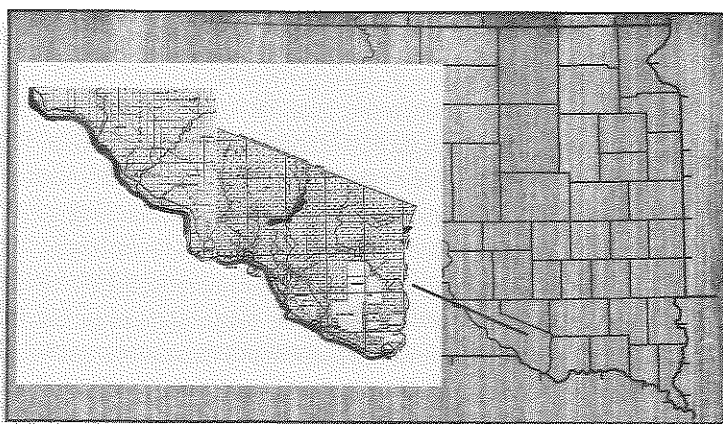


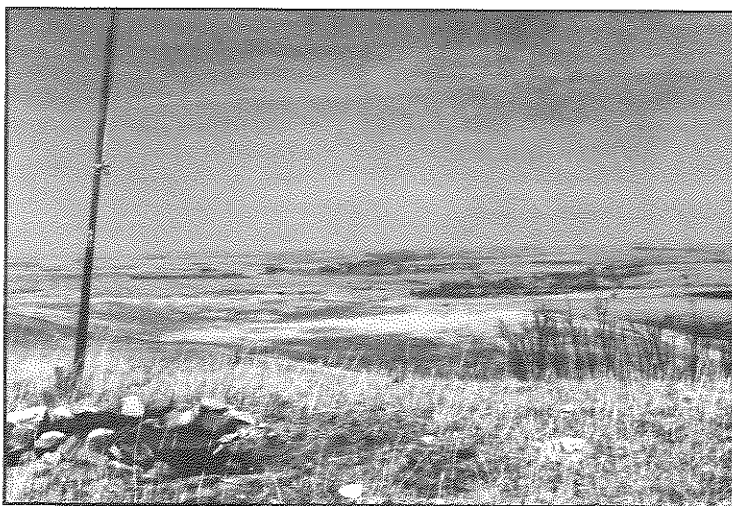
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Charles Mix County, Then and Now

Charles Mix County is the largest and most irregularly shaped of the five counties through which the Sioux City to Fort Randall Military Road passed. Several creeks mark the landscape, much of it rugged, but most historically notable are Mosquito Creek, Seven Mile Creek, and both branches of Choteau Creek. Mosquito Creek begins in central Wahehe Township and flows east until joining Slaughter Creek en route to the Missouri River. Seven Mile Creek begins in Plain Center Township and flows southeast into Swan Township en route to the river. The western "Y" branch of Choteau Creek begins in Douglas County and flows through Kennedy, Bryan, a corner of Lawrence, and Lone Tree Townships where it joins Dry Choteau. Dry Choteau Creek, the other branch of the "Y," forms the border between Bon Homme and Charles Mix Counties.

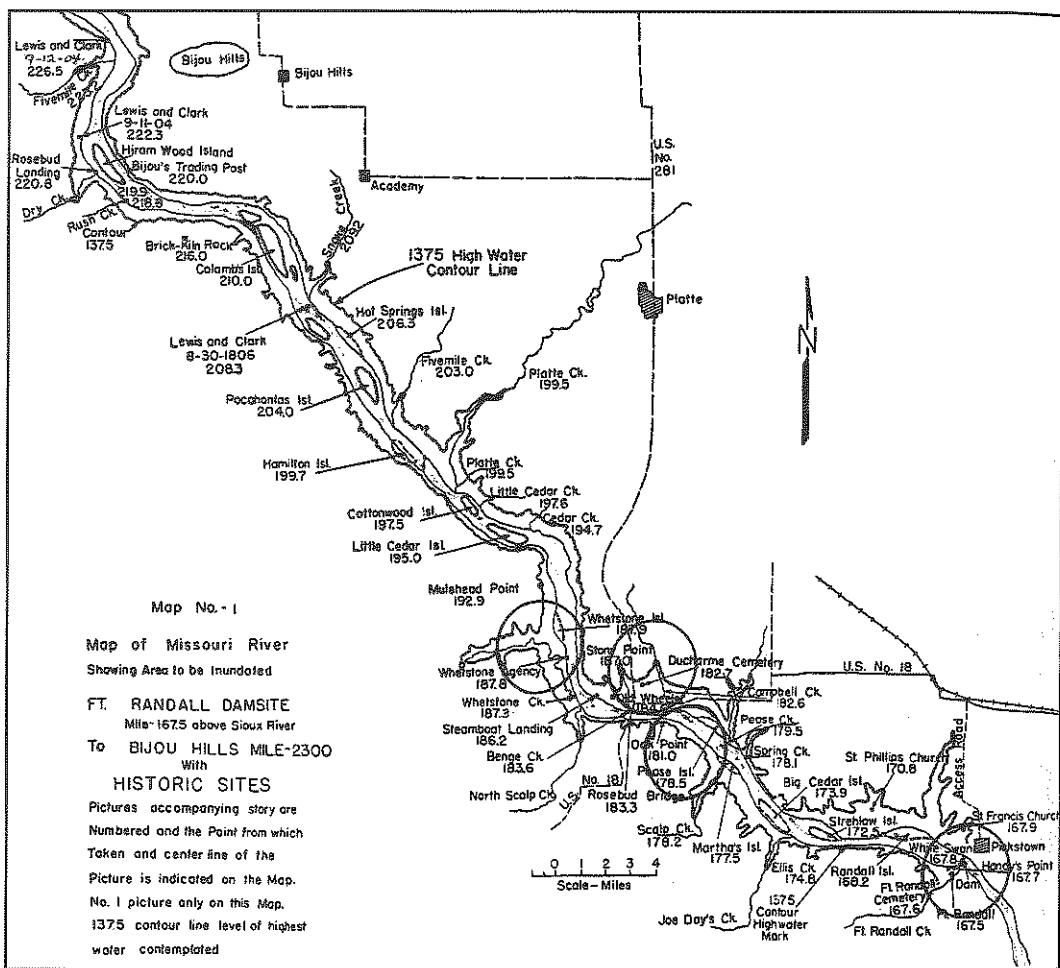
Charles Mix County was named for United States Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles E. Mix for his assistance in negotiating the Yankton Treaty of 1858. In 1862, original boundaries included portions of Douglas, Davison and Aurora Counties. Following several alterations,



A tilting flag pole planted on Signal Hill west of Choteau Creek overlooks unchanged prairie and rolling hills toward Fort Randall. Because of its height and panoramic view, Signal Hill was an important communications post for Indians and military in Charles Mix County.

the present borders of the county were established in 1873, and on November 4, 1879, Wheeler was chosen first official county seat. Actually in 1862, a quasi-county seat had been functioning at Papineau's claim north of Fort Randall along the Missouri River. Lake Andes became the present county seat in 1916. Due to the presence of nearby Fort Randall and the Yankton Sioux Reservation within its borders, the county has played and continues to play a significant role in the history of the Upper Missouri River Valley.

In 1858, the Yankton Sioux were sole possessors of the lands along the Missouri River from Sioux City to Fort Randall. However, establishment of the fort on Handy's Point in 1856 and the influence of white men whom the military post attracted had already changed the character of the land. Among newcomers were river men, rough western rovers, and those seeking profit from wood yards or related businesses. The land within the county had been thought unsuitable for



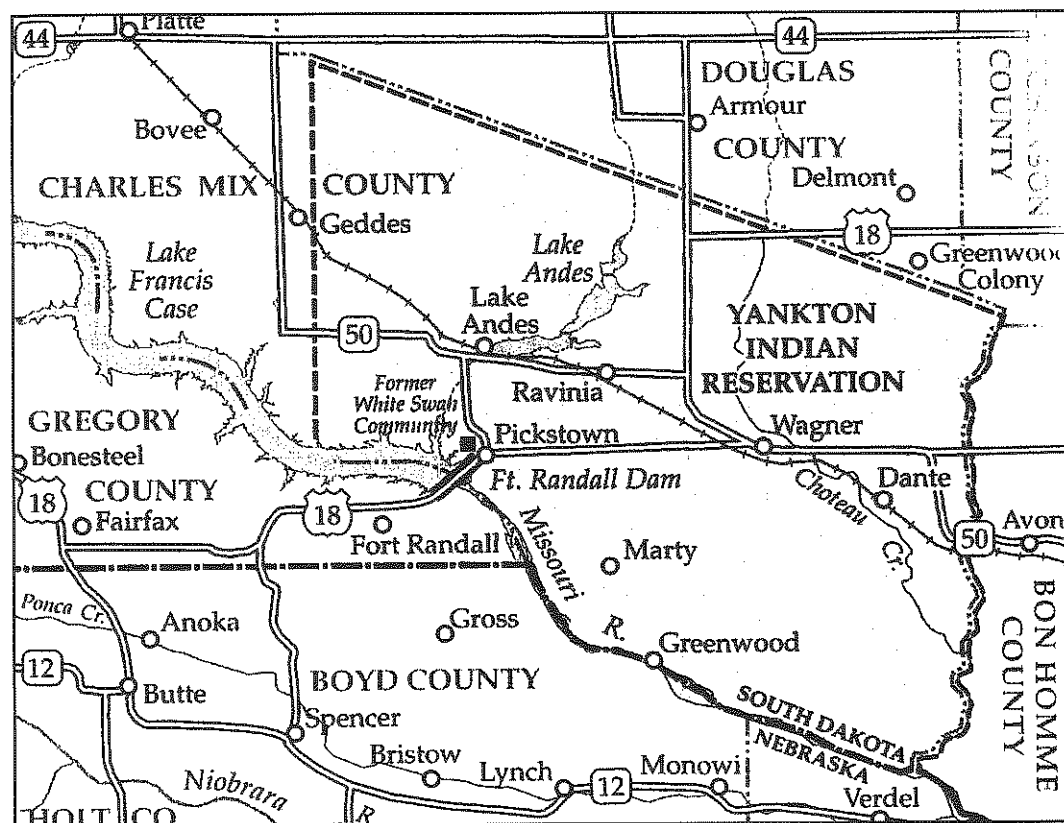
Map No. 1 of a series published in *Volume 24, South Dakota Historical Collections, 1949*, titled "Report on Historic Sites in the Fort Randall Reservoir Area, Missouri River, South Dakota" lists historic sites upriver including Academy and Bijou Hills. Neither Academy nor Bijou Hills, named for the nearby circular geological formation, fared well. Note circled sites (from right): Fort Randall Dam, Handy's Point, White Swan and Pickstown; Pease Island and Pease Creek; Ducharme Cemetery and Old Wheeler; and Whetstone Agency.

farming but possibly supportable of cattle, and a few cattle ranches sprang up in lush bottoms along the Missouri.

The Yankton Treaty of 1858 required that the Yankton Sioux Tribe sell its land to the federal government in exchange for promises of cash and annuities. The treaty also dictated that the natives must remove themselves to the designated Yankton Reservation by July 10, 1859. It was Charles Picotte, half breed, somewhat educated, of honorable character, and staunch friend of the Yanktons, who had intervened when Captain J.B.S. Todd strove to persuade the Yanktons to allow him (Todd) to negotiate the treaty.

Picotte, supported by Zephyr Recontre, insisted that fifteen chiefs and head men accompany the white delegation to Washington. It has been suggested that several bands were not represented when decisions were made, that names of their headmen had been signed without their knowledge. In spite of the Indians' suspicions but tempered by the peace-making ability of Chief Struck-By-the-Ree, the move to Yankton Reservation was successfully accomplished.

The Indian Agency at Greenwood on the Yankton Reservation began serving the Yankton Sioux in 1859 as base for annuities distribution and for federal government services. Conforming to changing times and new government policies, the original village was eventually abandoned and replaced in the 1950s by a residential community with modern homes on asphalt streets marked



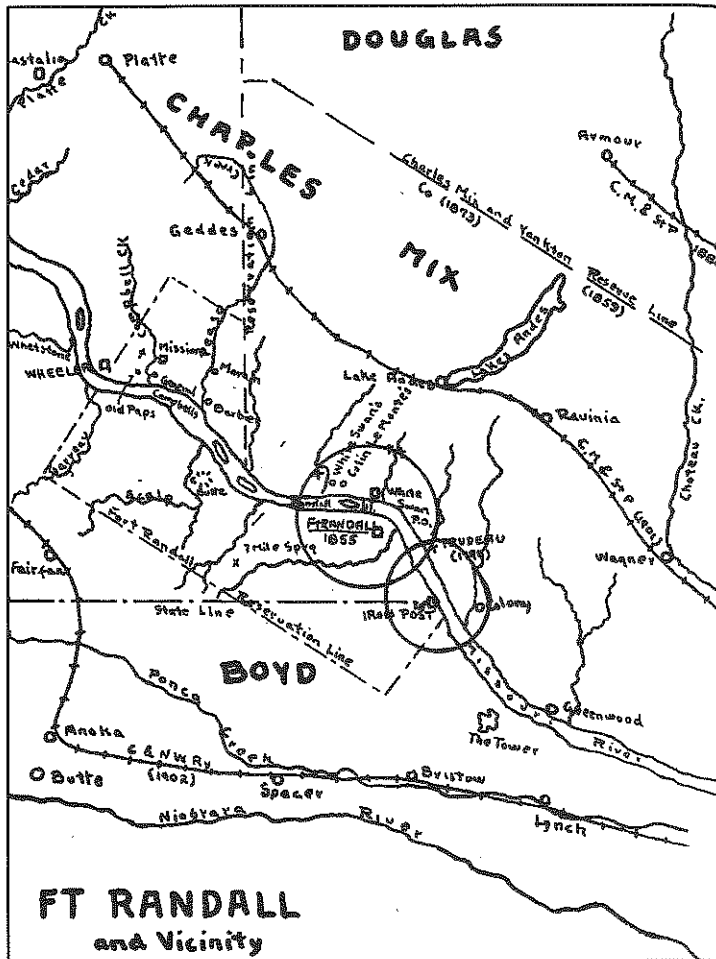
Borders of the Yankton Indian Reservation are outlined from Choteau Creek to Geddes and down to the Missouri River on a map of the former White Swan community published in *South Dakota History*, vol. 36, no. 2

by fire hydrants. The experiment failed and the rebuilt village was eventually abandoned. Today few reminders of the original Greenwood Village remain: powwow grounds, two side-by-side Presbyterian Churches (one long-abandoned), ruins of a chalkstone butchery building, and a very few scattered residences on either side of a gravel road. And of course, the Missouri River.

In 1860, the Fort Randall Military Reserve was established independently of the reservation, its somewhat rectangular boundaries extending from Charles Mix County south into a portion of Nebraska and west into Gregory County. Not until 1867 would the Reserve become public domain, although by that year a number of settlers had already been "squatting" illegally. (On January 1, 1884, a Special Act of Congress awarded homestead rights to all settlers already living on the Military Reserve.)

When General Wm. S. Harney established Whetstone Agency upriver from Fort Randall in 1868, about one thousand friendly Brules and mixed-bloods clustered there. Dakota settlers tended to remain on the Dakota side across from the

In 1996, reenactment members Donald Harrell and Richard Hermanek of United States Army First Infantry of Fort Randall, succeeded in locating an iron post pinpointing the northeast boundary of the Yankton Indian Reservation.



Familiar sites appear within borders of the Fort Randall Military Reserve on this map drawn after the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad entered Charles Mix County. Note "Iron Post" and "Colony" downriver of "Trudeau, 1794." (*SDHC, vol. 23*)



agency, close enough for business purposes but distant enough for comfort. President Ulysses Grant closed lands to settlement in the Whetstone vicinity in 1875 in an attempt to prevent unauthorized traders from supplying Indians with firearms and liquor.

However, many settlers refused federal payment for their lands and insisted on remaining. One notable exception was Charles T. Campbell, owner of a trade store and considerable property, who negotiated with the government for a good price and left for adventures in other places. President Grant appointed his own brother Orville Grant to oversee trading operations situated along that stretch of the river with little success. Recurrent scandals influenced President Rutherford Hayes on August 9, 1879, to rescind the no-settlement order.

Surveyor James C. Blanding, contract dated May 8, 1873, ran governing lines deemed necessary for distributing reservation land among the Indians for agricultural purposes. Surveyors Clevenger and Rusk, under contract dated May 19, 1873, surveyed the 40-acre allotted lands, and in 1874 and 1875, surveyor J.W. Beeman ran township and section lines. It was necessary that sections be subdivided and quarter and sixteenth corners established preparatory to Indians receiving their allotments. Map-making was a challenging task!

By terms of the Treaty of 1893, Indians were granted citizenship and the federal government negotiated purchase of all surplus land on the reservation as by then all Indian allotments had been distributed. In 1905, by presidential proclamation, the surplus lands were opened to settlement.

The western frontier and its courageous men and women have intrigued many authors. Fred S. Kaufman utilized data from a journal kept by his father Charles Kaufman to write a trilogy (classed as fiction but based on truth) filled with actual names and true events which occurred during the heyday of the Sioux City to Fort Randall Military Road. Brothers Charles and August Kaufman had arrived separately in Dakota Territory following service in the Franco-Prussian War. Charles' search for August takes him from Fort Randall through Charles Mix County to Choteau Creek to Yankton and beyond during the turbulent days of the 1870s.

Author Fred Kaufman was born in 1902 in rural Delmont, Douglas County, where he spent most of his life. He attended Yankton College in 1922-1923 and taught rural school for a time. An educated and cultured man, he died on July 4, 1976, just short of completing *Homesteading*, the third segment of his trilogy, in time for the nation's 1976 Bicentennial Celebration. His children completed the shortened manuscript. Books One and Two are *Custer Passed Our Way*, copyright 1971, and *Hunters of the Plains*, copyright 1975.

Many notable figures, some previously described, others noted in books mentioned above, contributed to the climate of early Charles Mix County. F.D. Pease settled on Pease Island in 1857. He was a trader, well-spoken, educated, first county representative to the Territorial Legislature, and like many traders, said to live with a keg of whiskey on his island with his beautiful quarter-blood native wife.

Jack Sully was elected county sheriff in the early 1860s. He roved up and down the river from his headquarters at the mouth of Platte Creek. His first marriage to a Norwegian girl ended within a week by her choice. His second and third wives were half-blood daughters of Narcisse Drapeau. Sully's notorious reputation may have been exaggerated, but threads of truth attest to his occasional quasi-legal activities. He eventually moved with his third wife from Charles Mix County to Sully's Flat in Gregory County where he was shot by a posse in May 1904 on his ranch located three miles southwest of Lucas.

Pioneers from localities near the Fort Randall Road left their marks on the Yankton Reservation, some seeking adventure and others forced by poverty to seek employment away from home. One was John Dvoracek, who emigrated from Moravia to the Tabor, Bon Homme County, area in 1872. At age twenty, he acquired work at the Indian Agency at Greenwood herding cattle for Alex C. Young on a government farm that Young managed for teaching purposes. Dvoracek remained on the reservation for nine years, his most vivid memory the period immediately following General George Custer's disastrous defeat at Little Big Horn. Prior to the battle 75 Indians and one Indian policeman had discretely left the reservation, apparently to join the battle, and Dvoracek's peaceful young Indian friends cautioned him to be alert on their return. When the runaways returned with scalps on their gear, they danced in riotous celebration around the flag pole. Even though the policeman had left without permission, he demanded his pay which was denied. Alec Young, who was highly respected, managed to avert disaster by exerting force to which the Indians submitted. Dvoracek grew to admire Indian family life, particularly the respectful relationship he observed between parents and children, and children among themselves.

In 1922, a young teacher, also from the Tabor vicinity, taught public school at Greenwood and later remembered fondly her two years spent there. All of Georgiana Reichert's students were Yankton Sioux except children from one Cherokee and two white families. Most were undernourished, their diet consisting of hard tack biscuits and hackberry seeds. Students climbed hackberry trees during recesses to gather seeds, cracking them open and eating the pulp, which tasted bitter to the teacher. Health problems proliferated, particularly trachoma of the eyes and head lice, which was regularly treated on Mondays with blue vitriol oil.

Children were required to attend only three days per week, and during free time, they loved to go hiking. In the fall, students and teacher (usually Reichert because she liked to hike and the other two teachers did not) would gather bittersweet, dried weeds and seed pods for winter bouquets. They harvested wild rice from sloughs, used to stuff wild ducks, geese and prairie chickens which the superintendent's wife shot. In winter children would pick water cress (winter lettuce) at warm springs and enjoy tobogganing and ice skating. In spring students derived pleasure from hikes in timber where wood violets grew profusely followed by visits to the Indian cemetery located behind the teachers' cottage in a grove of large cedar trees. There they might straighten cedar slabs marking graves and tamp dirt firmly about them. Overnight camping to watch ice breaking was also a favorite spring activity.

In 1922, three churches were functioning at the agency: Episcopal, which had beautiful hand-made altar and benches; Catholic; and Presbyterian. Reichert remembered two stores (with separate prices for whites and Indians) and a pool hall. Government employees and teachers enjoyed weekly gatherings for five o'clock dinners followed by card games of Five Hundred. The above information has been borrowed with permission from "Teaching School in Greenwood," in *Tales of Travel Along the Sioux City-Fort Randall Military Road*, by Romaine and Carmen Pesicka, copyright 2005.

A young woman of Sioux heritage born on June 4, 1885, shared her life experiences and traditions in Adeline Gnirk's *Epic of the Realm of Ree*. Bessie Red Hawk and her mother kept house at Fort Randall in its waning days for Lieutenant Samuel See who was in charge of the new regiment of Indian soldiers. She also acted as interpreter for Indian youths who had joined the infantry. Bessie was seven in 1892 when the black regiment left the fort, followed shortly by remaining white soldiers, and lastly, the Indian regiment. Lieutenant See, suffering from rheumatism, moved to

Vancouver and requested Bessie and her mother to accompany him and keep house. Loneliness prompted the two to return to the reservation where between them they acquired an allotment of 240 acres located on the north side of Lake Andes. Fish and wild game, including wild duck eggs, helped them survive.

Bessie treasured the Indian ways. It was not the Bible but the Great Spirit to whom one prayed. Doctors healed by herbs, roots, and ceremony. At first, men had two or three wives whom they purchased with horses or something of equal value. A girl walked behind her brother. When brothers and sisters reached the teens, they no longer teased but treated each other with respect. When a young girl became of age, she was isolated in a tent, given beads, moccasins, and duck skins to sew. Girls had no choice in husbands. When she was considered a young woman, she was allowed to reenter society. Indian justice required that if a girl stepped out with a white male, one braid would be cut off, or in more severe cases, knife wounds administered.

Pioneer Communities

Little towns sprang up, most along the Missouri. Among them were Wheeler, post office in 1881 and later important town; Edgerton in 1885; Old Platte in 1885; Bloomington in 1886, and the Congregational school complex at Academy in 1892. Most did not last, their buildings moved to more enduring sites or abandoned.

Other communities included La Roche, named for Joseph La Roche, township organized 1884; Lake George, township 1882; Castalia, town and township 1882, where mule and bull races were popular; Hamilton, 1850s, named for frequent visitor James V. Hamilton and visited as well by Narcisse Drapeau, Pierre Peliscien, Sully, and Kinkaid.

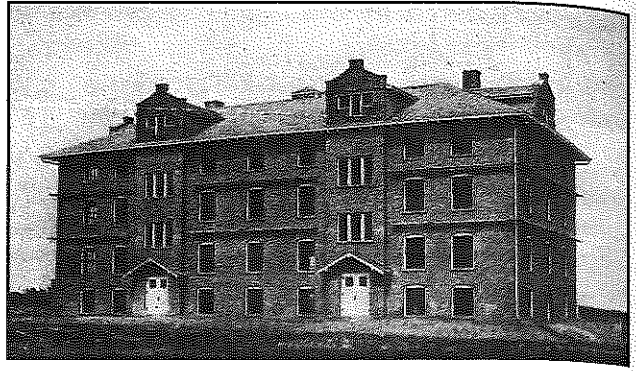
The La Roche region mentioned above was said to be infested by horse thieves and cutthroats including Kinkaid, Sully, Obashaw, Bill Cunningham and others. These men could be sufficiently disloyal to members of their own gangs to the extent that one gang hung brothers Hartrett and Henry Hyer in 1871, ostensibly to avoid splitting proceeds of horse stealing.

A colony of Swedes settled Forbes in 1881, and that year and the next large numbers of settlers from Holland established Old Platte. Other communities included Signal which took its name from signal stations established by a Missouri River survey. Carroll, 1881, was named in honor of Captain H.M. Carroll, who owned the ferryboat *Oriole* at Wheeler. Darlington, settled by families from Des Moines, Iowa, in 1884 moved to Edgerton in search of better water. Rhoda was named after Peter Roda (sic), who brought a group from Sweden. Two years of extreme drought beginning in 1886 caused an exodus from some of the above settlements; however, many Hollanders, Swedes, and Norwegians persisted.

Ward Academy

Academy came into being in 1892 as a Congregational Church and educational institution. Support came from members of the La Roche Church of Christ located in East La Roche Township soon after Pastor Lewis E. Camfield arrived in 1891 and preached his first sermon in the then desolate and drought-stricken area. Supported by Congregational Pastor Joseph Ward of Yankton College, Yankton, Camfield began canvassing for members for his church and students for a school to be located six miles east of the Missouri River in northeastern La Roche Township. Will Burton donated 40 acres for Ward Academy, named for Rev. Ward, which was dedicated in 1893. In 1898, La Roche supporters utilizing 42 horses and their drivers moved the La Roche Church, now Con-

gregational, onto Academy grounds. At its height in 1906, the imposing four-story Ward Academy hosted more than 100 co-ed students and a faculty of six. Warren Hall, a boys' dormitory also named for a Yankton College professor, and other buildings had been added to the complex which then comprised 500 acres worked in part by the students. The Camfields served the facility for forty years until 1932 when it closed. The above information comes from *History of the United Church of Christ in South Dakota 1869-1976*, compiled by Edward C. Ehrensperger.



Warren Hall, Ward Academy.

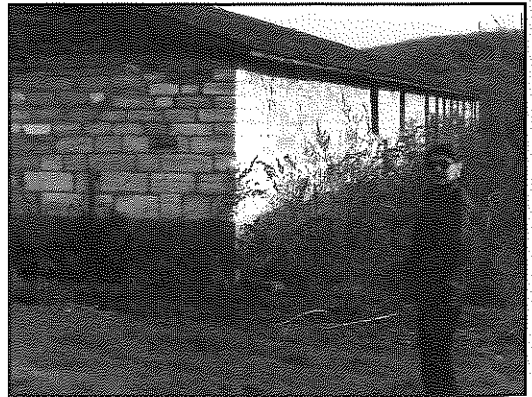
Rising Hail Colony

Charles Rising Hail, born in 1803 about the time of the Louisiana Purchase, created the original Rising Hail settlement about 1835. Fr. Pierre DeSmet established St. Catherine's Catholic Church there about 1853 on his second visit to the Yankton Sioux Indians. The seventy-five year old church was moved in 1928 to Greenwood, where it became a women's missionary house and clothing store. A new chalkstone St. Gregory Catholic Church was built later at an unclear distance south of the original site.

The federal government created Rising Hail Colony in 1936 as an agricultural experiment designed to assist the Sioux in becoming self-sustaining. The colony was situated in Section 36, White Swan Township, several miles west of Marty near Twin Vista, close to the site of the Trudeau Pawnee House in Black Timber area where Seven Mile Creek flows into the Missouri River.

Two years later in 1938, the Bureau of Indian Affairs assigned C.R. Whitlock, a New Deal former Superintendent of Rosebud Reservation, to establish an Indian commune at the site which would emulate the "old culture." August Nylander, who had previously worked among Indian pueblos in the Southwest, came from Greenwood to supervise the project.

About eight or nine families of 40 to 50 members combined belongings and money, borrowing funds as needed from government loan plans. Participants constructed houses, a commissary, post office, cannery, barn, hall for community activities and dances, all of chalkstone, and a frame schoolhouse for the Rising Hail Cooperative Farm Office. A well drilled on a nearby hill supplied water via pipe for the canning kitchens and gardens. Livestock included purebred beef and dairy cattle,



Weeds thrive against an abandoned chalkstone warehouse at former Rising Hail Colony. The author visited in 1986.

hogs, poultry, and bee hives. Sorghum and hay provided feed. At its height in 1941, the colony owned 1,500 acres and earned a profit of \$13,000.

Participants did well until World War II began, drawing young men to war. By 1949 all but three families had moved away and the commune was taken over privately by the Steve Cournoyer, Sr., family. Abandoned chalkstone ruins suggest that the federal government's agricultural experiment was not the correct method to help reestablish ethnic traditions effectively obliterated by European conquest.

Descriptions of Rising Hail Colony as found in *Historical Sites of South Dakota; a guidebook*, copyright 1980, and Adeline S. Gnirk's *Epic of the Realm of Ree*, copyright 1984, are not in total agreement.

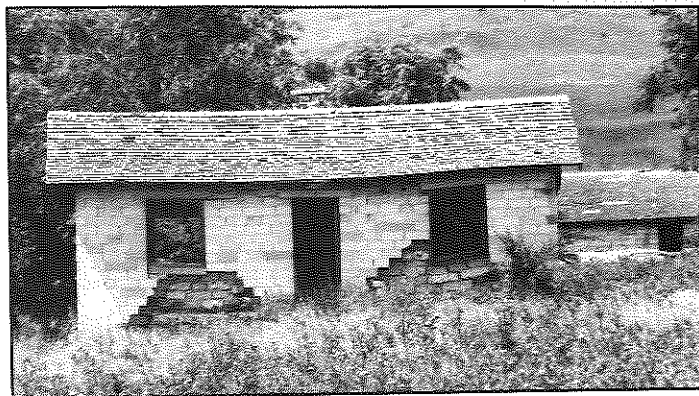
Current Towns in Charles Mix County

The names of many of the twenty-five townships in Charles Mix County reflect colorful mixed heritages. Within those townships, eight towns continue to serve the citizenry, the most recent the residential village of Pickstown built by the federal government in the 1950s during construction of Fort Randall Dam. Six of the other seven, Geddes, Platte, Wagner, Lake Andes, Dante and Ravinia, were railroad towns, all founded in or after 1900.

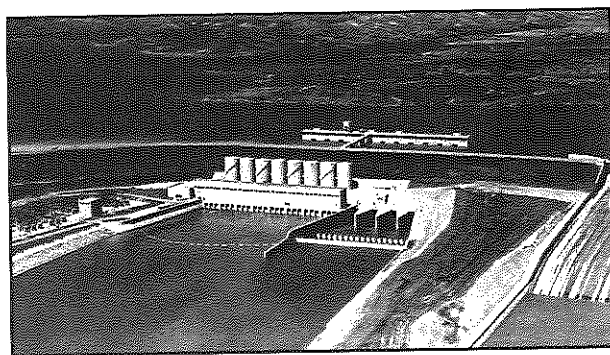
The seventh town, Marty, is a residential Indian village which effectively replaced the original village of Greenwood by the Missouri River. Marty has grown substantially adjacent to the grounds of the former Marty Mission Catholic complex.

Within a very few years of its founding in 1900 and incorporation in 1905, Geddes became a prominent business center of more than 400 residents; however, today only about 250 reside there.

Old Platte was put on wheels and moved to the railroad at (new) Platte in 1900, accompanied soon by Old Edgerton and Old Castalia. Dutch heritage remains strong in Platte Township and the town of Platte retains a solid population of more than 1,350.



A photo taken in 1986 on former Rising Hail Colony grounds shows deteriorated condition of a chalkstone building which may have been a home.



A pristine Fort Randall Dam began creating Lake Francis Case immediately after completion in 1946, the first of four dams erected on the Missouri River in South Dakota.

When a Sioux Indian woman gave up her allotment in Section 10 of today's East White Swan Township, Miss Lorena Pierce established a store and post office there that she named Lake Andes. Later, when Indian allotments became available for public purchase, the Lake Andes Townsite Company acquired 80 acres in nearby Section 4. The town of Lake Andes, county seat today, was born when the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad placed a siding at that location. Lake Andes was platted on April 21, 1904, today has a population of less than 800.

Dante, a railroad town, was platted as Mayo on April 5, 1907, in Lone Tree Township. A recent South Dakota Highway Map lists a total of near 80 residents in a village which grew around its Assumption Catholic Church and will celebrate its centennial in 2010.

Ravinia was established in 1909 in Plain Center Township. Like Dante, population of the once active town hovers between 70 and 80.

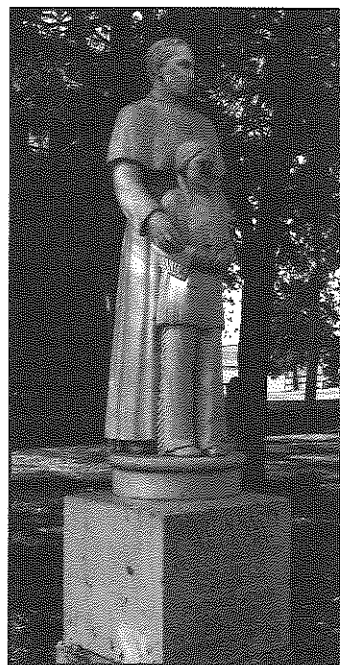
Wagner, platted in 1900 at its present site, began as post office and store four miles south close by the Sioux City to Fort Randall Road. Howard Wagner, son of prominent Bon Homme County resident Captain Benjamin R. Wagner, operated the store. The United States Census Bureau estimates Wagner's current population to be about 1,700. Its citizenry creatively celebrates Labor Day each September with a well-attended parade, rodeo, craft show and other attractions.

Marty Mission

Marty originated on allotment land in 1913, six miles west and six miles south of Wagner. According to the *Bishop's Bulletin*, August 2008, published by the Sioux Falls Diocese, the Catholic Indian Bureau had moved tiny St. Paul Catholic Chapel, purchased for \$1,100, twenty miles across prairie to the Marty site. It was dedicated on October 22, 1919. The first buildings on campus were built from salvage materials derived in 1925 from no longer used government school buildings at Greenwood. In 1931, Catholic priest Sylvester Eisenman bought sufficient land to erect a flour mill and farm buildings and in 1932, erected a residence and chapel for nuns. The Oblate Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, a native religious community, arrived in 1935. The priest continued developing the Catholic mission and boarding school he named Marty Mission in honor of Bishop Martin Marty, Sioux Indian missionary.

The present distinctive landmark St. Paul's Catholic Church was built on campus of Bedford limestone and cement in 1942, its impressive 167-foot steeple visible from miles around. Sculptures and stained glass windows feature native people. The small community of Oblate Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament live in a small convent on the premises and care for the church, which has not had a resident priest since 1984.

Fr. Martin Marty gazes pensively at grounds of the original Marty Mission Indian School from a statue inscribed as follows: "**Tamahecha**, Apostle of the Sioux Indians, First Abbot of the Benedictines, St. Meinrad Indiana, Vicar Apostolic of Dakota Territory, First Bishop of Sioux Falls, 1834-1896." Marty's arms encircle an Indian youth whose face has been marred.



On March 18, 1975, ownership of Marty Mission Indian School was transferred from the Benedictine Fathers centered at Blue Cloud Agency to the Yankton Sioux Tribe, and has operated under that system since. Today a large number of native homes cluster around a modern educational Kindergarten through 12th grade facility built in recent years across the road northeast of the aging brick boarding school campus. An Indian cemetery lies just north of the former mission grounds.

The Yankton Sioux Tribe Today

At present, Yankton Sioux Indian Agency Administration, Bureau of Indian Affairs Law Enforcement, Yankton Sioux Tribal Housing Authority, and Indian Health Service facilities are located within or adjacent to the city limits of Wagner and contribute in large measure to the town's active economy. Government housing for BIA and IHS employees is available in Wagner, and Rural Mutual Help Homes are scattered throughout the county.

Sioux Tribe Headquarters and Enrollment Clerk are located at Marty, as is Ianktonwan College. The Enrollment Clerk reported in August 2009 that a January 21, 2009, census listed 1,933 Sioux females and 2,005 Sioux males currently living on the Yankton Reservation. Off reservation, females numbered 2,753 and males 3,641.

In a unique cooperative effort between the Yankton Tribe, Indian Health Service and United States Department of Veterans Affairs, ground was broken in mid-August 2009 in Wagner for a new United States Veterans Outpatient Clinic. The tribe donated land for the 3,000-square foot modular building planned to save travel for as many as 1,000 veterans from Gregory, Charles Mix, Douglas and Bon Homme counties as well as Holt, Boyd and Knox counties in Nebraska.

Less cooperative has been settling the seventeen-year-old legal endeavor by the Yankton Sioux Tribe to force the State of South Dakota and Charles Mix County to acknowledge that a small part of the once huge reservation still exists and therefore remains under legal jurisdiction of the tribe and federal government. The adversaries have argued that the reservation was disestablished in the late 1800s.

On August 18, 2009, the Eighth United States Circuit Court of Appeals voted in favor of the tribe, writing, "While the fractured configuration of the Yankton Sioux Reservation may not seem ideal to various parties, it is a historic artifact resulting from shifting federal policy." The reservation now includes 37,000 acres, (down from the original 430,000 acres), most of which the federal government now holds in trust for the tribe and individual tribal members.

Following the legal victory, 2009 Tribal Chairman Robert Cournoyer urged his constituents, "Hopefully in the spirit of cooperation, we (now) continue to move forward to a positive end." Past Vice Chairman John Stone added, "...and make a commitment to take educated programs to ensure that we as a tribe still exist 120 years from now."