

ABERDEEN

SOUTH DAKOTA

Aberdeen

A MIDDLE BORDER CITY

SOUTH DAKOTA WRITERS' PROJECT



Auditorium-Arena

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ABERDEEN

A MIDDLE BORDER CITY

Writers' Program. South Dakota

*Compiled and Written by
Workers of the South Dakota Writers' Project
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John H. Firey

F. C. Ackley

Fred Roesch

John Wade

1940

PREFACE

IN telling the story of Aberdeen, the South Dakota Writers' Project has endeavored to give a true account of Aberdeen's development during its nearly sixty years of existence, giving the set-backs as well as the progress, and the arrested prosperity as well as the good times. Thus it was gratifying to receive a letter from John H. Firey, Chairman of the Friends of Aberdeen Committee, in which he said: "I have read the manuscript of *Aberdeen, A Middle Border City* and find it an accurate delineation of the story of Aberdeen as I have seen it develop during my 57 years of continuous residence here . . . the committee is indeed interested in having so valuable a collection of historical facts put into a permanent record."

For information and advice in the preparation of the book, we wish to express appreciation to the following persons: John C. Simmons, Charles N. Harris, W. O. Jones, Ira Curtiss, C. W. Croes, Benjamin Schaub, Miss Mabel Sensor, Mrs. Charles A. Howard, Mrs. Lorna Herseth, John Wade, D. G. Gallett, A. C. Witte, Mrs. J. E. Kelly, Duncan McFarland, Ira Krueger, Howard Manchester, Mrs. Alonzo Ward, Sr., Harry B. Kuni, Frank C. Wyttenbach, J. Ford Zietlow, T. C. Gage, J. H. McKeever, and Maurice M. Carpenter. We are especially indebted to John H. Firey, Fred Stiles, and F. C. Ackley who gave valuable assistance, and to the editors of the

American-News for the use of old newspaper files. We wish also to acknowledge the consultant services of Dr. E. C. Ehrensperger and other members of the State University faculty.

The text was prepared cooperatively by L. E. Falk, Eugene Lavine, Camille Jerde, Miles McNickle, Evelyn Brockhoff, and Jess Strader of the Aberdeen unit of the WPA Writers' Program in South Dakota.

LISLE REESE, *State Supervisor.*

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A MIDDLE BORDER CITY TODAY

ABERDEEN, largest city on the Milwaukee Railroad between Minneapolis and Butte, Montana, is situated in northern South Dakota, 33 miles from the North Dakota boundary and 85 miles from the Minnesota State line, in the heart of the region which Hamlin Garland, in his series of books treating the Midwest, called "The Middle Border."

This city of 16,929 population is considered a northern one, but it has approximately the same latitude as Bordeaux, France, and Venice, Italy. Its climate is mid-continental, subject to quick changes of temperature.

The site of Aberdeen, treeless when the first settlers came, now has a profuse growth of trees and shrubs, carefully nurtured by home owners. Its skyline is dominated by the Citizens Building, the Alonzo Ward Hotel, and the Capitol Theatre Building, each rising six stories. Toward the city limits on the east flows placid Moccasin Creek, whose slowly moving waters are held back by a channel dam to insure proper depth for the swimming beach on its banks. Beyond the city limits grain fields extend to the horizon in all directions.

The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific railroad tracks divide the city into north and south; Main Street is the dividing line between the east and

west portions of the town. Main Street is 56 feet wide from curb to curb and becomes a country highway about a mile on either side of the Milwaukee Railroad tracks, which it crosses at right angles. From Railroad Avenue to Sixth Avenue south, Main Street is lined with the principal business establishments of the town. The structures vary from the false-front frame and the highly ornamented brick buildings of the 1880's to the severely modernistic buildings erected in the 1930's.

Residential architecture is heterogeneous, generally speaking, but shows the influence of the Eastern States from which most of the early settlers came. The Highlands and Simmons Additions have newer and more pretentious houses, varying from the mansion type to the trim bungalows that dominate the last-named section. In other parts of the city the majority of the residences are of earlier construction. Many of them have the gingerbread ornamentations and the inevitable tower popular in the 1880's.

North of the Milwaukee Railroad and east of Main Street, in an area of about 40 city blocks, live the Russo-German immigrants and their descendants. At the outset a distinct group which used the German language exclusively in the home, it has now adopted the English language and American customs, and the third generation is unable to speak German.

There are 18 churches, with occasional services in German and Scandinavian among the groups that earlier worshipped exclusively in those languages.

Northern State Teachers College contributes much to the cultural and economic development of the community. The public school system is housed in six grade school buildings, one combination grade and junior high school, and a junior and a senior high school group that includes a large theatre-assembly and an auditorium-arena used largely for athletic events. There are also two parochial grade schools.

The most prominent civic, fraternal, and social organizations are represented; the Masons, Elks, and Knights of Columbus maintain buildings of their own. Other fraternal groups include the Odd Fellows, Eagles, Maccabees, and Modern Woodmen. Service groups include the Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, and Business and Professional Women's clubs among others.

Wholesale distribution of foods, drugs, hardware, farm machinery, and plumbers' supplies is the principal industry in Aberdeen. A large creamery, a meat packing plant, a sash and door factory, and a small flour mill are important in their lines. Five firms deal in lumber, nine in agricultural implements, and six firms operate department stores. There are about twenty grocery stores with complete stocks, and a larger number of neighborhood stores. More than a dozen firms deal in motor cars and 33 stations sell gasoline and oils.

As the commercial and social center for a large and highly developed territory, Aberdeen normally teems with activity; on Saturday night, Main Street becomes a crowded, exciting thoroughfare.

Before Saturday night there is Saturday after-

noon. About midday an influx of shoppers from out-of-town swells motor car and pedestrian traffic toward metropolitan proportions. Tides of bargain-hunters ebb and flow along the five blocks between First and Sixth Avenues south on Main street. It is here that merchants shrewdly flaunt their wares in inviting windows. A hat to hold a man's heart (or break a girl's, if she can't afford it); a collection of potent liquids in fancifully shaped bottles; windows of food, books, clothes—a thousand and one desired articles behind plate glass waiting to be purchased. By midafternoon there is a near staccato tempo to business in food stores, department stores, and the "five and tens."

It is a gay, friendly crowd, meeting in the metropolis of the region. Among the hundreds of strange faces, each of the visitors is sure to recognize acquaintances and friends from his own particular community and perhaps from other counties. Sidewalk traffic often snarls around groups of friends halting to exchange greetings or a bit of gossip. All of which is taken good naturedly, as the offenders move on to a soda counter to continue visiting.

In the later afternoon traffic policemen and traffic signals appear at the three main intersections, Second, Third and Fourth Avenues. Farmers with cream cans in the luggage carriers of their cars park as near their favorite stores as possible; and egg crates, now filled with supplies for the family larder, are carried into the waiting motorcar. The cream check and egg money have been exchanged for all manner of necessities—and perhaps a movie for the children.

As night falls the neon signs glow red and blue and green, and the street lights and show windows fight back the darkness with gratifying success, so far as the Main Street crowd is concerned. Yes, "downtown Main" is gaily lighted, except for the deserted old post office building . . . a missing tooth in the brilliant night-smile of the street. Despite the fact that many farmers have gone home, the crowd has increased rather than diminished, but the pace has slackened. City dwellers, busy at other jobs during the afternoon, now arrive in their motorcars, to occupy the parking spaces on Main Street vacated by out-of-towners. Perhaps they do a bit of belated shopping before the stores close at nine o'clock, but quite as often they sit quietly in their cars and watch the crowd go by. The traffic signals are removed from the intersection, hooded, and locked to a convenient light post. Half of the Main Street crowd takes its place in the motorcars that occupy every available parking space along the thoroughfare and watches the other half go by.

Now and then an auto horn signals sidewalk promenaders, and they move over to the car to exchange a friendly greeting and engage in small talk. The complacency and leisurely mood of the small town has overtaken the Main Street crowd. It strolls slowly up and down—an interesting cross section of the community's population. In the parade are young and old, rich and poor, city dwellers and farm families. They window shop; they inspect the posters at the Capitol and Lyric theatres; they halt to converse about styles, books, movies, cream checks,

the price of eggs, chickens, and grain, about crops, the weather, the neighbors, the latest scandal, and a hundred other unpredictable subjects.

A few minutes after midnight the taverns go dark and there remain only alternate street lights and shafts of light from a few all-night restaurants to guide late prowlers. Thus ends Aberdeen's salute to Saturday night — the more staid part of its population has been in bed for two hours.

THE COUNTRY FEEDS THE CITY

THE 1,728 square miles that now comprise Brown County, of which Aberdeen is the seat, have been owned by three nations. Twice French, and once a Spanish possession, the area became a part of the United States as a result of the Louisiana purchase in 1803. After the division of this huge tract, Brown County became part of Louisiana Territory in 1805 and then in succession it was included in the Territories of Missouri, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and finally in 1861 in Dakota Territory.

When Colin Campbell came to Brown County in 1822 to establish a trading-post on the Elm River, the region was for the most part a buffalo-hunting ground of the Sioux Indians, who were described by Nicolet, the French explorer, as "the finest type of wild man" he had ever seen. The one permanent Indian colony was that of the Yanktonais Sioux on the Elm River, under the colorful chief Waneta, who had served with the British in the war of 1812 and later visited England. Campbell built his post on the Elm, about seven miles southwest of the present town of Frederick. It was abandoned six years later when Waneta and his tribe moved to what is now North Dakota.

Of the various other early visitors, most important was John C. Fremont, America's distinguished

explorer, whose expedition in 1839 traveled northward through the country along the James River, halting for several days at what is now known as Rondell Park.

The 1872 session of the Territorial legislature designated the northern half of the present county as Beadle County and the southern half as Mills County. Seven years later the map was reconstructed by the Session Laws of 1879 and the county, now a consolidation of its two predecessors, was named for Alfred Brown of Hutchinson County, known as "Consolidation Brown" in the Territorial legislature.

In Brown County, agriculture began in a dramatic fashion. An early history relates that when the first settlers, Clarence D. Johnson and William Young, plowed the first furrow in the county on April 1, 1878, they carried pistols in their belts and were guarded by Benjamin Arrendall's Winchester rifle. This was simply a precautionary measure, since on the previous day a party of Indians had pitched their tepee across the path of the first furrow. Johnson and Young plowed directly toward the wigwam and halted, demanding that the Indians move it and get off the land. The red men refused, but as the plowmen again started forward, the squaws quickly dragged the tepee aside. No further attempt was made to interfere.

Of the first ten acres farmed by Johnson and Young, two were planted to wheat, destined from that time on to be the main crop of the James River Valley. The early settlers found rich, black, glacial and lake bed soils, described by experts as the third

richest soils in the world. The wheat they planted averaged as much as 50 bushels to the acre; so they planted more. By 1900 the acreage of cultivated land was about the same as it is today, slightly more than 1,000,000 acres.

Early settlement, originally dependent upon covered wagon transportation, was speeded up by the coming of the railroads in 1881. Both the Milwaukee and the North Western railroads inaugurated service that year and there was a rush of settlers from widely separated parts of the East. Aberdeen, situated at the crossing of the two railroads, became a focal point in the county.

Aberdeen's early rivals were Columbia and Ordway, the latter of which was immortalized in the books of Hamlin Garland — *Main Traveled Roads*, *A Son of the Middle Border*, *Back Trailers from the Middle Border*, and others. Ordway, once boasting more than 1,000 people, faded away as its ambitions to become Territorial capital, and later a university town, came to naught.

Almost from the beginning, Aberdeen's history and that of Brown County have been principally economic. The prosperity of the early 1880's was succeeded by crop failures and a depression that halted growth for ten years.

These conditions in turn were succeeded by a period of rapid growth. A grandiose dream for Aberdeen and the surrounding county, without regard for economic reality, came into being as if out of thin air. Railroads were constructed at a furious rate—on paper. The Aberdeen, Bismarck and North

Western, the Detroit and South Western, the Rock Island, and later the Illinois Central, were projected, and in some cases even graded, into the county.

Although the pace of development was somewhat slower than the more enthusiastic settlers had expected, it came swiftly enough. The network of railroads spread; and the establishment of wholesale houses made Aberdeen the distribution center for a great part of the surrounding country. Telegraphic service arrived with the railroads. A few years later, in 1886, John L. W. Zietlow, inventor and Dakota pioneer, built and operated in Brown County the State's first telephone system, only nine years after the establishment of the first telephone lines in the world.

Aberdeen won the county seat in 1890 from Columbia, after a succession of elections and court orders.

As early as the first decade of its existence Brown County introduced farmers to one of their major enemies — drought during the wheat growing season. The farmers learned that lack of rain at that time spelled disaster and that drought at other times of the year was not necessarily a handicap. For instance, the *Aberdeen Evening News* of October 25, 1888, records: "The longest drought probably in this portion of the Territory was brought to an end yesterday afternoon by a slight but steady down-pour of rain. With the exception of a very few showers which have hardly laid the dust, the drought has covered a period of nearly three and a half months." And yet 1888 is remembered as producing one of the best wheat crops in the history of the county.

Drought, low wheat prices, and economic factors united to make the second decade in Brown County a period that weeded out all but the most resolute of its inhabitants. In the ten years between 1890 and 1900, the population shrank by 1500 persons. A symptom of the unrest generated by hard times was the formation of a party of protest, born apparently of the conflict between the farmers on the one hand and the railroads and the millers' association on the other. But basically it was an attempt by the farmers to avert what they called industrial slavery and to obtain a more equal and just distribution of the fruits of their labor. The radicals of their day, they were first known as the Farmers' Alliance and later as the Populist Party. They elected a United States Senator and a governor for two terms. William E. Kidd, militant Aberdeen newspaper editor, and Father Robert Haire of Aberdeen were perhaps the leading promoters of the new party in Brown County.

After the turn of the century Aberdeen grew rapidly. It was the era of the great land boom. For the first time the resources of the James River Valley were systematically exploited. Speculators, land companies, and ordinary citizens took part, and land prices skyrocketed from \$5 and \$10 to \$75 an acre.

The rise in land values changed the farmers' attitude toward their holdings. Land that could be sold for \$75.00 per acre seemed more valuable even if it did not produce greater returns. But new difficulties presently arose in the form of wheat diseases. No land boom, but the war in Europe came

to the rescue this time and brought with it a new period of prosperity. The World War brought high prices, and all available acres were put into crops. Farmers marketed \$2 wheat and fed barley to \$16 hogs. Land sold as high as \$200 an acre and expensive automobiles were no longer considered luxuries. In the fall of 1920 the inevitable happened. The sudden deflation of prices and values caught the farmer unprepared, and considerable distress ensued for those who had bought land at wartime prices.

The chaos of the early 1920's did the farmer one good turn in that it forced him to diversify his crops still further, and depend less on wheat for his income. Other crops like corn and barley, together with stock raising, dairy products, and poultry became increasingly important to the farmer, and wheat, once the principal cash crop, now makes up approximately 50 per cent of the farm income in Brown County.

During the period between 1925 and the end of 1929, both business and farming returned to normal and showed a favorable up-turn. Then a virtual collapse of the economic system, signalled by the stock market crash of 1929, brought fresh disaster. Bank clearings in Aberdeen sank from approximately \$78,000,000 in 1925 to only \$23,000,000 in 1933. With the farmers, matters were even worse. A series of crop failures brought by drought and bad prices threatened to pauperize the agrarian population.

Continued drought and high winds during this period increased land erosion to alarming proportions. On November 11, 1934, Chicago and even the

Atlantic coast cities were dark under clouds of dust carried by a high wind from midwestern and southwestern farms. In Aberdeen, street lights burned during the greater part of the day and dust sifted through doors and windows. During the height of the storm a farmer remarked with grim humor: "I guess my land is following my wheat to market." But, endowed as they are with great tenacity, Brown County farmers always think of next year.

Through agencies like the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and the Farm Security Administration, the government has supplied funds to farmers in the county to help them carry on. In addition, a soil conservation project has been established to demonstrate control of wind and water erosion and how to conserve the fertility of the soil.

The modern Brown County farm, with an average of more than \$1,500 worth of machinery, often including a tractor with rubber tires, is a far cry from the early oxen-and-walking-plow days. Farming is now big business. Brown County farms produced crops valued at over \$1,800,000 in 1937 and had nearly a \$2,000,000 investment in livestock.

Farming is the business of greatest importance to Aberdeen. When Brown County farmers have money, they spend it freely in that city. Good crops and good prices for farm products mean prosperity for Aberdeen.

HOW THE TOWN WAS BORN

IN the government land office at Watertown, Dakota Territory, early in 1880, a group of men were gathered around a map spread out on a table. One of them stabbed a finger at a point in the southwestern part of Brown County. "There," he said, "right there is where we will cross the North Western Railway and locate the town." And as casually as that, according to legend, Aberdeen was ushered into existence.

The man with the pointing, authoritative finger was Charles H. Prior, town site agent for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad. The original survey indicated that the Hastings and Dakota division of the road would be extended from Bristol northwest through Columbia and thence to Bismarck. That was before Prior found he could not gain a suitable right-of-way from the owners of the Columbia town site. Other Columbia interests, planning navigation on the James River, are said to have demanded a drawbridge across the stream — which was perhaps another reason why Prior decided not to route the road to Columbia.

During the summer of 1880, Rice Brothers & Boyden of Watertown had opened a store at a point about 2 miles south of the present site of Aberdeen, where the North Western intersected the James River division of the Milwaukee. The place is re-

ferred to both as Grand Junction and Grand Crossing. Prior, fresh from difficulties with the Columbia town site owners, apparently planned to avoid any complications that might arise from having the North Western Railway in the town he would establish as the terminal for the Hastings and Dakota division of his road. Accordingly the Aberdeen site was about 2 miles to the north of Grand Junction—and nearly a mile from the point where the Northwestern track intersected the H & D division of the Milwaukee. In return, the North Western stubbornly refused for some time to establish a station and to bill freight to Aberdeen, making it necessary for shipments destined for Aberdeen to be called for in Ordway, about 10 miles northeast. This inconvenience was of but brief duration. The North Western soon established a station in Aberdeen and sought its share of the rich revenues of freight and passenger transportation the new country provided.


Whether Prior established Aberdeen sight unseen, or deliberately, as one historian suggests, because "a slough offered a possible source of water supply for the engines of the railroad" can perhaps never be ascertained with any degree of authority. The fact remains that the site was apparently the flattest part of what geologists say is the ancient stream bed of the Missouri River. All of which lends credence to the widely accepted theory that the site of the city was chosen without careful consideration of its suitability or perhaps without being examined at all.

The site as the surveyors found it in the autumn

of 1880 was unpromising enough. It was covered with rank prairie grass and devoid of trees, with a slough bordering upon the original platted area. There were traces of buffalo trails a few blocks south of the rails, and ducks were plentiful in a large marsh a short distance to the north. To the east, small, sluggish Moccasin Creek meandered crazily on its way southward. But destiny in the person of Charles H. Prior decreed that here was to be the second largest city of South Dakota.

A few sod huts, erected near the end of the railroad grade, became the nucleus of the future city and sealed the doom of Grand Crossing. The promoters of the latter moved the store building they had erected to a choice location on the new town plat in the early summer of 1881 — and Aberdeen was born.

GROWTH OF A PRAIRIE CITY

 ON July 6, 1886, Aberdeen celebrated its fifth anniversary. No official census was taken, but the new city estimated its population at 2,500 or more, which was probably nearly correct, as the Federal census of 1890 listed 3,182 residents. Compared with cities in more settled parts of the country, Aberdeen was still a small town; but by virtue of its position as a leading railroad center and trade mart of Dakota Territory, it was definitely important. Civic and business leaders were, quite apparently, conscious of the fact, and were feverishly striving to hasten the city's growth.

Their great expectations were indeed founded on more than hope. The new town had three railroads stretching out in all directions, and three more were projected. It had a waterworks, supplied by an artesian well with pressure at more than 150 pounds to the square inch, a fire department, and a telephone system.

Electricity and electric lights had come to town, and although it was a matter of earnest and serious concern at the time, perspective lends the proceedings of the new utility a rakish, musical-comedy atmosphere of uncertainty and hilarity, as is shown in an account of the City Council proceedings in September, 1888:

“ A petition for an electric light at the

corner of Eighth Avenue and Main Street was refused for the reason that the electric light company was unable to furnish more lights." The council went on to discuss with some heat the possibility of passing an ordinance to compel the company to take the lights out of private places and put them at the city's disposal. A month later matters had become a little involved again. The Aberdeen Electric Light Company offered to donate one extra light to the city if the company were allowed to shut off the lights at 1 a. m. The city council would have none of it, however, and the lights continued to burn all night.

An enterprising group had procured a franchise for an electric street railway. There was a flour mill, a plow factory, five firms selling at wholesale exclusively and twelve others which sold both wholesale and retail. Four grain elevators and two "flat houses" capable of storing 125,000 bushels of grain provided a market for the tremendous amounts of wheat produced in the vicinity.

There was a well established school system, six churches, a daily and three weekly newspapers, and a public library association. The financial requirements of the city were adequately cared for by three banks and a flourishing building and loan association. There was indeed no lack of enterprise, and the prospects for a great future seemed well assured.

A \$30,000 bond issue in 1888 was voted to provide a sewer system for the city, and there was continued progress in business.

The great era of development came with the turn



Above: Aberdeen's first business building, known as the "Pill Box," has an addition and is now used as a garage.

Below: Aberdeen's first church (Presbyterian) is now used as a warehouse.



Steaks being brought to market on the hoof was a common sight on Main Street in the early 1900's.

of the century. The population of Aberdeen rose from 4,087 in 1900 to 10,150 in 1910, an increase of 160 percent. The growth of business of all kinds was in direct proportion. Free city mail delivery was established, the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad was extended from Watertown to Aberdeen, and the Milwaukee Railroad completed its line to the Pacific Coast. The Aberdeen Street Railway, projected since 1886, began its operations; the six-story Citizens Building, erected by a company organized by C. A. Russell, a banker, was completed and gave the city its first "skyscraper." It was equipped with a roof garden and was one of the points of special interest in this section of the State. It was further notable in that it was the largest steel and concrete structure in the State, except the State capitol which was then under construction. Aberdeen was definitely metropolitan, insofar as South Dakota cities were concerned.

Rain and snow often turned the dirt streets into quagmires. Paving was long considered a necessity, but not until 1907 were the five blocks between the Milwaukee Railroad and Fifth Avenue South hard-surfaced. At the same time the avenues crossing this section of the street were paved one block on either side of it. From this beginning, hard-surfacing was gradually extended to all the principal thoroughfares.

A ten percent increase in population between 1920 and 1930 indicated that Aberdeen was still developing, although the energetic pace of the pioneer period had been replaced by the more steady stride

of a community that had come to realize its growth was dependent upon intensive cultivation of its current resources, rather than upon the acquisition of new ones. While it may not be said that all the grand dreams of the most optimistic of the pioneers have come true, Aberdeen has become a prairie metropolis.

THE LONG PULL

ONE of the first evidences of civic solidarity in Aberdeen came with the construction of the Grain Palace in 1893. This was a co-operative enterprise from the very beginning, the cost of the materials having been raised by popular subscription. All the work was done by volunteers; and some of the citizens, unable to do their part, hired proxies to work for them. The half-block square Palace Building, seating 4,000 persons, stood on the present site of the Boyd Building, at 502 South Main Street. It was used extensively for entertainments, conventions, and other public meetings, until destroyed by fire on April 28, 1902.

From that time until very recently, Aberdeen was without an adequate public meeting place. But this lack was remedied in 1938 when the modern, School-Civic Auditorium was built (see *In and About Aberdeen*). More than a convention hall, in its theater-assembly are presented the concert season of the Civic Music Association, a community theater, lectures, and occasional legitimate theater productions. The larger auditorium-arena houses events ranging from conventions and athletic contests to indoor circuses.

Aided by Senator Kyle, who was sent to the State senate by Brown County and became the first and only Populist United States Senator from South

Dakota, Aberdeen obtained a new post office and Federal Building in 1904. Senator Kyle worked for five years to get the bill passed by Congress and even then might have failed except for the fortunate circumstance of catching the Speaker of the House, Thomas B. Reed, in a petulant mood. Kyle, fearing the bill might fail to pass again, went to see Reed about the bill; and after some discussion, Reed remarked: "Well, let the d——d bill pass. I would rather see the government spend its money for public buildings than send it to the Philippine Islands."

By 1937 this building was outmoded, and the government built a new, five-story, buff-brick-and-limestone post office and Federal Building for Aberdeen at a cost of \$425,000 (see *In and About Aberdeen*). Of particular interest is the "mahogany" granite from the quarries of Milbank, South Dakota, used in the decorative work around the mammoth doors. The exterior of the first story is veneered in Bedford limestone, trimmed with grey granite from the Cold Springs, Minnesota, quarries.

In 1910 the town started on another venture in civic building. Steady growth had made the transportation facilities inadequate, and a street railway system was promoted on a franchise procured in 1886. The tracks extended from the Northern Normal and Industrial School northward to Wylie Park; a short spur down First Avenue led to the North Western depot and St. Luke's Hospital. Service by the little one-truck electric cars was discontinued in 1922 because of the increasing pressure of automo-

bile competition. Bus service has now taken the place of the electric trolley cars.

Aberdeen and Brown County have inaugurated a far-sighted program designed to dot the waterless plains with man-made lakes and parks. With the aid of Federal funds, artificial lakes are being created for three main purposes: recreation, water and wild fowl conservation, and water supply. In the first category are Mina and Richmond Lakes with their park developments, the Game and Fish Commission's lake at Simmons Park in Frederick, and the channel dam in the James River at Rondell Park. Highland, Tolefson, and Pigors are chiefly conservation projects, while the lakes created by the Elm River and Willow Creek dams are sources of Aberdeen's present water supply.

Mina Lake (see *In and About Aberdeen*), earliest of the larger artificial lakes, was an outgrowth of a project to divert the waters of Snake Creek into Scatterwood Lake. This plan was rejected because of its expense, and the plan to dam Snake Creek and make an independent body of water was substituted.

Richmond Dam (see *In and About Aberdeen*), completed in 1937 as a WPA project, is being developed as a recreational center with parks on two sides, a bathing beach, and a community building. Over 10,000 native trees and shrubs have been planted along the lake shore and irrigation systems have been built to insure moisture in dry seasons.

During most of its existence Aberdeen wrestled with its lime-loaded, hard-water supply, like Sinbad

with the Old Man of the Sea. Lack of good water was the greatest obstacle in the way of the city's extensive industrial development. Attracted by the advantages of Aberdeen's geographical position and its splendid transportation facilities, many manufacturers rejected the location because of the lack of a sufficient supply of suitable soft water.

The construction in 1935 of the Willow Creek Dam, a Public Works Administration project, was the first concrete step towards remedying this condition. The recent completion of a 500,000 gallon elevated tank, a filtration plant, the Elm River channel dams, and the large dam in the upper reaches of the Elm River assure the city of an adequate water supply of five grains hardness, only one-tenth that of the former hard water.

Aside from their practical uses, these lakes have an intangible value that would be difficult to overestimate. In a country where the abundance or scarcity of water is of primary importance, a lake is a welcome and refreshing sight. Lakes could not be wished into existence, so Aberdeen, with the help of the Federal government, created them.

ABERDEEN GOES TO SCHOOL

IN August, 1881, eight months after the town was platted, Mrs. C. H. Pleasants and 23 children assembled in a claim shanty approximately on the site of the present Central High School building, and public education began in Aberdeen. The following year F. H. Hagerty and William Lloyd donated a choice block of their new addition to the town site for school purposes. It is now occupied by the Roosevelt Junior High School.

The first permanent school building was erected in 1883 at an approximate cost of \$8,500, and the expansion of the city called for additional school facilities on an average of every two years. At one time it was found necessary to resort to portable buildings to relieve congestion in certain sections of the town.

Reference to the records of the Board of Education shows that a total of 17 school buildings were erected in the period between 1882 and 1939. At the present time eleven buildings, valued at more than \$1,500,000, comprise the city's school plant. During the school year 1938-39, 3,502 pupils attended and 116 teachers and supervisors were employed.

The physical equipment of the Aberdeen schools is maintained in accordance with consistently high standards. The courses of study have also been well in the vanguard of progress. The curriculum of the

Aberdeen school system was one of the first in the State to be reorganized to include junior high school courses and vocational training for high school pupils.

Well attended parochial schools are conducted by the Sacred Heart and St. Mary's Catholic churches; the Seventh Day Adventist church also maintains a school.

Higher institutions of learning in the county had their beginning in 1883 in the Groton Collegiate Institute, under the auspices of the Presbyterian church. It failed to get sufficient support and was closed after a few years. Ordway also had ambitions to become a university town and went so far as to excavate for the foundation and basement of the university building. But the plan came to naught when the Methodist Episcopal church decided to build its school at Mitchell.

The only institution of higher learning in Aberdeen is the Northern State Teachers' College, founded in 1902 as the Northern Normal and Industrial School and originally intended to offer industrial as well as teachers' courses. Its main development came in teacher-training and academic fields, and the name was changed to Northern State Teachers' College by the State legislature in 1939. It now has an enrollment of approximately 800 students.

Everyone who goes to school in Aberdeen is not necessarily within schoolage. The Work Projects Administration sponsors a nursery school in connection with the elementary schools, and adult classes as well. There is a nurses' training school in connection with St. Luke's Hospital. A business college and a beauticians' training school are well attended.

ABERDEEN GOES TO CHURCH

ABERDEEN first went to church in June 1881. The Reverend H. B. Johnson announced he would conduct an outdoor service near what is now the site of the Milwaukee Railroad roundhouse. On the appointed day a considerable number of devout pioneers collected and the Reverend Mr. Johnson mounted a crude pulpit improvised from a wagon box and delivered the sermon.

At the same time, according to a story told by the late Ira Curtiss, another "congregation," not so religiously inclined, had gathered to celebrate the day in their own fashion. Spirits of corn flowed freely and the group rapidly achieved a high degree of exhilaration. The two groups were in easy hearing distance of each other and the worshippers were struggling to hold the poise and dignity befitting the occasion. Doing their utmost to ignore the revelers, they sang the lovely old hymn:

"When I can read my title clear,
To mansions in the skies,
I'll say farewell to earthly fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes."

Lusty, slightly thickened voices caught up the tune, as an antiphonal choir answered with a parody of spontaneous invention:

"When I can shoot my rifle clear,
At pigeons in the skies,
I'll say farewell to pork and beans,
And live on pigeon pies."

ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA

80782

Religious worship soon thereafter became better organized, and meetings were conducted at various places in the city until the Presbyterians built a church in 1882. An interesting legend concerning the financing of this first church in Aberdeen is still told by those who can remember when the town was new. It appears a group of men were gathered in a cardroom in the early summer of 1881 and the conversation somehow turned to the town's lack of a church. The card players halted their game and, discussing the matter, decided that if Aberdeen were to become much of a town, it must have a church. One of the group, E. H. Alley, merchant and later county commissioner, took prompt action and passed the hat to the players at the tables, securing \$150 in cash and a larger sum in IOU's. The next day Alley passed the hat up and down the street, asking donations for a church. He apparently had no particular church in mind. He was gratifyingly successful, securing the most liberal donations, the story goes, from the several barrooms in operation.

The Rev. H. B. Johnson, a Presbyterian missionary, hearing of the church fund, secured it for his denomination; and a church was built on Kline Street and 4th Avenue South, on a lot donated by Hagerty and Lloyd. In a fine spirit of tolerance, the Presbyterian congregation permitted other religious groups to hold services in the edifice until they were able to provide church homes of their own. The building is now used as a warehouse and stands at 307 First Avenue South.

Churches were established in all the towns and

villages in the county and a considerable number of country churches were built during the first 20 years of the county's history. The first structure erected for religious worship in Brown County is believed to have been the sod church which Father Robert Haire built with his own hands on his claim north of Columbia.

Father Haire was a Roman Catholic missionary, but his influence extended far beyond his church. He was a learned man and of such exalted character that he was called the "Abou Ben Adhem of Aberdeen." (See *Saints and Sinners*.)

ABERDEEN WORKS

ABERDEEN works in much the same fashion as any other midwestern, prairie city. It has had some industrial development, and the processing of agricultural products has become more important each year; but its chief income is derived from its position as the wholesale distributing and the retail shopping center for a large surrounding territory. The development of good roads and automobiles has permitted the farmer to select his trade center, and by making the larger centers more accessible, has increased his dependence upon them. The independent and self-sustaining rural home in South Dakota is largely a myth. Closer contact with urban life has changed the farmer's habits, created new desires for prepared foods, ready-made clothes, mechanical devices, and luxuries; and in a large trade area extending from Roberts County west to the Missouri River, and from the bordering North Dakota counties south to Redfield, the farmer looks to Aberdeen to supply these needs. This has meant an increased emphasis on the development of retail and distributing facilities.

From a 1929 high of \$13,846,552, the retail net sales in Aberdeen dropped to a mid-depression total of \$8,662,000 in 1935, but picked up again with good crops in 1938 and 1939. The automotive group, which did \$4,000,000 or 30 percent of the 1929 total,



Above: Main Street in the early 1920's
with the view to the north.

Below: Same, but with the view, includ-
ing street car, to the south.



Many of the larger and older houses in Aberdeen
have towers; reason unknown.

was still the most important business in the city in 1935, accounting for nearly 27 percent of the net retail sales. It was followed, in importance, by the food stores, the general merchandise group, and the apparel group, which together accounted for another 46 percent of the total. The 306 retail business units in Aberdeen, not including services like laundry, hotels, and barber shops, employed 1,125 persons in 1935, with an aggregate payroll of \$932,000. For the same year, 56 wholesale establishments had a total net sales of \$10,291,000, with a payroll of \$756,000 for the 507 persons employed.

Twenty-six establishments in Aberdeen manufacture products valued at approximately \$2,000,000 yearly and employ about 245 workers. Industrially, most important are the railroads—the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific; the Chicago & North Western; the Great Northern; and the Minneapolis & St. Louis. These roads employ 528 persons with an average annual payroll of \$863,600.

Aberdeen is a division point on the transcontinental line of the Milwaukee. A ten-stall engine-house was built in May, 1884, and the shops were erected shortly afterwards. All facilities were greatly expanded between 1909 and 1913. Seven years later, in 1920, the Milwaukee established larger yards to handle its increasing volume of livestock shipments. Beginning with only a few pens, the stockyards have been increased until they have become now the largest "in transit" facilities in the Nation (see *In and About Aberdeen*).

A north and south branch of the North Western


runs through Aberdeen. A branch of the Great Northern railway, uniting with the main line at Campbell, Minnesota, has its terminus in Aberdeen. Another rail outlet is the Minneapolis and St. Louis, which comes to the city from the southeast.

A study of the occupations of the people of Aberdeen reveals interesting points. For every 5,000 Aberdonians, there are eight lawyers, eight doctors, five dentists, six pastors, two morticians, and 33 barbers and beauty operators.

Organized labor is strictly an American Federation of Labor affair, the Committee of Industrial Organization having made no attempt at organization in the city. Union activities are co-ordinated by the Central Labor Union, which includes most of the local organizations except the Railway Brotherhoods. Since there are no large employers, the relationship between employer and employee is for the most part paternalistic, and there has been little strife.

Federal funds have played an important role in keeping Aberdeen at work since 1934. WPA funds not only form the support of a large number of families but, combined with the money brought into the region by Federal agricultural programs, are the backbone of consumer purchasing power in the community.

ABERDEEN PLAYS

 RIGINALLY, the immigrant to Brown County was a man looking for land. He was a farmer in search of a secure and productive livelihood and he made a sober, industrious citizen. The life of the community was tempered by this kind of settlers so that the usual freedom and excesses of frontier existence were subdued, and there are few spectacular pages in the county's history.

Of course Aberdeen *was* a frontier town and it *did* have a hotel called "Sodom House," but practically no one shot anybody. Such outbreaks were confined to the Black Hills towns of gold-rush days.

The town did not seem to mind being deprived of bad men and gun fights. It played with a zest, square dancing earnestly and perspiringly to rhythmic folk tunes ground out by indefatigable fiddlers. It went warily to mixed sewing bees, hopefully to to basket socials, and boisterously to dog races.

At the sewing bees it courted and flirted outrageously. At the basket socials it bid too much for a prettily wrapped basket, and then waited with a sinking feeling in its stomach to find out who belonged to the lunch. Dog racing was more of a masculine entertainment. Aberdeen was particularly fond of racing dogs; and one or another of the dogs usually carried the town's shirt with him when he ran.

Amateur dramatics, concerts, and operettas were popular forms of entertainment. Traveling theatrical troupes were in town regularly during the theatre season, and their advertising paved the way for the "... stupendous, gigantic, colossal" era of the movies. On the opposite page is a sample from the *Aberdeen Daily News* of Dec. 7, 1887.

The newspaper review of Uncle Tom's Cabin, three days later, found the performance "dissappointing."

Occasionally the town was treated to a spectacle of strictly frontier flavor. A typical instance is reported in the *Aberdeen Weekly News* of October 10, 1888: "The Sioux Indian in a good deal of his primeval uncouthness was in Aberdeen last evening in charge of Indian Agent McLaughlin of the Standing Rock Agency. The party . . . on its way to Washington . . . was made up of the following chiefs and head men: Sitting Bull, John Grass, Gaul, Mad Bear, Big Head, Two Bears, Thunder Hawk, Bear's Rib, Fire Heart, High Eagle, Gray Eagle, Hairy Chin, High Bear and Walking Eagle.

"The scene at the railroad station where the Indians partook of supper beggars description . . . People, anxious to catch a glimpse of the renowned Sitting Bull and his younger and fit successors, crowded into the room to its utmost standing capacity . . . until the departure of the train . . . the same eager throng besieged them (the Indians) at every turn and the depot platform could not hold all . . . who congregated."

Indians, it may be explained, were seen but sel-

Opera House

One Night Only

Friday, December 9

ABBEY'S

DOUBLE MAMMOTH

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

COMPANY

AND

2---UNIFORMED BRASS BANDS---2

White and Colored

The ONLY Double Company in Existence

A laugh for every minute—smiles and tears blended together!

Two comical, ludicrous, musical Marks! A pack
of ferocious, manhunting bloodhounds.

2 GREATEST TOPSIES ON EARTH

Impersonated by the distinguished Serio-Comic Queens
of Songs and Operatic Prima Donnas.

THE HYER SISTERS

Specially engaged for this Great Double Company. The most
fascinating and talented CHILD ACTRESS in the world, little

JENNIE FURSMAN AS EVA

Engaged for this season as the only genuine South Carolina
Jubilee Singers and Plantation Troubadors; 20 in number;

the aesthetic trained donkey, Leon; the smallest Shet-
land pony in the world; Edison's electric parlor light; magnif-
icent scenery by Voegtlin; elaborate costumes by Dazien.

A Street Parade Daily at 12 o'clock

Reserved seats on sale at Post Office News Stand.

dom in Aberdeen, since, after the departure of Drifting Goose from his Spink County headquarters at Armadale Island, no Indians lived nearer the city than the Sisseton Reservation, sixty miles to the East.

The local attempts at culture took form a little difficult to describe, as is demonstrated by the following dispatch from the Rondell community in the *Aberdeen Daily News* of Feb. 16, 1888:

" . . . The Mud Creek Literary Society, which holds forth every week five miles east of the post office, was as usual largely attended on Saturday evening. The question discussed was, 'Resolved that a slanderer is worse than a flatterer.' . . . The judges' decision was unanimously in favor of the negative. The question for debate next week is, 'Resolved that liquor is worse than tobacco'."

In 1883, at the age of seven, Aberdeen was still a frontier town—but in dinner clothes, banqueting on cream of terrapin, soup St. Julien, and boiled plover, washed down with Riesling, claret and champagne—this to the astonishment of the East, which still looked down its nose at Dakota as a country of barbarians who existed chiefly on cracked wheat and salt pork.

As time passed, recreations and amusements changed. Horse racing, once a leading summer sport languished for various reasons. Duck and prairie chicken hunting, once the delight of the city's nimrods, ceased as the prairie chicken became almost

extinct. Then came the introduction of the Chinese ringnecked pheasant. The bird thrived and increased so amazingly that the hunter was supplied with a better-than-ever opportunity to exercise his skill. In fact, Brown County is now a great pheasant hunting region; and hunters from other states come each year to hunt the beautiful but elusive birds.

Gypsy Day, the annual October homecoming celebration of the Northern State Teachers' College, is now the season's gala event. During the celebration the town is filled with synthetic members of the Romany tribes. The student body and faculty are berouged, beringed, and draped in bizarre costumes, sometimes with startling results. A six-foot plus, 200-pound, blond Nordic in red, green, blue, yellow, and lavender makes a rather spectacular sight. The high spot of the day is the parade at noon over the principal streets of the town, when the clans in costume are interspersed by various floats, brass bands, and the novel groups traditional of American parades.

Aberdonians enjoy golf and baseball during the summer, and dancing is popular with all ages. In winter various dance halls in the downtown section are well patronized, but in summer the Wylie Park pavilion attracts the largest crowds. The more socially important dances are given by clubs like the Cotillion, Promenade, and Esquire at the hotels or the Country Club. A demand for old-time music still exists, for at least the older part of the population remains partial to the square dance, the rye waltz, and other "vintage" dances.

Sports, especially baseball, draw highly partisan crowds. An excellent baseball field and grandstand, erected in 1937 with Federal aid, attracts large crowds during the season. The larger parks, Melgaard, Wylie with its zoo, and Tacoma on the James River, are play spots for the whole family. Youngsters enjoy the supervised playgrounds in Wylie and Aldrich parks as well as the Children's Theater under direction of the Recreational Division of the Work Projects Administration.

Aberdeen's amusement preferences differ little from those of other Midwestern cities. The city is subject to fads like miniature golf, jig-saw puzzles, Chinese checkers, and contract and auction bridge; and bowling clubs bloom perennially with the coming of winter. Radio, moving pictures, motorcars, motorcycles, and even bicycles all attract their share of the populace seeking diversion and recreation.

NEW FESTIVAL

In the fall of 1940, a Golden Pheasant Festival was launched as an annual entertainment event. For the inaugural show, the Civic Association engaged Rochester, colored motion picture and radio comedian, George Givot, Greek dialect entertainer, and Ted Fio Rito's orchestra. Agricultural and industrial exhibits, carnivals, dances, and stage shows will feature the program each year.

ABERDEEN READS, LISTENS

ABERDEEN has "seen by the paper" ever since August 4, 1881, when the Aberdeen *Pioneer*, published by D. C. Wadsworth, came off the press anticipating its announced publication date by a full day. The second newspaper to appear was Col. John H. Drake's *Dakota Pioneer*, which bore the date, August 4, 1881, but which was actually published the following day, according to a statement made by Col. Drake himself to a Syracuse, New York, reporter about forty years later.

In the same interview Colonel Drake recalled that the rivalry between newspapers at the time was terrific. The struggle for supremacy in the Fourth Estate often waxed so violent that fist fights were not uncommon and a pistol duel (without casualties) resulted on one occasion. After that, Drake said, an armistice, so far as fistcuffs were concerned, was agreed upon, and the battle confined to withering invectives on the printed page.

Colonel Drake, it appears, was often involved in violent differences of opinion that could not be settled satisfactorily by the spoken or printed word. On Thursday, July 26, 1881, a contemporary newspaper, *The Dakota Huronite*, describes such an incident:

"A knockdown between rival editors occurred at Aberdeen on Monday. The par-

ticipants were John H. Drake, commonly known as Judge Drake, editor of the Dakota PIONEER, and William B. McChesney, editor of the Aberdeen REPUBLICAN. The parties, meeting, after some heated words, clinched and rolled off the sidewalk into the gutter. After struggling for a time both arose and administered several knock-downs and retired."

As time went on Colonel Drake's pugnacity apparently abated, although he never achieved intimacy with the dove of peace. He continued to publish the *Dakota Pioneer* until 1890, when he was appointed United States consul at Kiel, Germany, by President Benjamin Harrison, whereupon he leased his paper to L. Frank Baum, who later won enduring fame as the author of *The Wizard of Oz* and other children's stories. Baum continued the paper as the *Saturday Pioneer* for somewhat more than a year and then abandoned it. The plant sold piecemeal and the *Pioneer* was no more.

The two original papers, neither of which survived, had a precarious existence, much of their income being obtained from the publication of legal notices in connection with final proofs on government land. It appears that Wadsworth was not successful in gaining sufficient "land office patronage" and soon disposed of his interest in the *Aberdeen Pioneer*, whose name had been changed to *Aberdeen Republican*, because of confusion in the mail addressed to the two papers.

The *Republican* in time acquired a publisher-

editor quite as picturesque as Colonel Drake in the person of Maj. C. Boyd Barrett, a Virginian and a veteran officer of the Confederate Army. Courtly in dress and also in manners except when angered, he is said to have been prone to vociferous argument which at least on one occasion developed into a session at fisticuffs, without serious results, however, and without settlement of the issues. (See *Saints and Sinners*).

The *Republican* had a long series of owners following Major Barrett and finally ended as an anti-capitalistic sheet under the editorship of W. E. Kidd. (See *Saints and Sinners*.) After Kidd's death the paper was continued by his widow for a short time and then ceased publication.

The *Aberdeen Weekly News*, which finally became the *Aberdeen Evening News* of today, was founded by C. W. Starling and Paul Ware in 1885. Ware soon sold his interest in the *News* to Edwin C. Torrey, who at the time was with the *Ordway Tribune*. The *Tribune* plant was moved to Aberdeen about the middle of the year and consolidated with the *News* equipment. The *Tribune* had a power press, and when this became a part of the *News* equipment the proprietors launched a daily paper.

The first issue came off the press on July 26, 1886, and though the press was designed for power operation, the first issue of the *Daily News* was printed by power transmitted by a crank attached to the drive shaft of the press — and William "Old Birney" Brininstool turned it.

Attracted by the apparent prosperity of the

new town, Colonel Shaw, then associated with the *Minneapolis Tribune*, acquired an interest in the *Daily News* and in April, 1887, the Daily News Company was incorporated. But hard times came and the path of the *News* was still harder. The stock changed hands several times and F. H. Hagerty finally obtained most of it. Upon the failure of Hagerty's bank, the Daily News Company perished and the *News* stock was acquired by H. S. Williams.

Williams and H. C. Sessions of Columbia continued the paper until Sessions' interests were acquired by C. J. McLeod in March, 1893. The paper was then published by Williams & McLeod until June, 1893, when the News Printing Company was organized with Williams, Torrey, George Schlosser, and C. J. McLeod as owners of the stock. Schlosser and Torrey soon sold their interests to Williams and McLeod. McLeod became the sole owner in December, 1900, and continued until the two combined with the *Aberdeen American* in 1910.

The *Aberdeen American* had been founded in 1904 by H. A. Pickler and Walter Kutnewsky and continued under their ownership until 1914, when J. H. McKeever and E. P. Neill became the sole owners of the property. C. D. Kimball purchased Neill's interest in 1926.

The American and News in 1929, absorbed the *Aberdeen Journal*, which had been founded in 1921 with Jay Reeves, State Auditor, as editor, and Maurice M. Carpenter as business manager. The company took over the presses and equipment of *The Square Deal*, a Non-Partisan League daily which

came into being shortly after the close of the World War.

In 1928 *The American and News* was purchased by James A. Mathews as managing partner of New York interests, Kimball retiring to California. It has since that time remained under the same ownership, although editorial and business personnel have been changed.

Both *The American* and *The News* are now published by the same plant, the former in the morning and the latter in the afternoon.

Another important publication in Aberdeen is *The Dakota Farmer*, which was established in Alexandria in 1881, and moved to Huron soon after. It was moved from Huron to Aberdeen in October, 1893, by W. F. T. Bushnell, at that time sole owner. Soon after Bushnell died in 1900, W. C. Allen became associated with the paper, becoming editor in 1910, a position he held until his death in 1939. The paper developed rapidly during the more prosperous times after the turn of the century and it became a leader in its field of the Dakotas. W. J. Allen, a brother of the former owner, is the present editor.

The only weekly newspaper in Aberdeen now is *The Northwest Journal*, published by Howard C. Anderson from December, 1934, to February, 1940, when it was acquired by Ira Kreuger. Anderson bought the subscription list and plant of *The Dakota Free Press* from Alice Lorraine Daly, changing both its name and policy. *The Free Press* had been published earlier in Frederick, and was brought to Aberdeen in 1929 by the late Tom Ayers.

RADIO

While Aberdeen was a pioneer in the use of the telephone in the northwest, a good system being established in 1886, it was tardy in acquiring radio communication. Radio station KABR was established in 1935, the first broadcast being made at 6:30 a. m. on January 21 of that year.

The station opened with a power of 100 watts and transmitted on a frequency of 1420 kilocycles. The studio was on the sixth floor of the Alonzo Ward Hotel and the transmitter near Wylie Park. The station was originally owned by a stock company consisting of 65 people, all or most all of them residents of Aberdeen. The group most active in promoting the new enterprise included Harvey C. Jewett, Jr., J. H. McKeever, E. C. Johnson, Dr. J. D. Alway, R. F. Romans, Carl O. Swanson, and B. F. Siebrecht.

KABR first operated as a daytime station, being closed in the evening at local sunset. In December, 1935, a steel radiating tower was erected and the broadcast time was extended to include evening hours. Further development in the broadcasting facilities came in 1938, when the Aberdeen Broadcast Company was granted permission by the Federal Communications Commission to increase the power to 1000 watts and to transmit on a new frequency, 1390 kilocycles. A new transmitter building was erected at the Wylie Park site, together with an additional steel radiating tower.

LIBRARY

It is significant that only two years after the founding of Aberdeen, there was an organized effort

to establish a public library. Commenting on early campaigns to organize one, Albert F. Milligan, pioneer resident and for almost a generation a member of the library board, says: "The town was new. There were many transients and no one knew much about anyone else. Everyone was intent on getting started in something and money was scarce. Under these conditions, the idea of starting a library was not taken very seriously. With but two churches, a library seemed a minor need."

It was, therefore, only natural that B. E. Hutchinson, first Registrar of the United States Land Office, should meet with considerable discouragement when he started the movement for a library. Hutchinson, who is still remembered by survivors of that period as a gentleman of the old school, dignified and deeply interested in educational and cultural affairs, continued to agitate for a library despite public indifference.

As the new town became more settled, the idea gained favor with the citizens. A mass meeting was called and the Aberdeen Free Library Association was organized February 25, 1884. The venture was financed by popular subscription and the original list of givers is still preserved in the archives of the library. The association was incorporated under the laws of the Territory, March 13, 1884.

Commenting on the progress of the venture, the *Aberdeen Republican* of March 20, 1884, reports: "Two cozy rooms are being fitted out for the public reading room and library." The library association was dependent upon voluntary gifts and the efforts

of interested groups for its support, and various methods of financing it were employed. A news story in the issue of the *Republican* mentioned above announces a lecture to be given by A. C. Mellette, later Territorial governor, for the benefit of the library fund. Another newspaper story in 1886 announces a benefit theatrical performance to be given by a dramatic troupe from Mellette in Spink County.

Quarters were provided on the second floor of the Hagerty & Marple bank building, where two rooms were fitted up as library and reading rooms. The original collection of books, about 100 in number, is said to have consisted principally of gifts. The first librarian, according to the best information available, was Miss Elnora Pleasants. Others who served in that capacity during the early history of the library include the Misses Belle McCrae, Genevieve Taubman, and Aurora Koehler. When Clara Wright was librarian in 1894, she was provided with a substitute, an indication that patronage had increased considerably during the first ten years of the institution's existence.

The library continued to grow through donations from private sources and an occasional appropriation from the city council until 1900, when the city assumed full responsibility for the maintenance of the institution. At this time the secretary of the Carnegie Foundation informed Sen. J. H. Kyle that Andrew Carnegie, the steel magnate, proposed to donate \$15,000 to Aberdeen for a library building, if the city would provide a site and pledge of at least \$1,500 annually for its support. Carnegie singled out Aber-

deen for special attention by requesting that the library be named "The Alexander Mitchell Library" in honor of his friend, Alexander Mitchell, who was president of the Milwaukee Railroad when it was built into Aberdeen.

Apprised of the plan to build a library in Aberdeen, Mr. C. H. Prior, town site agent for the Milwaukee Railroad, offered the city a site for library purposes at Lincoln Street and Sixth Avenue South. The offer was accepted and upon the pledge by the city to appropriate at least \$1,500 annually for its support, the Carnegie Foundation made the promised funds available and the building was erected. A. C. Witte, A. N. Aldrich, and M. H. Kelly were named by Mayor John E. Adams as a committee to supervise the construction of the building. It was completed and dedicated in 1901. Since that time it has received several gifts of considerable value and various citizens have rendered distinguished service on the library board. The circulation of books reached a peak of 191,000 in 1934.

The library now has more than 25,000 volumes, besides a valuable collection of pamphlets and a mass of information gathered by the clipping service it has maintained for a number of years. The present board (1940) consists of Joe Kelly, president, A. C. Witte, vice-president, J. H. McKeever, secretary, Mrs. W. J. Hill, and W. J. Allen, directors. Miss Dorothea Heins is librarian.

The Northern State Teachers' College has a library of about 25,000 volumes, a collection chosen of course for use of students. The Aberdeen High School has a collection of 8,500 volumes, well selected for school use.

PIONEER SAINTS AND SINNERS

THE descriptions of people and events in *Aberdeen, A Middle Border City*, are necessarily "bird's-eye views." As a result, few of the many colorful personalities that appeared on the scene in early days have been mentioned, and these only casually. Here, then, are a few family album portraits of men who have become a legend in Aberdeen's history. They do not represent pioneer Aberdeen in all its phases, they are merely sketches of personalities that had a common characteristic—they drew attention during the town's first years. Some of them greatly influenced development of the community; others were merely colorful citizens of the new town.

THE PRIEST

Head and shoulders above his contemporaries was a Catholic missionary priest, the Rev. Robert W. Haire. Converted to Catholicism as he was about to enter law school in his native State, Michigan, he decided to enter the priesthood, and attended France's famous Louvain University in preparation for final theological study in St. Mary's of the West in Cincinnati, Ohio.

In June, 1880, after six years of service in Detroit and Flint, he left Michigan and came to Dakota, where he filed on a homestead near Columbia in Brown County. He built a sod church with his

own hands on his claim and began his long, distinguished ministry to his church in the new country.

Priests were few on the frontier and Father Haire's parish extended from Springfield, Minnesota, to Oakes, North Dakota. But as Aberdeen grew in population it became the center of his activities and in 1886 he became priest of the Aberdeen parish. Shortly afterwards, he induced the Presentation Sisters to move their academy from Fargo to Aberdeen. In 1902 he founded St. Luke's Hospital, later becoming its chaplain, a post he held until his death on March 4, 1916.

Physically distinguished by a full beard, worn by special dispensation because of a throat ailment, Father Haire was a familiar and colorful part of early Aberdeen. He was an ardent prohibitionist and addicted to making street corner speeches on the subject. These discourses always drew a large crowd.

Feeling sometimes ran high on these occasions and the speech was often interrupted by hecklers. Once a leading liquor dealer of the city called out from the crowd:

"You're nothing but a demagogue, anyway."

As Father Haire caught sight of the flushed face of the heckler, he replied: "Ah, a demagogue, eh? If you had a bit of straw around your neck you'd pass for a demijohn."

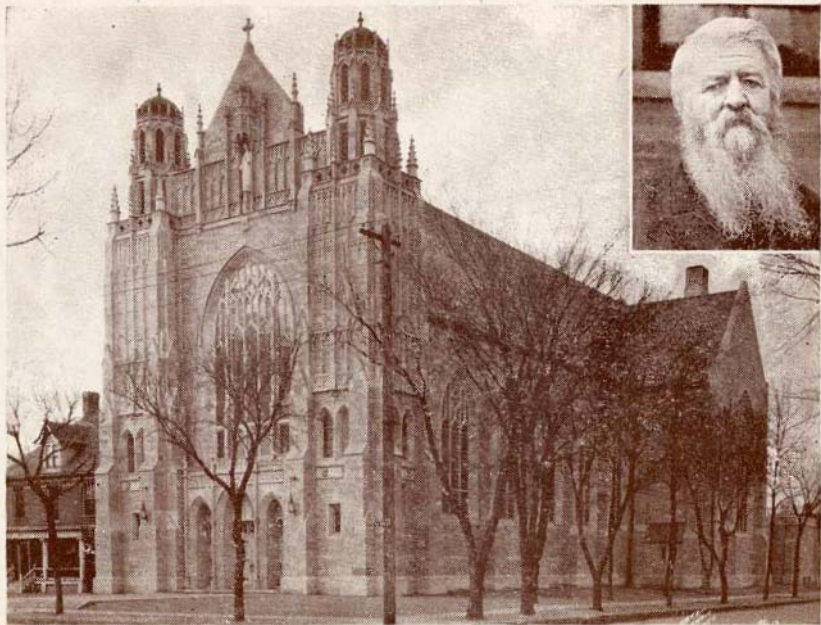
Essentially, Father Haire was a crusader, and he is the great and good man of Aberdeen's short history. He believed in the greatest good for the greatest number, in the intrinsic worth and dignity of the human being, both as an individual and as

part of the social body, and above all, he believed in a democracy functioning democratically on the widest possible base. A vital, intelligent, and scholarly personality, he was yet no dilettante, and he worked long and hard to put his theories into practice. The Initiative and Referendum amendment to the State constitution, which served as a model for others of its kind, was, to a large extent, written by him and adopted by the Populists through his efforts.

He was a member of the Farmers' Alliance and the Populist Party, and was one of the founders of the Knights of Labor in Aberdeen. His outspokenness and independence of thought eventually brought him into serious conflict with the Church hierarchy and he was suspended from active priesthood for a period of years. The charge was finally dismissed by the Pope, who reinstated him. His exalted character and nobility of soul rose above any efforts to discredit him with members of his faith and the citizens of the town, generally. He was probably Aberdeen's best beloved man in life and when he died citizens erected a monument to him on the campus of the Northern State Teachers' College. A large bronze medallion set in a granite obelisk memorializes him as "Humanity's Friend."

"THE GENERAL"

James Ringrose, proprietor of The Sherman House, best known of early-day hotels and the social and business capitol of the new town, Aberdeen, was a man of enormous vitality and "lebenlust." Associated with him in the hotel were several sisters who were the active managers of the institution, giving it



Sacred Heart Church; (inset) Father Haire.



Federal Building

wide fame for good food and matchless hospitality. Guests at the Sherman House still recall the sincerity of the welcome that they encountered there.

It was largely the broader policies of the institution and the bar that occupied "The General," as he was popularly known. His military title was not entirely fictitious since he was active in the Territorial militia and an honorary colonel on the Governor's staff. But for so colorful a personality as Jim Ringrose, "Colonel" was not sufficiently distinctive; so when someone dubbed him "General" the title took hold, and "General" it remained.

Mrs. Bilkins, the fictitious boarding house landlady, whose Winchellesque comments appeared in a weekly column conducted by L. Frank Baum in his *Saturday Pioneer*, had much to say about Jim Ringrose. She referred to the democrats as "jimicrats" because of Ringrose's influential place in the party; and she called a pint of whiskey, a "bottle of Ringrose's pride."

One of the best-known Ringrose stories was the one told by W. C. Allen who published the *Dakota Farmer* in Aberdeen. Allen used to handle Ringrose's printing and always kept a supply of Sherman House stationery already made up, since the General had a habit of wanting it in a rush. Ringrose thought Allen's prices too high; so he gave the work to a cut-rate shop. To his great disgust the stationery was badly printed and smeared when handled. Allen relates how he arrived one morning to find the General greatly perturbed and was shown a box of smeared envelopes. Ringrose, red-faced and nearly exploding with rage,

ran his thumb over the printing making a black smudge of it.

"What am I going to do?" he said. "The boys are tired of this bum printing and they won't use 'drug store' envelopes."

"Well," Allen said, "you know me—I never gave you anything like that."

"But you are a domned robber," he said, "and besides, you couldn't help me out today."

"Oh, yes I could," Allen replied. "I could get all you need for a day or so by 2 o'clock, if you give me the order now."

The General wouldn't believe it, but finally said:

"Go ahead, but if I can 'schmear' one of those envelopes with me thumb, you'll never get a domned cent for them!"

So about 2 o'clock, Allen pulled a box of envelopes out of the cupboard where they had been stored and took them over to Ringrose. The General was waiting for them, hands all set for smearing. He tore off the top of the box and began running his thumb over them, but there was nary a 'schmear'."

Finally, after going through most of the box, he gave up and said to Allen:

"Well, Billy, you are a domned robber, but when it comes to printing—you're a wizard!"

And from that time on, Allen did all the Sherman House printing.

REFORMER

A contempory of both the "General" and Father Haire, William E. Kidd, was in his sympathies much closer to the priest. He was a skinny, disreputable-

looking little man, covered with a pattern of print-shop grime and almost always in need of a shave. With the help of half-blind William Henry Harrison Brininstool, he wrote and published a nationally famous paper, the *Aberdeen Star*, whose circulation at times exceeded that of the town's present paper.

Labeled a radical, and called "Billy the Kid," only half in jest, he would have been the town's problem child if his personal life had not deviated from the popular conception of that of either a newspaper man or a radical. In contrast to the storm of words he unleashed in his paper under the banner headline "SOCIALISM IN OUR TIME," his personal life was blameless. He did not smoke, drink, or swear; and if he was sometimes a little slow in paying his debts, the reason was that many causes enlisted his sympathies and financial aid.

During one period when his press broke down, the *Aberdeen News* printed the *Star* for him. Kidd and Brininstool would pick up the papers and personally deliver them around town. The *News*, which was having some difficulty in collecting the printing bill, recalled how Kidd had labeled W. O. Jones, the police chief, "Chained to the Sidewalk Jones," when he hitched transients to a ball and chain to work on the city street. The *News* editors chained Kidd's forms to a post. The paper missed a couple of issues but Kidd soon obtained some money and retrieved the forms.

A personal friend of Father Haire's, Kidd worked with him on the Initiative and Referendum law; and after he was elected to the State legislature in

1896, he furnished the impetus that led to its adoption. His term in the legislature also found Kidd leading the unsuccessful fight to prevent Populist James H. Kyle, whom he considered a political traitor, from being elected to the United States Senate for a second term. Kyle nullified Kidd's efforts by dealing directly with the Republicans, and selling out for their support.

The meteoric rise of Populism found William Kidd and his ready pen a national figure in a movement that boasted idols like "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman, Mary Lease, "Sockless" Jerry Simpson, Ignatius Donnelly, the Sage of Neneger, and William Jennings Bryan. Many of his friends and acquaintances, who admired his unquestioned sincerity and honesty, myopically regarded him as a harmless visionary; but the leaders of reaction and entrenched politics feared the power and influence of his pen.

Reform movements and crusades — William Allen White called Populism the nearest thing to a crusade in our time—generate spontaneously from an emotional base and almost inevitably badly organized Populism was no exception. It subsided almost as swiftly as it had risen; and with its fall, William E. Kidd lost political means of expressing his theories. His death in 1902 at the age of 53, coincided with the swift decline of the Populist Party in South Dakota. In that year the party surrendered its name and became part of the Democratic organization.

A SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN

Maj. C. Boyd Barrett, of the Barretts of Maryland and the Carrs of Virginia, surrendered with

Lee at Appomattox, with the scars of three wounds as permanent reminders of the Civil War. Finding his Virginia plantation in ruins, he tried to rehabilitate it without success, and then took over the Old City Hotel in Alexandria, where George Washington had often been a guest.

Apparently the hotel business was no more productive than the plantation had been, and Barrett soon abandoned in favor of the mercantile business in the Capitol City itself. The opening of the Great Plains for homestead entry and the golden promise of the James River Valley brought him to Aberdeen in 1884, where he became landlord of the Old Artesian Hotel.

An urge for politics and public life that would not be denied soon caused him to turn his back upon the hotel business and purchase *The Aberdeen Republican*, a weekly newspaper. Changing both the name and the political policy of the paper, the courtly old Virginian found it a convenient vehicle to further the Democratic Party in general and his own political fortunes in particular.

Major Barrett was a Southern Democrat, a former officer in the Confederate Army, in a city traditionally Republican and populated mostly by "Yankees," many of whom had been his adversaries in wartime. Consequently his prospects of advancement were not very promising. The Major, however, was familiar with languishing causes and carried on with vigor and determination. It appears that he was successful in obtaining most, if not all, of the city printing, as witness the comment of the landlady in

Frank Baum's rival *Saturday Pioneer*: "and the uncommon council cut poor Major Barrett's printing bill to \$1700 when they might have given him five thousand. And he is such a nice pleasant gentleman too."

The Major's great political preferment finally came with the election of Grover Cleveland to the Presidency in 1892, when he was named Receiver of the United States Land Office in Aberdeen. Upon finishing his term, he again became identified with the newspaper business, concluding his career as a publisher with the sale of the *Pioneer-Sentinel* in 1902.

His death in 1915 marked the passing of the last of the few Confederate veterans who played a part in the founding of Aberdeen and one of the most colorful personalities of its early history. Physically distinguished by a short, stocky figure and a bald head with a scanty fringe of red hair, he was immaculate in dress, courtly in manners, and chivalrous in the presence of ladies. His besetting sin, if sin it be, was vociferous political argument, which, on one occasion at least, stirred him to engage in fisticuffs. Major Barrett was a southern gentleman, a Virginia Barrett.

"THE LAW"

Homesteader, pony mail carrier, police officer and finally a prominent lawyer were careers included in the Aberdeen life of Ira O. Curtiss, native of Marengo, Illinois. Of gigantic stature and athletic build, he was chosen in May, 1881, by the squatters on the site of the future city of Aberdeen as the proper man to carry the mail from Yorkville on the

James River to the little group of sod shanties which were to become Aberdeen.

The coming of the railroad in July, 1881 made pony express mail carrying unnecessary, and Curtiss drifted into other employment. Eventually he became night policeman, a job that was considered fit only for a man able to care for himself in emergencies without the aid of firearms. He was apparently eminently successful in maintaining the peace, despite the many hard characters that drifted into the frontier metropolis. His commanding figure, together with a genius for getting on with people, is said to have saved much trouble for the city courts.

Worshippers at the shrine of John Barleycorn, who had achieved too exuberant spirits, were somehow in awe of his great physique; and this, together with his powers of persuasion, often induced the celebrators to retire until the spirit of bravado and hilarity subsided.

He finally studied law and became one of the more successful members of the Brown County bar, acquiring a considerable fortune before moving to the West Coast in 1922. Unsuccessful investments dissipated his substance and he returned to Aberdeen in the 1930's, to spend the final years of his life practicing law. He died in his rooms in the Alonzo Ward Hotel in January, 1937.

THE BANKER

One of the more colorful personalities of early Aberdeen was Frank B. Gannon, long-time president of the First National Bank. He has been described as a shrewd, hard-headed Yankee, whose outer shell covered a kind heart.

A keen judge of human nature, Gannon's method of choosing borrowers for his bank comprised evaluation of the moral risk perhaps even more than the financial. An anecdote illustrating this point is still told with much enjoyment by men who knew him. A customer in whom Gannon did not have much faith was interviewing him with regard to a loan. The would-be borrower dwelt upon his claims for accommodation without visibly impressing Gannon. Somewhat exasperated, he finally exclaimed: "What will I have to do in order to get a loan in this bank?" "You would have to be born again," Gannon answered quietly.

Another anecdote illustrates his financial credo. It appears that Gannon was standing on the east bank of the Missouri River waiting for a ferry to take him across. A man in the crowd sought him out and asked for 25 cents to pay his ferry toll. Gannon looked at him a moment and then asked, "how old are you?"

"Thirty-five," was the reply.

"Well," said Gannon, "if you havn't been able to accumulate 25 cents in thirty-five years, I don't think it will make much difference which side of the river you are on."

Since his death, it has been revealed that he was not deaf to the pleas of those who were in real need. He is said to have extended aid to scores of people from his personal fortune without hope or expectation of repayment.

DIAMOND JIM

C. C. Fletcher, a native of Davenport, Iowa, would be far out in front in a race for the title of

"Diamond Jim" Brady of early Aberdeen. Fletcher undeniably had a way with the ladies, as is shown by his development of Keystone City in 1882. The town was platted on the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railroad survey at the forks of the Maple River north of Ellendale, North Dakota, and the majority of property owners were young women from Pennsylvania whom Fletcher had interested in the West.

When the railroad finally extended northward from Ellendale it veered to the west of Keystone City, two miles or more. All lot owners in Keystone City were offered like locations in Monango, and most of them accepted. And so Fletcher's "Ladies' town," as it was facetiously called, vanished.

He then made Aberdeen his home until his death. Despite eminent eligibility, so far as personal fortune may figure in romance, and ever gallant, he apparently was never taken seriously by the belles whose favor he sought. Graying matrons in present-day Aberdeen, who remember him well, recall that Fletcher was ever immaculately attired and that "Fletchie's" lady was always provided with an elegant corsage and driven to social engagements in an equally elegant carriage. But none of them were impressed with his eligibility as a husband, and he remained a bachelor.

He amassed a considerable fortune, which he left to distant relatives when he died in 1938.

ONE MAN GANG

"Yes," said Denny, jerking his larboard jaw to the northeast and elevating his right shoulder to an angle of forty-five degrees, "I am here with both

feet. My voice is for war. I like the smell of blood. The click of the revolver is music to my ear. Three hundred funerals, properly located, would benefit the territory more than division or admission as a whole. Public opinion has ruined business all over the territory. Any delegation sent to Washington will be lost in the shuffle. I like to look at great statesmen and so have come down to look the outfit over. Peace troubles my mind. I want war and a lot of it. Ingratitude deserves death or a worse punishment. A liar should be shot on sight. Major Edwards is the greatest man in the territory, but he is too forgiving to suit me. I want a man who will draw, quarter, and roast his enemies. Dakota don't amount to much at Washington. I am a Democrat of the old school. Have spent my money for the party and never squealed. I have no use for these sucklings in politics."

It may sound a little unbelievable, but this quotation is a verbatim transcript of an interview with Captain Denny Hanafin published in the *Aberdeen Daily News* in 1887 and captioned:

A TALK WITH DENNY

HE SAYS HIS VOICE IS RAISED FOR WAR AND BLOOD

A rawboned, angular Irishman, Captain Denny erupted almost as often as Old Faithful, if not quite so regularly, and the result, like the foregoing little gem, usually made good news copy. His unofficial title was the "Squatter Governor," and he endeared himself to a wide audience who appreciated the solemn foolishness which attended his appointment of

a mythical Territorial government from among the defeated candidates in the elections.

He was conspicuously present at meetings of the legislature and at conventions throughout the territory, and freely, to put it mildly, commented on what was going on, always stressing the fact that a few funerals, judiciously distributed, would do more for the betterment of politics and government than anything else.

A noisy, blustering, talkative soul was Captain Denny Hanafin, but purely native in his humor, for the sense of American folklore has always been exaggeration—the more, the better.

IN AND ABOUT ABERDEEN

NORTHERN STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE Jay Street at Twelfth Avenue, was founded in 1902. The six principal buildings on the campus are grouped around the central lawn in a quadrangle, open at one end. A new men's dormitory, Seymour Hall, named for A. H. Seymour, a member of the college faculty for a quarter century, was built in 1939-40. East of the buildings is the Johnson athletic field. An outdoor amphitheatre, in which pageants and plays are presented occasionally, a greenhouse, and a hockey rink lie to the south.

In Central Hall is the Northern South Dakota Historical Association Museum, founded in 1933 by Marc M. Cleworth, Professor of United States History. Among the 3,500 items displayed are Indian arrowheads and artifacts which, according to archeologists, are exceptional.

2. THE AUDITORIUM-ARENA, Washington and Second Sts., a modern structure of tile faced with pressed brick and trimmed with limestone, was built as a Public Works Administration Project in 1938, with the Aberdeen Board of Education assponsor, at a cost of \$300,000. The theater has a seating capacity of 1,600 and the arena, 4,700. It houses all indoor entertainment which attract large groups of people.

3. The POST OFFICE AND FEDERAL BUILDING, on Fourth Ave. between Lincoln and

Washington Sts., was built in 1937 at a cost of \$425,000. Designed by William Dewey Foster of Washington, D. C., special architect for the Treasury Department, it is pleasing in general effect although its lines are of almost severe simplicity. It was dedicated by Postmaster General James A. Farley on October 11, 1937.

4. The BROWN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, Lincoln St. at First Ave., was built in 1904, of Bedford limestone, in a variation of the traditional capitol building style. The dome is surmounted by a statue of Justice. Several mural paintings adorn the walls and ceilings of the courtroom.

5. The NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY, 116 Third Ave. S. W., built by the Works Progress Administration in 1936-37, is the home of Battery A and of the Headquarters Battery of the 147th Field Artillery of the National Guard. It is used occasionally as an auditorium.

6. ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL, State St. and Third Ave., is considered one of the finest hospitals in the State. The new five-story, fireproof building was constructed in 1928 by the Presentation Sisters, who established the first hospital in 1900 and now use the former hospital building as an academy.

7. An unusual memorial is the MULE MONUMENT in Aldrich Park, Main St., and Third Ave. North. It is a small granite slab in memory of Kate and Maude, two mules who worked for the city of Aberdeen for 31 years and then were pensioned.

8. The CITY BASEBALL PARK, State St. and Fourteenth Ave. South, was sponsored by the

city and built by the Works Progress Administration. It has an approximate seating capacity of 5,000 people and is the scene of City League games and of State amateur baseball tournaments.

9. The MUNICIPAL AIRPORT, 1 m. E. of the city limits on U. S. 12, saw the first airmail flight through Aberdeen on July 3, 1934, on the Omaha-Bismarck route.

10. The STOCKYARDS, Sixth Ave. at west city limits, provide a resting and feeding place for livestock in transit from western ranges to eastern markets. There are 150 pens for cattle and 109 pens for sheep, each holding a carload. As many as 2,000 carloads pass through the yards each month during the fall shipping season.

11. MELGAARD PARK, south end of State St., is a recreational city park. The land was given to the city by Andrew Melgaard, pioneer farmer, whose statue, erected by the city, occupies a commanding place in the park. The figure is cast in bronze and is the work of Alice Lettig Siems, Chicago sculptress. The park is a part of Melgaard's tree claim. Such tracts were granted by the government in return for planting a specified area to trees.

12. WYLIE PARK, 2 m. NW. of the city, has a small artificial lake and a bathing beach. The lake is officially called *Minne-eho*, or Water Behold. The park consists of 25 acres, including a small zoo, a public golf course, and a dancing pavilion. It is a favorite recreational place for residents of Aberdeen.

13. The HIGHLANDS, in the north part of the city, is considered Aberdeen's best residential

district. The name is an example of wishful thinking, since the elevation is a matter of two or three feet above the lowest part of the city. At the corner of North Main Street and Twelfth Avenue is an exact reproduction of Longfellow's home in Cambridge, Mass. The yellow frame house, with its green shutters and white trim, was built by W. D. Swain, an early resident.

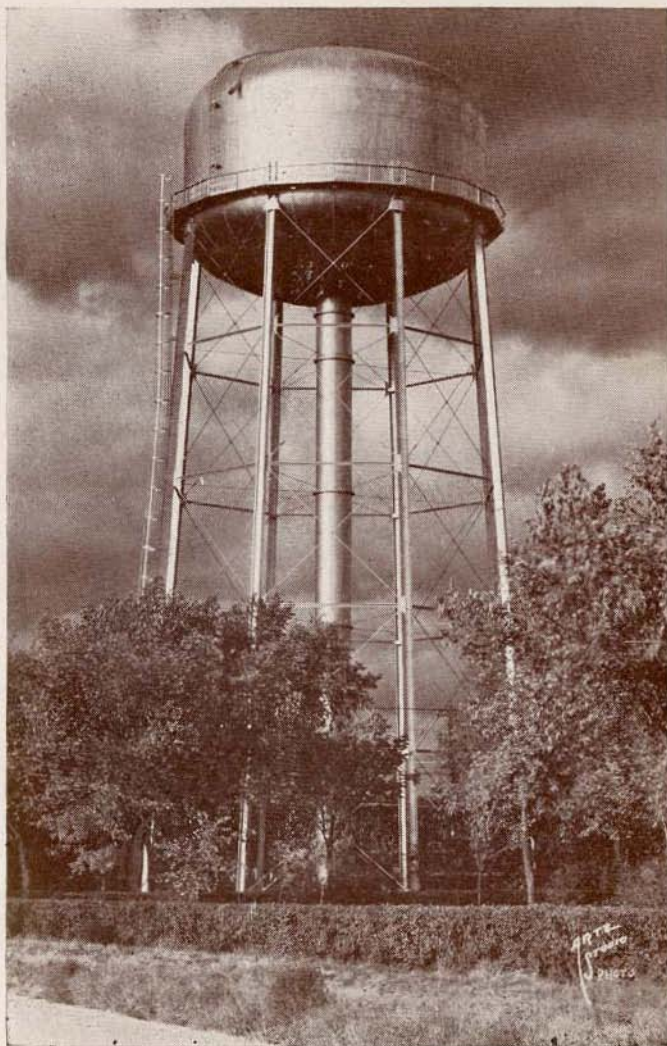
14. MORNING HEIGHTS is a residential section of recent development in the southeast part of the city, beyond Moccasin Creek.

15. WEST HILL, originally platted as an exclusive residence district, failed to gain wide acceptance because a marsh made travel to the main part of the city difficult. Several large residences, built in the 1880's, still remain, but a large number were moved closer in. The section is now built up with less pretentious homes.

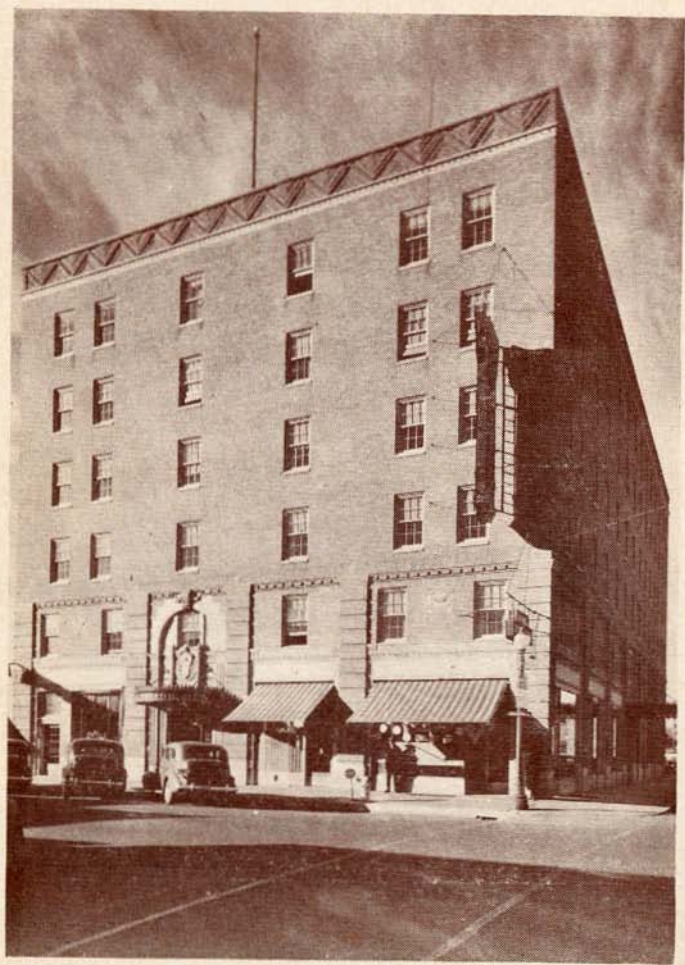
16. RICHMOND LAKE, 5 m. W. and 5 m. N. of Aberdeen, one of the largest artificial lakes in the State, is impounded by a dam 1400 feet long. When the dam is filled to capacity, 1012 acres are flooded.

17. MINA LAKE, situated 11 m. W. of the city on U. S. 12, is an 850-acre artificial lake whose official name is *Shake Maza*, the Sioux word for horseshoe. The dam which impounds the lake is 900 feet long and was completed in October, 1934. A park, a bathing beach, and picnic ground have been developed with the aid of the Work Projects Administration.

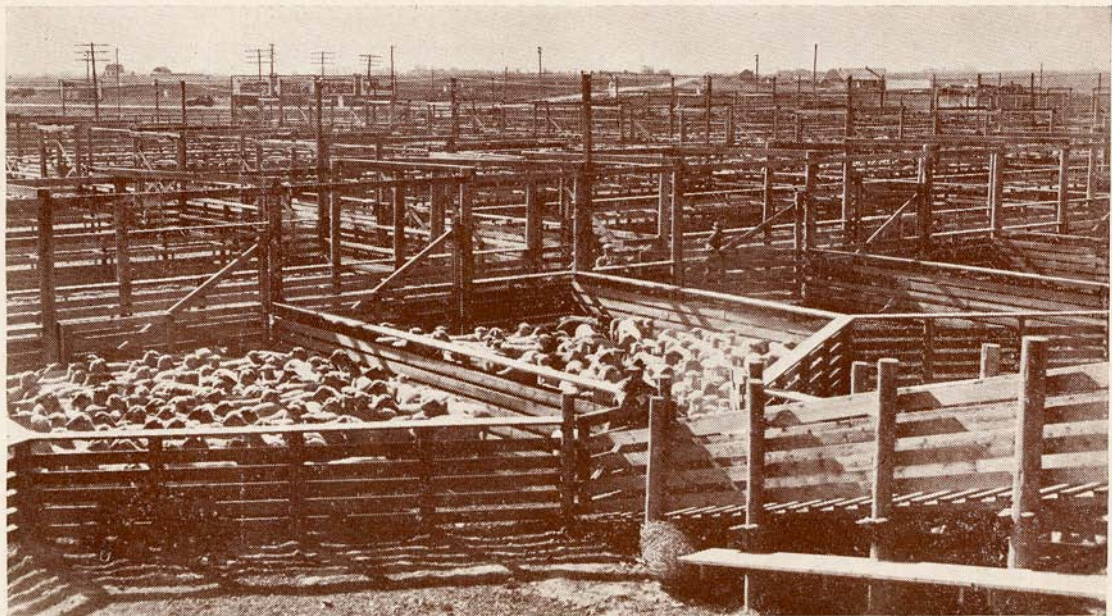
18. The SITE OF THE COLIN CAMPBELL TRADING POST, 21 m. N. and 5 m. W. of Aber-



Water Tank



Hotel



Stockyards



Combine

deen on the Elm River, is marked by a monument. Campbell, the first white man who lived in what is now Brown County, was sent to Dakota to establish a fur trading post in 1822. He traded for six years with the Yanktonnais Sioux, who lived there.

19. The HAMLIN GARLAND MEMORIAL, 8.5 m. N. and 2.5 m. E. of the city, marks the Garland homestead, the scene of Garland's first literary efforts. A bronze plate mounted on a 12-ton granite boulder was placed on the site in 1936.

20. The SAND LAKE WATERFOWL REFUGE, 6 m. E. and 14 m. N. of Aberdeen, contains about 21,000 acres of land acquired by the United States Biological Survey in June, 1935, for a game refuge. Development was largely carried on by a camp of the Civilian Conservation Corps until July, 1939, when the corps was transferred to the Black Hills. A National Youth Administration residence center was operated there in 1940.

BROWN COUNTY CHRONOLOGY

- 1822 Colin Campbell establishes fur trading post on Elm River.
- 1835 Maj. Joseph R. Brown establishes fur trading post at Rondell.
- 1839 July. John C. Fremont's expedition follows James River valley north through Brown Co.
- 1845 Father Ravoux of St. Paul visits Indians and says Mass at Sand Lake.
- 1861 March 2. President James Buchanan signs bill creating Dakota Territory.
- 1864 Second battalion of General Sully's command crosses county on way to Missouri River.
- 1872 Brown County created and named for Alfred Brown.
- 1877 First permanent white settlers, Clarence Johnson, William and Hattie Young, and Benjamin Arrendall, established claims in Columbia Township in mid-August.
- 1878 April 1. Johnson plows first furrow in county. John, Ben, and Ole Everson settle on James River. May. James E. Humphrey and H. H. Slack settle in county on lower James River.
- 1879 April. Government opens land in Brown Co. for settlement. July 4. First celebration held in Johnson's grove near Columbia. Nov. First white boy, James C. Lindboe, born in county. Dec. First white girl, Estella Everson, born in county. Mail route from Yankton to Jamestown operates through county. B. M. Smith secures land for Columbia. Post offices established at Columbia and Yorkville.

- 1880 May 30. First marriage in county, Sophia Black and C. D. Johnson. Spring. Charles H. Prior locates Aberdeen. June 26. First Catholic service in county by Father Haire, east of Columbia in Section 30. Sept. 14. County organized. Oct. Survey for city completed. Nov. Columbia wins county seat election over Bath, Ordway, and Aberdeen. First small group of Norwegians arrive in Gem Township. Winter of blizzards and deep snow.
- 1881 May. Ira Curtiss is hired to bring mail from Yorkville. June. Tents and sod houses put up in Aberdeen. June 13. First store in Aberdeen built of hemlock and tarpaper. June. First church services in Aberdeen, by the Rev. H. B. Johnson. Summer. First bank in Aberdeen organized. July 6. First railroad train enters Aberdeen. August 1. Aberdeen post office opened, in Juniper & Bliss store. August 4. First newspaper in Aberdeen issued. August. School opens in Aberdeen. September. First school built in county dedicated with a dance at Putney. Chicago and North Western tracks laid near Aberdeen. November. New Sherman House dedicated with reception and dance. December. First Christmas celebration in Aberdeen.
- 1882 March 24. First daily train from St. Paul reaches Aberdeen. June 5. First city election, five trustees elected. June 6. Indian scare. October 1. U. S. land office opens in Aberdeen. First church built in city (Presbyterian). First artesian well drilled near Milwaukee depot. Abraham Peldo leads Finnish migration to Frederick.

- 1883 Population of Brown County, 8,000. March 15. Aberdeen incorporated as a city. April 5. John Garland elected first mayor of Aberdeen. May 1. County division defeated. Sept. 20. Twenty thousand dollar bond issue voted to build city waterworks. Oct. 22. First teachers' institute held, 26 present. Nov. 2. Aberdeen flour mill starts operation, capacity 200 barrels per day. Nov. 11. West-bound train service from Aberdeen begun. Aberdeen school building constructed at a cost of \$8,500; enrollment 150. Nov. 14. First fire in Aberdeen burns livery barn. Dec. 5. Bishop Hare holds Episcopal service in Berry's Hall.
- 1884 Jan. A fire department organized. Jan. 25. Erection of First Methodist Episcopal Church begins. Feb. Library association organized. March 20. R. A. Mills installs soda fountain at a cost of \$600. March. Fund for poor farm started; expense for poor, \$100 per month. April 10. Library rooms over Hagerty & Marple bank made ready. April 15. Brown County Bar Association organized. May. Bank of Dakota opens at Columbia, capital \$50,000. May 28. City artesian well "blew in" during supper hour, pressure 154 pounds per square inch. June. Baird, Gage & Baird ship first wool. Oct. 2. First Annual Brown County Fair opens.
- 1885 Jan. Aberdeen Rifles organized. Feb. 11. Aberdeen *News* issued weekly. Nov. County division rejected.
- 1886 Jan. Columbia presents courthouse to Brown County. Jan. 14. Franchise granted for Aberdeen Street Railway. March. Aberdeen cemetery platted by W. P. Butler, city engineer.

- April 1. Aberdeen Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association organized. May 1. Electric light system established. May 20. Gov. Gilbert Pierce visits Aberdeen. June 11. Mass meeting secures "Duluth Outlet" railway. July 26. Aberdeen *Daily News* appears. Father Haire becomes parish priest in Aberdeen. Great Northern railway extended into county. John L. W. Zietlow builds and operates first telephone line in county. Presentation Academy established by Catholic Sisters.
- 1887 Nov. 9. Aberdeen organized under general law.
- 1888 Jan. 12. Great Blizzard.
- 1890 Jan. Susan B. Anthony visits Aberdeen. May 24. Farmers' Alliance picnic. Aug. 20. Irrigation convention in Aberdeen. Sept. 6. State Fair opens at Aberdeen. Nov. Aberdeen chosen permanent county seat.
- 1893 Sept. 11. Grand opening of the Grain Palace. County hires L. Norris and Captain J. H. Hauser to produce rain. Sept. 15. First Annual Ball given by traveling men at Grain Palace.
- 1894 S. H. Jumper, Mayor, issues proclamation to set aside Tuesday, June 12, as a day of prayer for rain. June 17. Thanksgiving service for rain held in Grain Palace.
- 1896 Oct. William J. Bryan speaks in Aberdeen.
- 1897 Tacoma Park established as picnic grounds. June. Meeting held to consider grasshopper situation. October 4. First automobile seen in Aberdeen on display at Grain Palace. Dec. 26. First moving picture machine in Aberdeen.
- 1898 May 2. Capt. Charles A. Howard and Company leaves for Spanish-American War.

- 1899 Oct. 14. Pres. William McKinley, in Aberdeen with four members of his Cabinet, reviews South Dakota regiment returning from Spanish-American War.
- 1900 Sept. 1. Col. Theodore Roosevelt, Governor of New York, visits Aberdeen. Opera House built.
- 1901 Carnegie Foundation offers \$15,000 for library building.
- 1902 April 28. Grain Palace, corner of Fifth Ave. and Main St., burns. May 1. Opera House razed by fire. Northern Normal and Industrial School opens.
- 1903 Pres. Theodore Roosevelt visits in Aberdeen.
- 1904 March 1. U. S. post office and courthouse building completed. March 15. Brown County courthouse dedicated. July 1. Free city mail delivery established. Aug. 20. Public Library proposed; city votes funds. Maude and Kate, famous Aberdeen mules, start working for city.
- 1905 Jewett wholesale building erected.
- 1907 Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad extended into county.
- 1909 July. First transcontinental freight train passes through Aberdeen. Oct. 4. Registration opens for Standing Rock Indian Reservation. Nov. 16. Emil Victor hanged for murder of Christie family and Michael Ronayne; only execution in Brown County.
- 1910 March. Citizens Building completed. July. First transcontinental passenger train passes through Aberdeen. Nov. 8. County prohibition voted. Nov. Aberdeen street railway begins operation.
- 1911 Feb. 28. Election held to incorporate city un-

- der commissioners. April 25. First city commissioners elected. Oct. 25. Pres. William Howard Taft visits Aberdeen. New Sherman Hotel completed.
- 1912 Yellowstone Trail built from Ipswich to Aberdeen. Central High School erected.
- 1915 Sacred Heart School established.
- 1916 March 4. Father R. W. Haire dies. June 25. Sixty-five Aberdeen members of Company L, commanded by Capt. Perry Peters, leave to join Punitive Expedition in Mexico.
- 1917 July 16. Capt. Harry de Malignon and 105 soldiers, leave Aberdeen for World War.
- 1918 Flu epidemic.
- 1922 Yellowstone Trail completely graveled through county. Aberdeen Street Railway ceases operation.
- 1924 Nov. 18. Father Haire Memorial dedicated. Drainage ditch begun in northeastern S. Dak.
- 1925 First Hungarian partridges planted in County.
- 1926 Y. M. C. A. building dedicated.
- 1927 Airport completed. Simmons school built. Alonzo Ward Hotel built. Capitol Theater built.
- 1928 Completion and occupation of new St. Luke's Hospital.
- 1930 Nov. Severe sleet storm damages communication and power lines.
- 1931 Jan. 13. Schense quadruplets born. July. Golden Jubilee of Aberdeen. Statue of Andrew Melgaard erected.
- 1932 Farm Holiday Association stops mortgage sale at courthouse.
- 1933 Sept. Monument at Rondell Park unveiled. Landscaping shores of Moccasin Creek begun with Federal Emergency Relief Admin. funds.

- 1934 Mina Dam completed. July 3. First airmail flight to Aberdeen. Nov. 11. Most severe dust storm in history of city. Northern South Dakota Historical Association organized.
- 1935 April 1. New city waterworks begins operation. June 1. Branch of Federal Department of Justice opens in Aberdeen. Willow Creek Dam constructed.
- 1936 Feb. 16. New low in temperature reached, 40 degrees below zero. July 12. Hamlin Garland Memorial dedicated. July. Maximum temperature, 115 degrees. Aug. 2.8 Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt visits Aberdeen. Nov. Leslie Jensen of Aberdeen elected governor.
- 1937 Oct. 11. James A. Farley, postmaster general, speaker at dedication of new post office building. Richmond Dam completed. Lacey Drug Store building, 55-year-old-landmark, razed.
- 1938 Aug. 10. Harry L. Hopkins, administrator of Works Progress Administration, speaks in Aberdeen at dedication of Armory. Nov. Approval of Northern State Teachers' College men's dormitory by Public Works Administration announced. Elm River dam completed.
- 1939 Feb. 1. Construction begins on community building at Richmond Lake.
- 1940 Seymour Hall, men's dormitory, Northern State Teachers' College, completed. First annual Golden Pheasant Festival.

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*Composed in hand-set type
and printed in the Prairie League
Workshop, September, 1940
First Edition*