



Carved out of the wilderness seemingly overnight, Harrison had its beginnings with the coming of the railroad and its controversial new location as the seat of Clare County. Businessmen, a few families, and armies of lumberjacks soon gave Harrison a reputation as the toughest town in Michigan. More than 10 years of the lawless lumber era gave way to the beginnings of a peaceful village in 1891. The streams and lakes previously used for water, ice, and log hauling became attractive to tourists drawn by the slogan, "20 lakes in 20 minutes." The miles of railroad and narrow gauge rails turned into roads and trails for the buggies and automobiles used by settlers and vacationers. While agriculture largely failed in the tree-stumped wilderness of the early 1900s, the village prevailed into a city representative of small-town American life. Angela Kellogg is the support services librarian at the Harrison district library and manages its local history collection. Cody Beemer is a Harrison native and lifelong student of Clare County history. This volume represents the best photographs, facts, and tales from those who have preserved Harrison history, including the Beemer family collection, the Harrison district library, and the Clare County Historical Society.