

Ward County

WARD county up to 1908 was the largest county in the state, largest in point of population and extent of miles--and was known as the "Imperial" county of Ward. In 1908 Mountrail county was stricken off, and later two other new counties, namely, Burke and Renville, were created.

The first settlers who came to the region now known as Ward county in the early eighties were Elmer Francis, who is still a resident of this region, William H. Wilson, and later, Dick Copeland, who is now publishing a paper at Havre, Montana. James Johnson came here in 1884, and located at Burlington, which was the first county seat. There was quite an influx of settlers from 1881 to 1886. In the fall of 1886, the Great Northern railroad, then known as the Manitoba, reached Minot from Devils Lake.

In the summer of 1886, Olaf Olson, Ole Spokle, Ed. Kattleson, and Erick Ramstad located in the immediate vicinity of Minot. Erick Ramstad filed on a tract of land which is now on the north side of Minot, and brick's mother filed on a tract which now includes the business district and a portion of the residence district on the south side of Minot.

The year 1887 saw busy times for the village of Minot. The town was incorporated in the spring of 1887 and James H. Schofield, who is still one of the substantial business men of Minot, was elected the first mayor. At that time, Minot had about four hundred inhabitants. In 1890, thirteen years later, Minot had one thousand two hundred and seventy people and the Federal census for 1910 shows Minot and North Minot, which, during the year 1911, has been incorporated as a part of Minot, to have a population of six thousand seven hundred twenty.

Minot is situated in the heart of the Mouse River Loop, and is located at the intersection of two great competing transcontinental lines of railway, the Great Northern and the Soo. It is located on the Mouse river, one of the historic streams of the state, and its future is assured.

Outside of the Red River Valley counties, Ward county has

less waste land than almost any county in the state. It is estimated that ninety-eight per cent of the county is arable. Because of the abundance of free land and cheap land east of Ward county, and also because of the financial and industrial depression which spread over the United States between 1893 and 1897, Ward county was sparsely settled until about 1898, when an influx of settlers took place; but

between 1898 and 1905 the population of Ward county increased from approximately four thousand five hundred people to forty thousand people, while the census for 1910 shows the territory embraced in Ward county up to 1908 to have a population of fifty-nine thousand. Perhaps no region in the United States, outside of the mining and oil regions, has grown so rapidly or has developed so substantially and permanently as Ward county from 1898 to 1906, which year practically saw the last of the free land within the county.

In ability to produce all the crops known to this region Ward county has been the peer of any county in the state. Our production of wheat, flax, and other cereals has been enormous. In twelve years land has gone from no price to fifty dollars an acre, and perhaps the average of improved land in all that part of the county east of the Coteaus would average in price above \$35.00 per acre, and it is cheap, exceedingly cheap at this price, as our lands will produce as many dollars per acre and perhaps on the average more, certainly more with the same workmanship and labor expended, than the high priced land of Iowa and Illinois.

The increase in the acreage of corn in Ward county for the year 1911 is estimated at five hundred per cent. The statistics, as will be, later shown by the assessor's report, are not yet available. but the per cent given is estimated, to be conservative. The assessed valuation of Ward county is in the neighborhood of fourteen millions of dollars; which is one of the largest in the state.

Ward county is peopled by a lot of hardy yeomanry, the great bulk of our population coming from the middle western states, such as Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana and Illinois. Perhaps more than forty per cent of the people of Ward county are of Scandinavian origin, than whom no people are more successful pioneer.

Ward county has produced as high as sixteen bushels of flax per acre on an average, and is recognized as the greatest flax growing county in the state.

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BOOK

NORTH DAKOTA YEAR

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The acreage in corn has increased 35 per cent and the number of hogs and milch cows to the same extent during the past two years.

Ward county has three hundred eighty-five miles of railroad, 365 schools, thirty-six state and national banks, and sixty-one post offices. It has two and one-half head of cattle on an average to every man, woman and child in the county, making it one of the good stock counties of the state. The United States Geological Survey figures that Ward county has more tons of coal underlying its surface than has any other county in the state, and North Dakota has more tons of coal underlying its surface than has any

other state in the Union. The average altitude of Ward county is one thousand five hundred eighty feet, which is supposed to be nearly ideal for all grain crops.

At Minot there is established and running a lignite coal briquetting plant. Erected at a cost of \$150,000, this plant has a capacity of 100 tons per day. The quality of these briquets in heating power equals that of anthracite coal. It is, the opinion of thoughtful, conservative business men, that the establishing of this institution marks a new era in the use of lignite coal. It is believed and fully expected that, at an early period, one of the byproducts--gas--will heat the homes and furnish electricity not only for the city of Minot, but for other towns and cities at distant points. It means cheap power and cheap power means manufacturing industries.

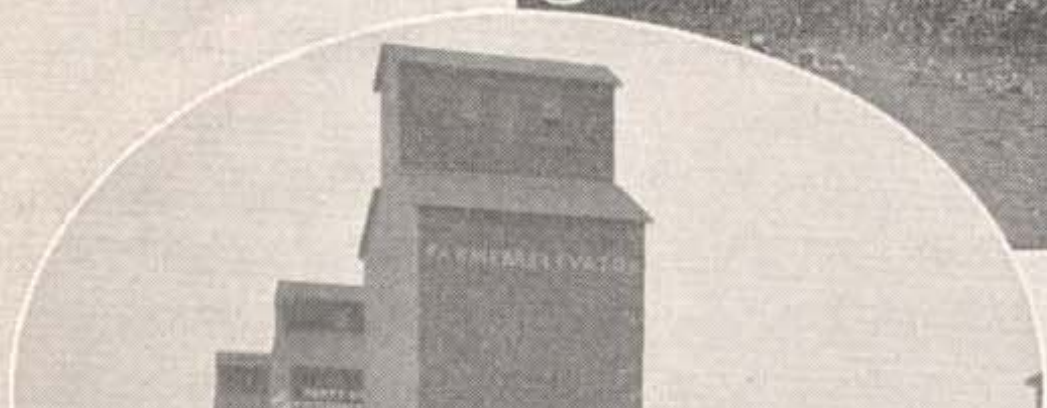
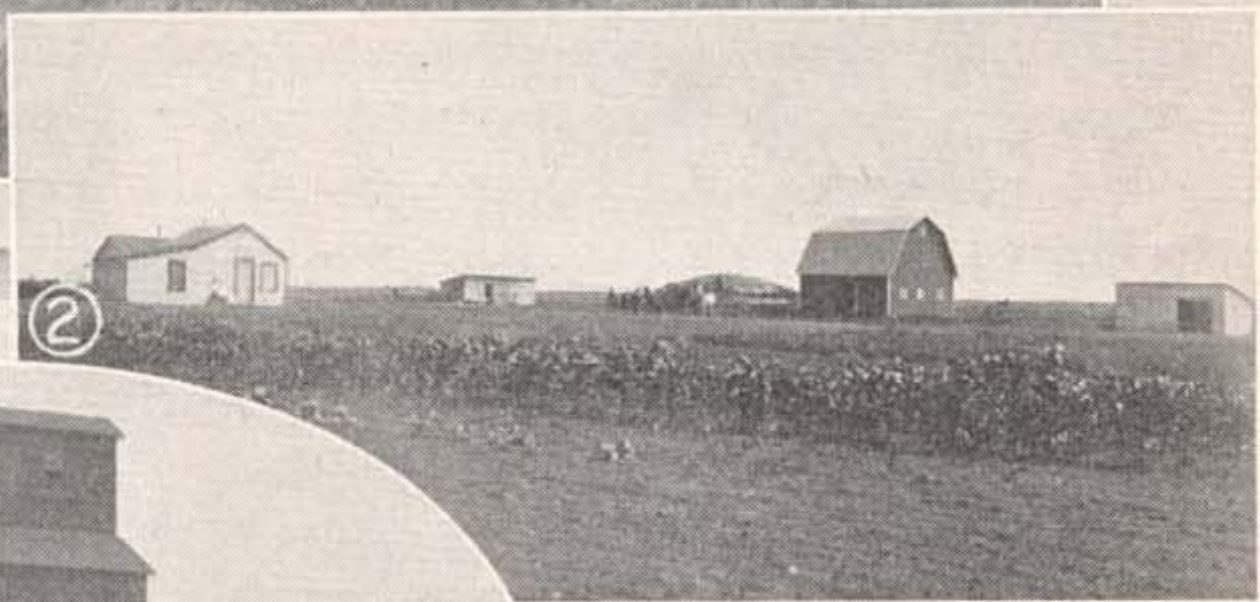
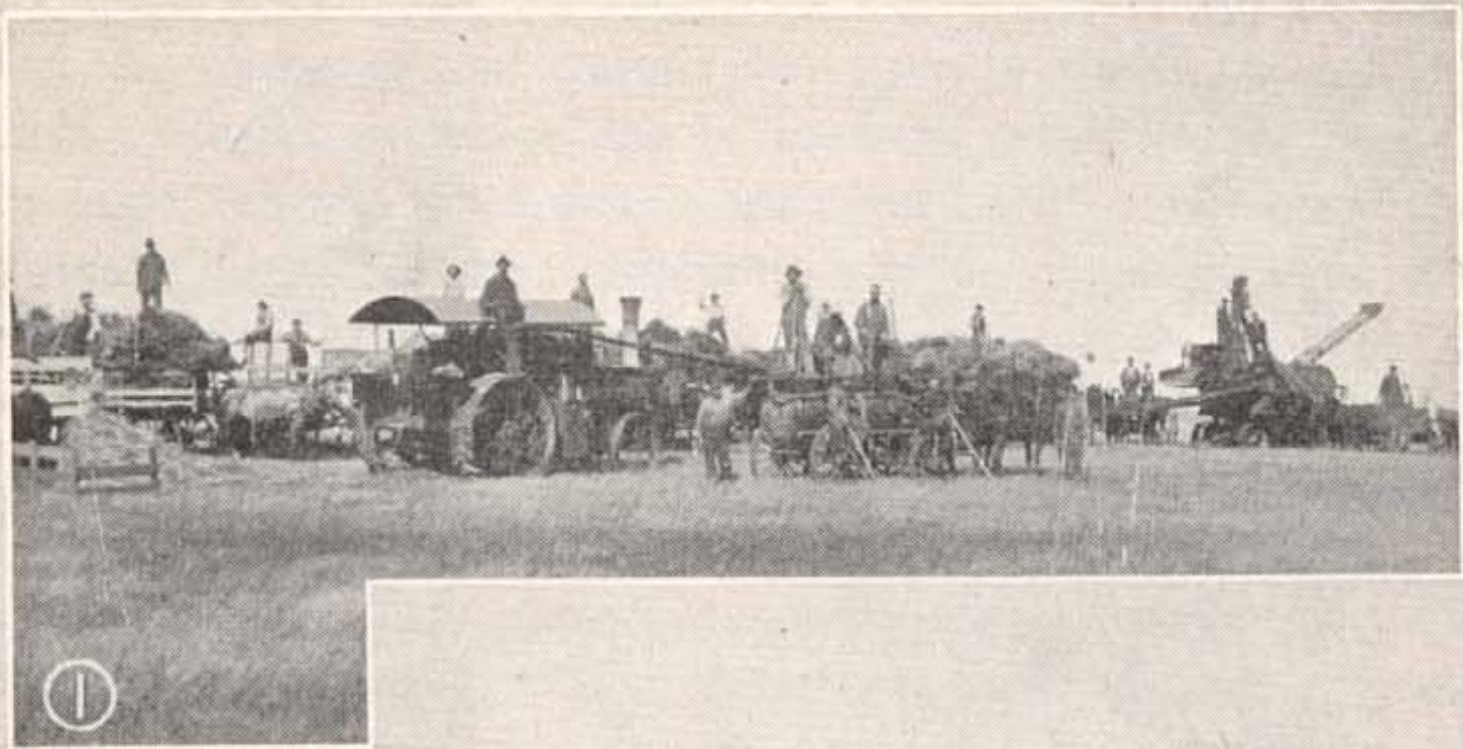
Minot, the metropolis not only of Ward county, but of all the western part of the state, is one of the greatest distributing points for farm machinery in the world. Minot is growing steadily and for the year 1911 the buildings erected approximated a million dollars in value. The banks in the city of Minot have deposits of nearly two millions of dollars. It has one of the three first class post offices of the state, its postal receipts exceeding fortytwo thousand dollars yearly. It has a large number of wholesale houses tend two of the largest wholesale grocery houses in the state. Its retail merchants are prosperous; its schools are flourishing, and its citizens are leading happy, contented lives, and all pulling together to make Minot the largest city in the commonwealth of North Dakota.

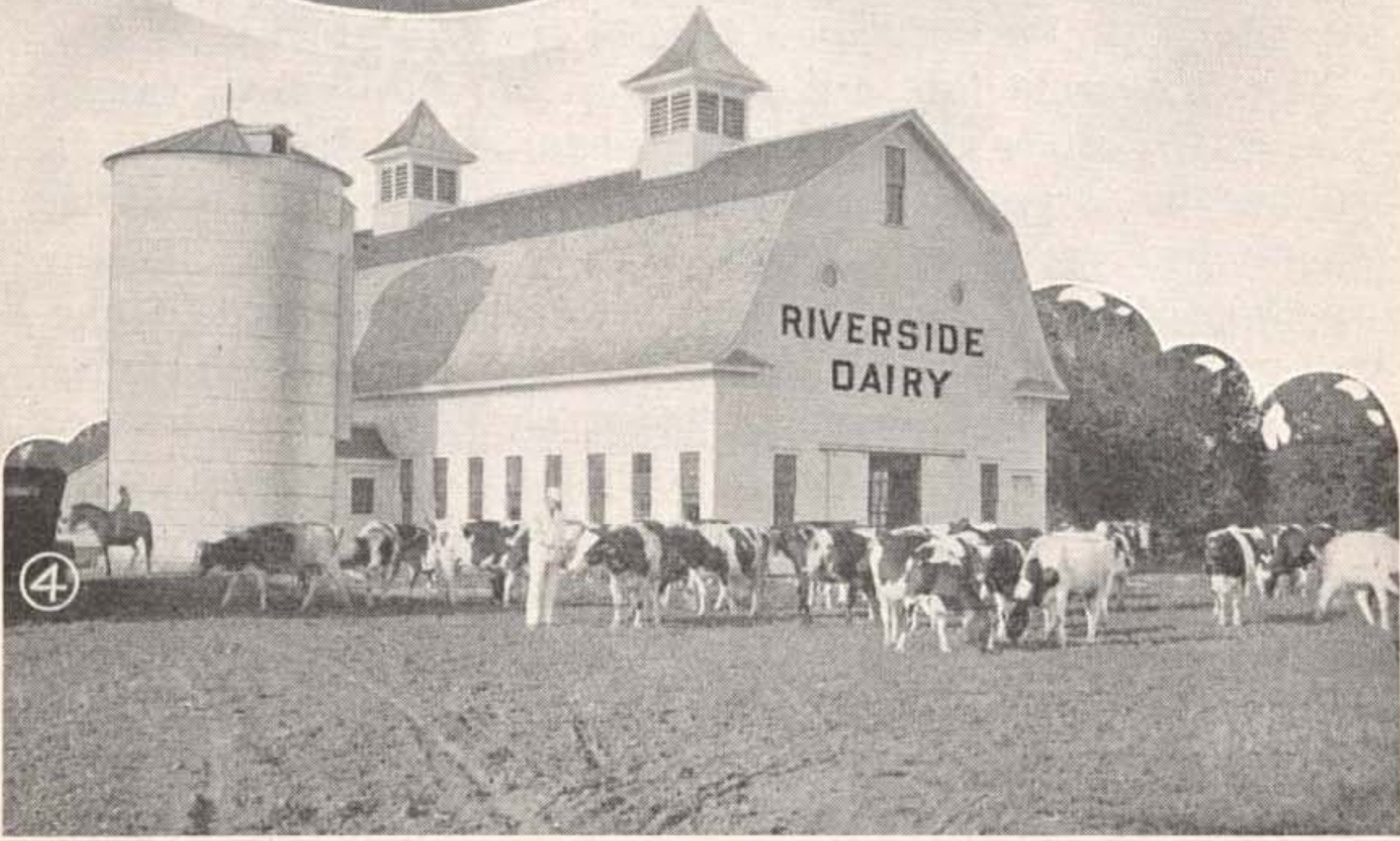
At Minot is also located one of the state's normal schools, erected at a cost of \$240,000.00. The buildings are made of rein-

forced concrete, with Hebron pressed brick finish. In point of design, convenience of arrangement, and durability of structure, they are the latest best thought in modern educational architecture. The large number of students in attendance at this school for the opening year is ample evidence that in the course of a very few years, this school will be one of the state's largest and strongest educational institutions.

Other towns in the county enjoying a rapid growth and taking a leading part in the development of their respective tributary territories are Kenmare, with a population according to the last census of nearly 1,500, Sawyer, Carpio and Donnybrook on the "Soo," and Surrey, Des Lacs, Berthold, Kenaston on the Great Northern.

Nothwithstanding the separation from her of the counties of Burke, Renville and Mountrail, Ward county does not seem to have suffered materially in her agricultural output, which for 1912 was as follows: Spring wheat, 2,213,430 bushels; durum wheat, 21,495 bushels; flax, 230,528 bushels; oats, 1,427,561 bushels; barley, 204,09 bushels; winter rye, 19,725 bushels; speltz, 21,258 bushels; corn, 13,656 acres; potatoes, 185,767 bushels.





WARD COUNTY

1, Threshing Scene; 2, A Ward County Home; 3, Hauling Grain to Market;
4, Riverside Dairy.

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