

## Side Tour 8A

Valley City -- Oakes -- South Dakota Line. ND 1.

Valley City to South Dakota Line, 75 m.

N.P. Ry. branch line roughly parallels route between Verona and Oakes, North Western Ry.

branch between Oakes and South Dakota Line.

Graveled roadbed throughout.

Accommodations in principal towns.

ND 1 south of Valley City traverses the rolling plain--part of the Height of Land--that lies between the Sheyenne and the James Rivers. The northern end of the route runs near the Sheyenne, while its southern course roughly parallels the James. Near the southern border of the State the highway runs across the level bed of glacial Lake Dakota, a small part of which extended into present North Dakota. This lake existed before Lake Agassiz, in the valley of the James River, which was in existence before the second ice age. Along the entire route pheasants are plentiful.

ND 1 branches S. from US 10 at Valley City (*see Tour 8*).

At **19 m.** is the junction with a graveled road.

Left on this road to BIRCH CREEK HISTORIC SITE (*picnic and camp grounds adjoining*), **1**

**m.** In the late 1830's the Federal Government sent its first exploratory expedition into this area under Jean N. Nicollet and Lt. John C. Fremont. Their party camped in this coulee on Birch Creek in 1839. In August 1863 a detachment of the Sibley Indian expedition under Col. Samuel McPhail also camped here, naming the site Camp Johnson for one of the officers. Later, in 1867-72, the Fort Totten-Fort Ransom trail crossed the coulee.

HASTINGS, **19.5 m.** (1,453 alt., 125 pop.), was named by the N.P. Ry. for Hastings, Minn., which in turn was named for Gen. Henry Hastings Sibley (1811-1891), first Governor of Minnesota, and in 1863 commander of an expedition against the Sioux.

At **23.5 m.** is the junction with ND 46, a graveled highway.

Left on this highway to the junction with an unimproved country trail, **7 m.**; R. here **0.5 m** to INYAN BOSDATA, or Standing Rock, one of two rocks within the boundaries of North Dakota sacred to the Sioux tribes (*see Side Tour 8C*). The Sioux are reticent concerning legends of the stone, saying only that it is *waukan* (mysterious). About 4 ft. high, it is roughly shaped like an inverted cone, and stands atop a circular mound, from which long, narrow mounds extend both E. and W. The significance of the mound on which it stands is not definitely known, but it is believed to be of ceremonial origin. Positions of skeletons and types of artifacts found in the different strata of the few mounds excavated in this area lead archeologists to believe that the mounds were built for burial purposes. Discoveries in the oldest stratum indicate that after the retreat of the glacier the race which built the mounds was nomadic, living by the hunt and on

edible tubers found in the region, while artifacts found in later strata reveal that the race had probably become agricultural and lived in permanent villages.

At **9 m.** on ND 46 is the junction with an unimproved dirt road; L. here **1 m.** to CAMP WEISER HISTORIC SITE, named for Dr. J.S. Weiser, surgeon with the First Minnesota Mounted Rangers, who was later killed in the Battle of Big Mound (*see Tour 8*). This was an encampment of the Sibley expedition the night of July 13-14, 1863.

At **30.5 m.** on ND 1 is the junction with a graveled road.

Left here is FORT RANSOM, **7 m.** (1,217 alt., 297 pop.), a quiet little village hidden in the trees at the foot of the hill on which are the RUINS OF OLD FORT RANSOM. Thousands of Civil War veterans, released from service, turned to the West for opportunity, crossing the plains to the gold fields in Montana and Idaho. To keep the hostile Sioux in check and to guard the immigrant wagon trains on their overland journeys, it was planned to establish a chain of forts across the prairies. Fort Ransom was the first of this chain, built in 1867 by Gen. Alfred Terry and named for Gen. Thomas Ransom, a Civil War officer. It was protected by sod and log breastworks 12 ft. high, surrounded by a ditch 8 ft. deep, a protection never greatly needed, for few Indians lived in the vicinity. In 1872 Fort Ransom was replaced by Fort Seward at Jamestown (*see Tour 8*). Remains of the breastworks of the fortification are visible.

Across the deep ravine running N. and W. of the fort a lookout post was situated on BEAR DEN

HILLOCK, which the Sioux know as Matoti. On the slope of this hill is a large glaciated WRITING ROCK, on the surface of which are four deep grooves. These the Indians believe to have been written by spirits. Two legends are told of the stone: one, that a water sprite traced the markings with his finger, the other that two young women spirits came daily to write messages to the tribes, until the invasion of the white man, when they refused to send further messages. Several tumuli of the mound builders are on this hill.

At **36.5 m.** on ND 1 is the junction with ND 27, a graveled highway.

Left here is LISBON, **18 m.** (1,187 alt., 1,650 pop.), Ransom County seat, named by two settlers for their home cities, Lisbon, N.Y. and Lisbon, Ill. The first settlers arrived in 1878, and two years later the town site was platted. Situated at the foot of the hills bordering the Sheyenne River, the town is scattered on both wooded banks of the stream. The red-brick buildings of the STATE SOLDIERS HOMES, in landscaped grounds in the southern section of the town, accommodate 50 veterans. SANDAGER PARKS in the northwestern part is a well-maintained recreational center (*short boat trips up river available in summer; reasonable fares*). W.D. Boyce (1860-1912), Lisbon newspaper publisher during the 1880's, who became publisher of the *Saturday Blade* in Chicago, is credited with bringing the Boy Scout idea to the United States from England, and a fine BOY SCOUT BUILDING AND PARK on Main St. are a memorial to him. R.N. Stevens (1852-1925), a Lisbon attorney and member of the State constitutional convention in 1889, later associated with Alexander McKenzie in Alaska, is characterized as the crafty attorney in Rex Beach's novel *The Spoilers*.

Left from Lisbon **1 m.** on ND 9 to OAKWOOD CEMETERY, the land for which was a gift of William K. Thaw, a large landholder here in early days. It contains the graves of many soldiers. In the center of the area is a statue of a bugler in the pose of sounding taps, a memorial to the Civil War dead.

At **22 m.** on ND 27 is the junction with a graveled road; R. here **2 m.** to the junction with another graveled road; L. to another junction at **3 m.**; R. to the SITE OF CAMP HAYES, **4.8 m.** On the first bench above the level Sheyenne River flood plain Gen. H.H. Sibley and his Indian expedition camped a week in July 1863 while awaiting supplies and mail from Fort Abercrombie. At each of his camps Sibley erected breastworks of some type, and remains of the ravine trenches at this site are still visible. Like giant, round anthills, several tumuli of the mound builders project against the sky line on the hills bordering the river opposite Camp Hayes. The largest of the hills along the river here is OKIEDAN BUTTE, meaning *place where they all rushed together*, famed in Sioux legend. At the foot of the hill, near a spring still flowing, a Sisseton Sioux war party is said to have attacked and killed a band of 30 Arikara Indians. At this same place in the early 1880's Bvt. Gen. H.M. Creel of the U.S. Regulars reported having his command entirely surrounded by so large a herd of bison that it stretched beyond the vision of his field glasses, and took several hours in passing.

At **26 m.** on ND 27 is the junction with an unimproved dirt road; R. here **3 m.** to the CHEYENNE INDIAN VILLAGE SITE. A springhouse (L) stands at the entrance to the ear-

shaped site. Depressions mark the position of the earth lodges that once stood here. A moat is still visible around the entire site. Many artifacts have been excavated, including traces of pottery. The homes of the Cheyennes were circular lodges, constructed of earth over a frame of logs, similar to those of the Mandan and Hidatsa Indians who lived along the Missouri River (*see Side Tour 3A and Tour 8*). In the eighteenth century the Cheyennes were forced into South Dakota and Wyoming by the continued attacks of the Sioux and Chippewa.

STRONG MEMORIAL PARK (*picnic and camp grounds*), **3.3 m.**, is across the road (R) from the Indian village site. The land was given the State historical society by Frank Strong, and is a memorial to him.

ND 1 continues S. to VERONA, **41 m.** (1,383 alt., 222 pop.), first settled in the spring of 1883, and named for the city in northern Italy.

At **42 m.** is the junction with ND 13, a graveled highway.

Left here is LAMOURE, **10 m.** (1,304 alt., 889 pop.), named for Judson LaMoure (1839-1918), an early political power in the State. It is situated on the banks of the James River, and is the center of a large dairying area. Its history dates from the arrival of the railroad in 1883. As the community grew, an intense rivalry was born between LaMoure and Grand Rapids (*see below*), a rivalry that did not end until LaMoure, in a hot fight in 1886, won the LaMoure County seat from Grand Rapids, which thereafter declined. Like other frontier towns, LaMoure had many

gaming houses and saloons. Residences being scarce, one pious family was forced to live above a saloon. When it came time for the wife to entertain the weekly prayer meeting, the saloon closed out of deference, and the next issue of the LaMoure *Chronicle* mentioned the incident thus: "There were spirits above and spirits below. The spirits below were spirits of wine, and the spirits above were spirits divine." One year LaMoure had no speaker for a Fourth of July celebration, while a popular speaker, Dr. E.P. Robertson of Fargo had been engaged by Grand Rapids. He arrived at Lisbon, the end of the railroad line, and was met by a fine four-horse team and the best carriage to be found. The driver shouted, "All aboard for Grand Rapids! Right this way for Dr. Robertson!" and the unsuspecting doctor was driven to LaMoure, delivered a glowing address, was returned to Lisbon by the same rig, and reached home without having learned of his error. An occasion for excitement in LaMoure was the arrival of the steamer *Nettie Baldwin* in the late summer of 1883. The boat docked at a pontoon bridge, and some citizens had visions of the town's becoming an important river port. Of a second trip in 1884 the *Chronicle* recalls: "The climax to speculation concerning a regular commercial route came suddenly and sadly. *Nettie Baldwin* couldn't cut the buck, or was it the mud?" The boat was left in the water, where it lay for many years.

At **13 m.** on ND 13 is the junction with ND 63, a graveled highway; R. here is GRAND RAPIDS, **19 m.** (1,320 alt., 60 pop.), named for the cataract in the James River at this point. The little village, once a prosperous county seat, lies at one of the widest points of the James River flood plain. It was the first organized town in LaMoure County, and until 1886 was the county seat. In that year it lost the position to LaMoure after a bitter struggle, although the editor of the

LaMoure *Chronicle* dared to sympathize with Grand Rapids, to an extent that won him in his home city the title of "Leper of LaMoure."

On ND 63 to LAMOURE COUNTY MEMORIAL PARK (*picnic and camp grounds, playgrounds, swimming, horseshoe courts, athletic field*), **20 m.**, is a 53-acre tract along the James River, established as a memorial to LaMoure County World War dead. Many county gatherings are held here each summer.

ND 1, S. of Verona, continues over the level prairie. At **57 m.** is a junction with ND 11, which unites with ND 1 between this point and **70 m.**

OAKES, **58 m.** (1,310 alt., 1,709 pop.), on a level rise of ground 1 m. E. of the James River, is at the extreme northern end of the bed of glacial Lake Dakota. The town site was platted in 1886 at the junction of the N.P. and North Western Rys., and was named for Thomas Fletcher Oakes (1843-1911), one-time vice president and general manager of the N.P. Ry. A short time later the Soo Line built into the new community, and these railroad facilities were a factor in the rapid growth of the town. It was incorporated as a city in 1888. The foresight of Oakes' first citizens is indicated by the exceptional width of the streets.

The million dollar NORTH AMERICAN CREAMERY PLANT is the chief industrial plant of the town.

CENTRAL PARK, in the western part of town, contains a lighted ice-skating rink.

South of Oakes the low-lying hills of the Missouri Plateau (R) are visible in the distance, while a range of hills (L) marks the Height of Land between the Sheyenne and James Rivers. Rain falling on the western side of these hills finds its way into the James and the Gulf of Mexico via the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers, while that falling to the E. enters the Sheyenne and eventually makes its way to Hudson Bay through the Red River.

LUDDEN, **69 m.** (1,303 alt., 164 pop.), was named by the town site owner, Frank Randall, for Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Ludden of St. Paul, Minn., who had cared for him when he was an infant. First settled nearby in 1883, the town was moved in 1886 to its present site on the railway. There are many Finns in the community who still use the *sauna*, or steam bath, of their native land. Early marriage is common among them; the Finnish tongue is usually spoken in the homes.

At **75 m.** the route crosses the South Dakota Line, 48 m. NE. of Aberdeen, S. Dak.