

Alice M. D'arcy

Alice Darcy was one of many Irish immigrants to locate to the town of Canton along the Missouri River. She was a fascinating woman that served as Superintendent of Schools for Meagher County and was an early business woman in Canton and Townsend. Alice Darcy was the Great Aunt of Eileen Perry who passed away this year.

Alice Darcy (who later changed her last name to D'Arcy) was a particularly good friend of W.E. Tierney another Irish immigrant that eventually located to Canton then to Townsend. Alice D'Arcy and W.E. Tierney maintained a very close relationship throughout their lives.

Alice was once the Superintendent of Schools for Meagher County before Broadwater County was established and the town of Canton was in Meagher County. At that time, Meagher County ran from the east side of the Missouri River in this valley to the other side of the Snowy Mountains – close to 150 miles. Imagine being responsible for the public schools in that vast area, when travel was by wagon!

Miss D'Arcy also became a successful business woman. She opened stores in Canton, Hassel and Radersburg before eventually moving to Townsend. Like her good friend Tierney, Alice understood the importance of the town created by the Northern Pacific Rail Road and moved her store to Townsend.

W.E. Tierney and his partners J.R. Marks and Dan McCarthy built the first major buildings in Townsend – the Townsend House Hotel and the Tierney Mercantile. The Tierney Mercantile was a large department store; the building still stands on Broadway across from TK's Garage (J Rock Jewelry and the closed auto parts store are in the building).

W.E. Tierney allowed Alice D'Arcy to have a small corner of the Tierney Mercantile to open a store in Townsend which was a successful venture for both of them. Alice D'Arcy eventually built her own building at 309 Broadway (where

the Mint gaming room is located) and moved the store there. At that time Miss D'Arcy lived with her mother and sister in town.

The store was very successful and Alice D'Arcy decided to build an even bigger store with an apartment above it for her own living space. She built a grand, two story brick building at 314 Broadway (the "Gambles" building now occupied by Broadwater Blooms) and moved into the apartment above the store.

According to the Broadwater Bygones "Miss D'Arcy made buying trips to New York and stocked her store with the best of materials and women's wear, shoes and fine china and silver."

Alice D'Arcy lived and operated her store until she sold the building to Fred and Bob Kapinos. Miss D'Arcy never married and was living with her niece Mary D'Arcy when she died in 1935. She was interred in the Canton Cemetery in a plot with her mother and sister, Ellen.

Alice D'Arcy played a large part in the founding of pioneer Montana both in Meagher County and later Broadwater County. Alice and her good friend W.E. Tierney helped found Townsend and to shape the future of the town.

Most of the information in this article came from the Broadwater Bygones (available at the Broadwater County Museum) and from Linda Huth's presentation "A Walk Down Mainstreet".