displays the fanciful fretwork, multi-sloped roofline, and bay windows indicative of its Folk Queen Anne design. Wide, metal horizontal siding, installed in 1977, covers the exterior walls of the home. The original clapboard and decorative tongue and groove siding is present and intact under the modern siding. Asphalt shingles cover the roof, and stucco encases the interior brick chimney that protrudes from the south ridgeline. The main roof is an intersecting gable, and a saltbox roof covers the rear portion of the building. A shed roof covers the front porch, and the rear porch is hipped. All the rooflines display boxed overhanging eaves. The floorplan has remained unchanged since its original construction. Decorative metal cresting at the ridgelines and surrounding the bay window are no longer present. Windows throughout the building are original. All are one-over-one light, wood-frame, double-hung style, except the six-light casements that enclose the rear porch.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Areas of Significance: EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: 1905-1955

Significant Person(s): n/a

Significant Dates: 1905, 1907, 1916; 1917

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: Edgar B. Camp/Edgar B. Camp and Bros.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

Laurel is a railroad town. Founded and platted along the Northern Pacific (NP) route as a hub where the Northern Pacific, Great Northern, and Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroads would meet, Laurel was destined to be major transportation center in Montana. When the railroad arrived in 1906, there were very few buildings within the townsite. One of the first residences in the community was located just a few blocks north of the tracks at 110 Fourth Avenue. Constructed in 1905 by Edgar B. Camp, the house predated the railroad by only one year, and despite its relative proximity to downtown, the property surrounding the house was farmland. Laurel pioneers Abraham and Carrie Erb took up residence there in 1908. As one of the first residences in the community, the Abraham and Carrie Erb home is representative of the earliest local settlement. Through the first half of the twentieth century, the house and the Erb family witnessed the development of the community from its earliest incarnations as a fledging, optimistic railroad town through its growth into a petroleum-refining center. Through the years, the residence was home to the Erb family, whose own story is a representative of the settlers of Laurel, and the next generations that defined its identity. For these reasons, the Abraham and Carrie Erb Residence is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A.

**Settlement of Laurel, Montana**

For centuries, the area surrounding present-day Laurel was a place used by numerous people.<sup>3</sup> Among others, the Crow, Blackfeet and Assiniboiné Tribes all claimed the areas between the Yellowstone and Mussellshell Rivers as part of their traditional homeland. When non-Indians began to arrive in the areas, from French Trappers in the late eighteenth century through Lewis and Clark in 1806, and subsequent expeditions through the 1850s, the Upper Yellowstone Area served a natural passage route. Most of these visitors did not stay long. In the 1840s, Catholic Priest Pierre DeSmet described the Upper Yellowstone as: "The battleground where Crows, the Blackfeet, Sioux, Cheyennes, Assiniboins, Aricaras, and Minnetarees fight out their interminable quarrels, avenging and revenging without respite their mutual wrongs."<sup>4</sup> Whether this account is accurate, non-Indians did traverse Yellowstone country with trepidation. Indeed, the Crow, Cheyenne, Blackfeet and Assiniboiné tribes all used the area for its rich natural resources, and most of these nations claimed the territory. The area's fate was decided by 1859, however, when the Raynold's Expedition declared that the Yellowstone Valley "affords peculiar facilities for a railroad."<sup>5</sup> By the turn of the twentieth century, non-Indians had established a firm foothold in the region, having obtained title to the corridor via a series of treaties with the tribes and the conclusion of the Great Sioux War.

<sup>3</sup> The origin of the name "Laurel" is a matter of some controversy. Roberta Carkeek Cheney, in her *Names on the Face of Montana: The Story of Montana's Place Names*, (Missoula, MT: Mountain Press, 1984 rev.), writes: "No one knows for sure the origin of the name. Mrs. Gehrett, who came to Laurel in 1911, thinks it was named by a railroad man for a member of his family. Mrs. Moran heard that a railroad man named it for his hometown of Laurel, Mississippi; Elsie Johnson, who has written a book about Laurel, says it was originally named Carlton, and that no one can explain the change. ... Still another explanation is that is named after the laurel plant, however, no shrub even remotely resembling the species grows here." (p. 162).

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Pierre De Smet as quoted in Don Spritzer's *Roadside History of Montana*, (Missoula: Mountain Press, 1999), p. 334.

<sup>5</sup> Spritzer, p. 335.



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The house faces east onto Fourth Avenue, its side gable bay to the south and the front gable portion to the north. A raised, shed-roofed, open porch fills the space within the ell. Delicate turned posts and decorative brackets, original to the building, support the porch roof. Access to the porch is gained via three steps set at an angle at the inside corner of the ell. Above, a gabled pediment invites visitors to the porch and front door. Between the turned posts and the pediment is a suspended frieze of spindlework. Like the rest of the house, the porch rests on the original cast concrete block foundation.

The south side of the east (front elevation) contains two evenly-spaced single windows. An original wood entry door, with a modern metal storm, is set at a forty-five degree angle to the building at the inside corner of the ell. A handsome lattice highlights the transom window above the door. Simulated masonry siding has been applied on either side of the entry.<sup>1</sup> Beneath the front gable of the east elevation, there is a large bay window. A hipped mansard roofline covers the bay, which contains four window openings: one on each side and a pair at the front.

The south (side) elevation of the house is divided into three zones: one to the west side, beneath the slope of the saltbox roofline; one at the center, beneath the gable end; and one to the east that forms the south wall of the protruding front gable section of the façade, beneath the porch roof and just east of the main entry door. The west and east bays each contain a single window. The central bay features a pair of windows centered beneath the gable end. The north (side) elevation's fenestration is limited to a single window at the west side and a small sized window at the center.

The west (rear) elevation features an original enclosed porch extension off center to the south. This hip-roofed porch rests on a concrete block foundation. Ribbons of three casements fill its north and south elevations, and a pair is situated at the north corner of the west elevation. Just south of that casement pair is the rear entry door. Accessed by a two-step concrete stoop, the door is wood and protected by a modern metal storm.

### Interior:

The interior of the Abraham and Carrie Erb Residence is well preserved. The floorplan, woodwork, and even some light fixtures, remain intact. Entering the home through the main door, one steps into the small rectangular foyer. A wood-trimmed opening, with decorative bracketing at the top corners, beckons to the living room to the right (south). A six-paneled door opens to the formal front parlor to the left at the northeast corner of the house (north). Also to the left, a paneled door leads to the bathroom just west of the parlor, and a den at the northwest corner of the house. At the west side of the foyer, a four-panel door leads to a bedroom. The living room is long and rectangular, and the kitchen and southwest bedroom are situated across its west side. The back porch extends from the rear (west) wall of the kitchen. All of the interior doors are solid wood, with multiple panels and vintage hardware. Door and window trims feature fluting and rosettes at the corners. Other interior features include hardwood floors beneath the carpeting, beadboard wainscoting in the kitchen and back porch, and several vintage light fixtures.

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<sup>1</sup> For an interesting discussion of simulated masonry, including Perma Stone and Formstone, see Ann Milkovich McKee, "Simulated Masonry," in *Twentieth Century Building Materials*, ed. By Thomas C. Jester, (McGraw-Hill for the National Park Service, 1995), pp. 175-177.

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### **Carriage House/Garage (one contributing building)**

A well-worn two-track driveway leads to the garage at the southeast corner of the house. This small, rectangular, wood frame building was constructed between 1920 and October 1944<sup>2</sup>, and displays the narrow clapboard siding also present beneath the steel siding of the residence. Asphalt shingles cover the front-gable roof, and a metal stovepipe protrudes from the north slope. The eaves reveal exposed rafter ends and the underside of the tongue and groove sheathing. No foundation is visible. The east (front) elevation faces the street, and features a pair of large, diagonally-braced tongue and groove doors. Both the south and north elevations contain no fenestration. There is a single, small, fixed, four-light window centered in the west elevation.

### **Hired Man's House (one contributing building)**

This small, rectangular bunkhouse dates to 1917, and was constructed for the farm hand Carrie Erb hired after her husband's death. This small building faces east into the back yard, and features a front-gable roofline and shed extension that slopes to the south. Asphalt shingles cover the roof, which also features exposed rafter ends and tongue and groove plank sheathing. The exterior walls are sided with wood shingles and corner boards. There is no visible foundation. A concrete pad serves as the stoop for the east entry door. This one-light, four-panel door is centered beneath the gable end and sheltered by wide overhanging eaves and a multi-light, wooden storm door. Additional fenestration is limited to a two-light sliding window centered on the south elevation.

### **Carport (one non contributing building)**

Constructed in 1968, this wood-frame carport faces the alley to the west of the property. The west elevation is open, and vertical posts define its three bays. Within the structure, the concrete pad foundation functions as the floor. The east, north, and south elevations are covered with steel siding, and feature no fenestration. The shed roof of the building slopes gently to the west and is covered with asphalt shingles.

### **Integrity:**

The Abraham and Carrie Erb Home's integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association are high, as the home still clearly reads as a Victorian cottage. The interior of the house adds to the significance and integrity of property. Its integrity has been impacted by the application of steel siding during the 1970s. Despite this, the design, form, and ornamentation of the house remain intact. Because the modern siding masks the original wood siding, its integrity of materials and workmanship are diminished, but the building's associations with the earliest development of Laurel are strong enough to transcend these weaknesses. In addition, the historic outbuildings add to the significance of the property. The garage and hired man's house retain a high degree of integrity and are closely associated with the history of the home. The non-contributing carport faces the alley and does not detract from the overall integrity of the property.

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<sup>2</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, *Map of Laurel, Montana*, 1920 and October 1944.

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The Northern Pacific arrived in nearby Billings in 1882, and continued west over the next several years. The community closest to what would become Laurel, Carlton, remained “an unimportant station... west of Billings.” That changed in the early 1900s, when James G. Hill determined that the land at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Clark’s Fork Rivers was ideal for major railroad facilities. By 1906, Hill controlled the three major railroads in the state: the Northern Pacific, The Great Northern, and the Chicago Burlington, and Quincy.<sup>6</sup> That year, he began to spend over one million dollars on major hub facilities in the new town of Laurel. The rail structures included machine shops, an ice-making plant, loading docks, a huge water tank, and a roundhouse with fifty-five stalls. The railyard would become one of the largest between St. Paul and Seattle. In 1909, the Great Northern connected to the Northern Pacific at Laurel, and five years later, the Burlington connected there from the south. In addition, the Northern Pacific’s spur line to Red Lodge, with its rich coal mines owned by the railroad, connected to the main line at Laurel. Agricultural and mining products were shipped through Laurel to regional markets.<sup>7</sup>

Laurel did not suffer the fate of many railroad boomtowns. Whereas other Montana communities were dependent on the railroads to bring settlers and ship the goods they produced – and therefore at the mercy of the natural and economic climate - Laurel was more resilient. It was the railroad itself that provided most of the work in town. Local farmers mostly produced sugar beets, a hearty crop less vulnerable to the drought and tough economic conditions witnessed by much of Montana after 1917. Carrie Erb described the nascent town: “Because of the railroad having made this town a freight center, and because of the new sugar manufacturing bringing people in for the beet raising, the town grew like a mushroom.”<sup>8</sup> Indeed, the settlers of Laurel did not arrive with the desire to get rich quick and get out. Instead, they were families of hard working settlers who chose to stay.

### **The Family Home at 110 Fourth Avenue**

In anticipation of the railroad’s expansion, the lots and blocks of Laurel’s original townsite were platted by order of railroad magnate James G. Hill in 1905. That year, Edgar B. Camp constructed one of the first residences in town. He and his wife, Ida, lived in the pretty Victorian cottage for just over two years. In 1908, Abraham Erb purchased the house and surrounding land. He and his young wife, Carrie arrived in Laurel in 1908, and with their family, would occupy the house for more than eighty years.

Abraham Shetter Erb was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania on June 1, 1863. His Mennonite family had settled there from Germany more the one hundred and fifty years before. Abraham married Sarah Elizabeth Donner, a woman two years his senior, and they made Bush, then Loveland, Colorado their home. The venturesome couple had three children, Roman, Esther, and Enos. Tragically, Sarah died on October 24, 1900. Abraham worked to raise his young children alone for the next five years. Roman was only ten when his mother died, Esther was seven, and Enos was just three. Abraham met Carrie Evelyn Young, a young woman from Corning, Iowa. She was eleven years his junior when they married on June 7, 1905. The couple decided to make a fresh start for their family in Montana. As farmers, Abraham and Carrie saw the advantages of living in the fledgling community of Laurel.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> For an excellent discussion of Hill’s business practices that led to his control of these railroads, see Michael P. Malone, Richard B. Roeder, and William L. Lang, *Montana: A History of Two Centuries*, rev. ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), pp. 178-184.

<sup>7</sup> Spritzer, p. 355; Carroll Van West, *A Traveler’s Companion to Montana History*, (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 1986), p. 102. For more information about James Hill, see “Dream of Jim Hill,” Chapter XVI in Joseph Kinsey Howard’s *Montana: High Wide and Handsome*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983 (10<sup>th</sup> printing).

<sup>8</sup> Elsie P. Johnston, *Laurel’s Story, A Montana Heritage*, (Laurel, Montana: Laurel Historical Research Committee, c1979), p. 73.

<sup>9</sup> Johnston, p. 380.

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For the first six years, Abraham farmed the land immediately surrounding the house, as well as fields in the surrounding area. Abraham and Carrie welcomed two children during this time, Mildred in 1909 and Myron a year later. Both children were born in the bedroom off the living room.<sup>10</sup> With five children to support, Abraham tried a new venture in 1913. He partnered with George Harper and Thomas Rigney in the implement business. The Erb, Harper, and Rigney Implement Store at 313 West Main Street proved unsuccessful, and failed in 1915. This setback was soon followed by another devastating blow to the family. Abraham died of influenza on July 3, 1916.<sup>11</sup>

At the time of his father's death, twenty-six year old Roman had just been married three weeks. Like his father, Roman was a farmer. His sister, Esther, had been married for five years, and lived in Billings with her husband, H.L. Justiss. Enos was nineteen when his father died. He left town to attend Sweeney's Automotive School in Kansas City, Missouri, but returned to follow the family tradition of farming. Enos chose to live in the Huntley area east of Billings. Carrie Erb, a sudden widow, had two small children for whom to care. She employed a "hired man" to run the farm, and had a small bunkhouse constructed for him behind the main residence.

In 1917, Carrie was asked to be Laurel's first librarian. As one of the few women in town that had a college degree, she was well educated and fit well with the position. She described what led to the decision to start a library in town:

In June of 1908, the first year I was here, I was invited to the closing meeting of the Saturday Woman's Club before the summer vacation. ... They were a fine group of women who had come from mid-western states. Back home they had lived in towns where they had access to the latest books, to musical entertainment, theatres, operas, and art exhibits. ... This group of women would buy books and pass them around to one another, but there was always more needed – to keep up with the latest books, or with the times. They discussed the idea of having a library and later [1917] proudly proclaimed to have been the agitator for getting one started.<sup>12</sup>

Carrie continued in that job for the next thirty-four years. She said:

All through the years from July 2, 1917 to July 1, 1951, I liked the contacts I made with people who frequented the library. They were very kind and it being an informal library, we could discuss books, magazine articles, and events together. This included children as well as adults. On retiring as librarian, I knew I would miss making the acquaintance of new children who would join the library as well as those who frequented it. I found too that the people who start and promote such a project as a library which contributes so much to the culture, educational values, and information of the locality, comprise the solid and substantial quality that makes America what we are proud of; and these people include all who have patronized the library.<sup>13</sup>

Those people certainly included Mrs. Carrie Erb herself, and her interaction with the community is well remembered throughout Laurel. Her granddaughter has a slightly different take on her grandmother, however, as she knew her in her declining years. Shirley Ann [Erb] Hill told the current owner of the Erb Residence, Blaine Dantic, that she

<sup>10</sup> Shirley Ann [Erb] Hill, Interview with Blaine Dantic, February 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Johnston, p. 380.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 380-383; Shirley Ann [Erb] Hill, Interview with Blaine Dantic, August 2003.

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was always closer to her mother's side of the family. Her grandmother Carrie seemed kind of crabby to Shirley. Shirley said that she thinks her grandmother had arthritis and this made her kind of crabby – because she couldn't pick up the grandchildren or do things with them.<sup>14</sup>

While Laurel as a whole did not experience the depth of depression seen in other parts of Montana during the late 1910s and 1920s, there were economic hardships through the first half of the twentieth century. A petroleum refinery, constructed in 1930, helped Laurel weather the onset of the Great Depression.<sup>15</sup> Money was tight, though, especially for a widowed librarian. To help make ends meet, Carrie, like others at the time, opened her home to other families. She and Myron lived in the southwest bedroom and living room. Another family lived in the kitchen and northwest bedroom, another rented the parlor, and still another lived in the den. She and her children would also take their buggy to the railroad tracks and gather coal to burn in the stove to warm the house.<sup>16</sup>

Mildred had graduated from Laurel High school in 1927, and taught in Wilsall, Denton and Belfrey, Montana prior to marrying Herbert Zwisler and moving to Washington State. Myron graduated in 1931, and like his half-brother Enos, was a good mechanic and enjoyed working on automobiles. In 1934, he began working in Smith's Vulcanizing shop, which eventually became Smith's Super Service. He worked for, and eventually purchased the "Super Service" business in Laurel. Myron also enjoyed stunt riding on his motorcycle as a charter member of the Billings Motorcycle Club. He competed in the earliest Great American Hillclimbs, winning two state championships. On August 24, 1936, Myron married receptionist and Kansas native Isabel Clark. The couple moved throughout the Pacific Northwest during the 1940s and 1950s, and Myron worked as a welder in Seattle and Alaska. They returned to Montana, and owned the Town Pump service station in Livingston.<sup>17</sup>

Once relative prosperity returned with the advent of the post World War II economic upturn, Carrie was able to reclaim the house for herself. In 1951, Carrie retired from the library. She lived in her family home at 110 Fourth Avenue in Laurel until her death in 1966 at the age of 92. She had lived in the house for sixty years. After her passing, Myron and Isabel moved into the residence. Their daughter, Shirley Ann, may not have entirely embraced the move; she remembers: "When I was a little girl, the front sidewalk always had huge spiders all over that used to scare me because they'd be crawling all over."<sup>18</sup> With their return to Laurel, Myron purchased the same Smith's Super Service he had worked for twenty years earlier. He expanded the service station, adding a car dealership, and continued the business until 1974. A testament to his status in town, Myron served as the President of the Laurel Chamber of Commerce. Well known outside the business world, he also boasted membership in local fraternal organizations, including the Al Bedoo Shrine and Arab Patrol, the Corinthian Lodge #72, and the Elks Club.

During the 1970s, Myron updated the house with metal siding, but otherwise kept his mother's house remarkably intact. He lived until 1998, and Isabel continued to live in the house until 2002.<sup>19</sup> Isabel was also well-known in Laurel. She worked as a nurse for local physician Dr. Broughton, and was his receptionist as well. She was a fifty-year member of the

<sup>14</sup> Shirley Ann [Erb] Hill, Interview with Blaine Dantic, February 2005.

<sup>15</sup> The oil refinery was the second largest in the state by 1935, second only to the plant in Sunburst, Toole County, Montana. For more information regarding the history of the oil industry in Montana, see Don Douma's four-part article "Second Bonanza: History of Oil in Montana," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 3 No. 4 and Vol. 4 Nos. 1-3, Autumn 1953 through Summer 1954.

<sup>16</sup> Shirley Ann [Erb] Hill, Interview with Blaine Dantic, February 2005.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*; Johnston, p. 380-383.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*; Blaine Dantic, "Montana Historic Property Record," on file at the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Helena, MT.

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Laurel United Methodist Church, and the Order of the Eastern Star, Zidonian Chapter 50. She moved with her daughter to Burien Washington in 2002. Shirley Ann resided in the Abraham and Carrie Erb Residence with her mother prior to the move.

Blaine Dantic purchased the Erb home in January 2003, and Isabel passed away just eight months later on August 30. Since he purchased the property, Mr. Dantic has learned of the community interest in the house:

The home has always been admired by the people of Laurel. Since I purchased the home in January of 2003, I have had a number of the elders in the community request tours of the home. In fact, my grandmother stopped by after church with a group of her friends, who all requested to see the interior of the home. One of the women stated to me "I used to walk by this house as a child and I've always wanted to see inside." This is a common statement I hear from the older people in the community.

Mr. Dantic was able to visit with Shirley Ann and learn more about the remarkable family that pioneered the settlement of Laurel and made up such an important part of the fabric of the town. As a librarian, farmers, mechanics, and receptionists – the Erb family held positions on which the community was founded, and careers that lead them to interact with all community members. The Erb family is an institution in Laurel, and the Folk Queen Anne cottage in which they lived, one of the first residences in the town, is strongly associated with those patterns of settlement and community development.

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Photographs

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Abraham and Carrie Erb Residence, c. 1910. Mildred and Myron Erb are the children pictured at left.

Carrie Erb sits in the rocking chair on the lawn, facing her children.

On the porch are Abraham Erb, his son Enos Erb, son-in-law Henry Justiss, and son Roman Erb.

The cow's name is unknown.

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Photographs

Abraham and Carrie Erb Residence  
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Abraham and Carrie Erb on their wedding day, June 7, 1905.

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Carrie Erb with Myron, Mildred and their friends Alice and Nellie (undated photo, early 1920s.)

Carrie sits on the front porch of her house, and the children stand to the side of the bay window.

Note the turned posts, cast concrete foundation, and one-over-one light double hung window, still present on the house.

Photo courtesy of Shirley Ann [Erb] Hill.

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Undated photographs (early 1920s) of Carrie (left) and Myron Erb.  
Their house is in the background.  
Photo courtesy of Shirley Ann [Erb] Hill.

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Photo of Myron Erb and his dog, behind him is the south elevation of the Abraham and Carrie Erb Residence. Undated photo (1920s). Note that the garage is not yet built. Photo courtesy of Shirley Ann [Erb] Hill.



Myron Erb with his (different) dog, photo taken in the back yard of the Erb Residence and shows the southwest corner of the house and the garage. This photo dates to the 1930s. Note that the back porch has been enclosed, perhaps to accommodate the boarders. Photo courtesy of Shirley Ann [Erb] Hill.

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A motorcycle enthusiast, Myron Erb was a founding member of the Billings Motorcycle Club, and two-time state champion. Photo was taken during the mid-1930s, view to the northwest. Photo courtesy of Shirley Ann [Erb] Hill.