

50th Anniversary



A Small Town With A Big Welcome

1911



1961

Foreword

In the centuries before man appeared in this land the glaciers were forming this area as we now see it. Some of the richest soil in the world was deposited in portions of North Dakota, and an infinite variety of scenic beauty created. Our climate, although harsh at times, is healthful and invigorating. We have four very definite seasons and certainly cannot complain of a monotonous temperature. Our natural resources are second to none and are still being developed.

The Indians were the first human inhabitants of this part of the country and next came the explorers, who were sent out by foreign governments. Pierre Verendry, a frenchman, is thought to be the first of these men, who explored the wilderness, in the years 1738 to 1742. At that time the Assiniboin Indians, a wandering tribe, were located in the north central portion of what is now North Dakota. Other explorers followed and soon fur traders were setting up posts. There were many fur bearing animals and the Indians trapped and sold them to the traders.

Through various purchases and treaties the United States Government secured all the land of which North Dakota is a section, in the 1800's. The first settlers came in 1812 to the Pembina area. They came from Scotland and Ireland and as so many people after them, left their homelands because the landowners drove them out. These people had a very hard time and did not settle in North Dakota permanently.

After the United States acquired all of the Northwest Territory more people came in to settle in this area. North Dakota was directly on one of the routes to the Oregon Country and there was a considerable amount of travel through here. General O. O. Stevens had been appointed governor of the newly organized Washington Territory and as he was an engineer, he was given the job of surveying the Northwest Territory for a railroad. The North Dakota area was surveyed in 1853 and these surveys stimulated immigration to this territory. The railroad, however, did not materialize in North Dakota until 1872, when the Northern Pacific crossed at Moorhead, Minn., and reached Bismarck in 1873.

Between 1800 and 1875 there were many battles between the army and the Indians. Of these the closest to be fought near us was the battle between General Sibley and several tribes of Sioux. General Sibley had been sent into Dakota Territory to punish the Indians who had escaped

from Minnesota after an uprising that resulted in the massacre of 360 white people. The story leading up to the Minnesota Massacre is similar to other stories of relationship between the Indians and the white man. In Minnesota, as elsewhere, the Indians were continually crowded back as white settlers moved in. Treaties were signed confining the tribes to reservations and they were to be paid for the land they gave up. The United States, being in the midst of the Civil War, was unable to meet its treaty obligations to the Indians on the dates when they were due. To the Indians it seemed the government always had the right to revoke old treaties and make some new ones to suit its need. This finally led the Indians to attack and murder all the whites they could find. Some of these Indians fled into Dakota and the following year General Sibley and General Sully were sent to punish them. Near Big Mound, Sibley caught up with the warriors and through an unfortunate incident, Dr. Weiser, an army doctor, was killed by an Indian and the battle followed. The Indians fled and Sibley and his men resumed the chase. He caught up with them near Dawson but not much damage was done, as the two sides stayed too far apart for any effective work. The next encounter was at Stony Lake, northeast of Driscoll. This time the Indians were attempting to stop or slow down the soldiers in order that their women and children might escape across the Missouri River. Many of them did escape but had to leave behind them large quantities of hides, tallow and dried meats, together with about one hundred and fifty wagons. These things represented the fruits of their hunting activities as they were a peaceful hunting party and not a war party. General Sibley returned to Minnesota after what was considered an only partly successful campaign and the Indians, most of whom were never in Minnesota, were forced to suffer again.

Several more battles were fought between the whites and Indians, the best remembered being Custer's Battle in June of 1876. In 1876 and 1877 the Indians were completely subdued and were no longer able to roam over the prairie.

The defeat of the Indians opened up vast areas for settlement by the whites. The railroad soon spread into all sections of the state, and with it came more settlers. These came from all the countries of Europe, although those from northern Europe predominated. These early settlers lived mostly on farming and most of them prospered, the soil being their greatest resource. Traffic first increased along the rivers and later over the prairies. Thus we have come from explorer, traders, miners, missionaries and soldiers to the pioneer settler. From a territory in 1861 we came to statehood in 1889.

Beginning in January 1, 1863 free land was available for homesteading. Anyone over twenty-one years of age could have 160 acres free and had to prove his claim by living on it for six months out of a year, for five years. This was later reduced to three years. This law, however, did not bring in an influx of settlers. Besides the Civil War, which was being fought, there were stories of Indian Massacres, blizzards and grasshoppers to keep people away. Some large ranches were built up however and cattle were raised in large numbers.

Next the railroad companies and land syndicates started a land boom to attract permanent settlers. Some of these came from the eastern states and many from large cities. They were cultured, well educated men and women who were led to this new land by visions of wealth and many for the adventure of something new. The largest number of immigrants from foreign countries came from Norway, Russia, Canada and Germany. However every European country was represented. Although it is true that many of the early pioneers suffered great hardships in establishing themselves in this new country, for the most part they prospered from the start. Most of the European immigrants were happy to leave behind them poverty, harsh military regulations and oppression.

The first settlers in our section of the state came by wagon and train. In an effort to build up the population of the state the railroads gave special rates to men coming in to start building homes. These people often came in what was known as "Emigrant Cars". This was a boxcar on the train into which was loaded livestock, machinery, tools, together with household equipment and last but not least, the settler and his family. One man was allowed to ride free in this car with his possessions. Times were very hard at that time and many poor men were at a loss as how to get here. One Tuttle resident tells how his father was smuggled aboard one of these "Emigrant Cars" and hidden in a wagon. He changed places with his brother when he felt the need for a little exercise. He got here and lived to be one of Tuttle's oldest and best loved citizens, "Dad" Thorne.

The first towns where these settlers carried on their trade and business were Steele, Driscoll, Bowdon and Goodrich. By the beginning of the century many claim shacks and sod houses dotted the prairies, often on the corner of the section, so four neighbors were close together. Soon many were deserted as the less hardy pioneers left for more comfortable surroundings. The ones who remained bought more acres and raised families. They took on the responsibility of township and state government. These are the

people whose stories are told and who have helped to make this country a "melting pot" of nationalities, customs and cultures.

As we, the present generation, prepare this book, celebrating the 50th year since Tuttle was founded, we believe it is fitting that we look back even farther than half a century and present the histories of our first settlers. We know that God's Hand was present, as these men of vision and courage, built this country. We will remember the great debt we owe, these, our pioneer forefathers.

We are aware that we will not be able to present a complete picture of the people who first came to this country. Many of the early settlers are gone and with them memories they alone could relate to us. We have contacted many of the descendents of the pioneers and are very happy with the response. Our thanks to these people for making this book interesting and quite authentic. Some of the memories have grown dim, so we ask your forgiveness for the errors which will, no doubt, appear. We trust the biographies and histories are interesting and we hope they make a valued memento, which you will cherish. The one fault found with some of these stories is that people are too modest in telling about their lives. However as we read this book, it will not be difficult to tell what kind of people they were and are. It is an inspiring story of the hardiness of the pioneer homeseekers, with limitless spirit and vision, who planned and worked out their future, here in Tuttle and the surrounding farms. —By Louise Sauter

JOHNSON DRUG STORE

THE REXALL STORE

LARGEST IN THE COUNTY

Wilton, North Dakota

WING LOCKERS

Butchering - Processing - Curing - Smoking

— :: —

LINDY L. LEIN, Owner

Phone WH 3-6855

Wing, North Dakota