

Guided Notes (Teacher)

South Dakota claims some of each. But why do some towns grow, others stay small, and some disappear? Towns sometimes grow because they're next to valuable natural resources, like good farm land...or **gold** mines. Or they grow because business people build **factories** and hire workers who move to town.

Big or little, there are always stories of high hopes behind towns. Let's take a look at **Detroit**....

And all the while they waited for something that would make their town boom...the **railroad**. Trains never came.

The trains never came to Detroit partly because of a man named Charles Prior, who worked for the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad. The story goes that Prior pointed at a spot on a map and said, "This is where we will cross the Northwestern Railroad and locate a town." Prior decided to please his boss, the railroad president, by naming the new town after the boss's hometown.....a place far across the Atlantic Ocean, in Scotland, called **Aberdeen**.

By 1886 a railroad map called Aberdeen "The railroad hub of Dakota." Later Aberdeen folks shortened that to "**the hub city**." And it was a city, as South Dakota measures things. By 1910 Aberdeen, less than 30 years old, claimed more than ten thousand residents. One was Ansel Green...who helped make Aberdeen a factory city.

Other South Dakota towns hoped for factories, too. After all, successful factories would create jobs, and production wasn't usually tied to the state's unpredictable **weather**, as in farming and ranching.

Huron, meanwhile, produced a million **cigars** each year. For the most part eastern South Dakota towns, with better rail connections to the big markets of Omaha and Minneapolis and Chicago, enjoyed more success with factories than western towns.

Sioux Falls got the state **penitentiary**, and Hot Springs the state's home for retired **soldiers**. State homes and schools for South Dakotans with disabilities went to Aberdeen, Redfield, and Sioux Falls.

There are also towns that prospered because of luck, as much as anything. In the 1920s **Keystone** appeared to be a mining town that had seen better days, and was perhaps on its way to becoming a ghost town.

Borglum blasted and drilled into a nearby mountain...creating Mount Rushmore National Memorial. Far from a ghost town, Keystone now sees **three** million visitors every year.

Sometimes people leave because local jobs don't pay well, or because there are no new jobs at all. Sometimes young people leave because they're bored, or...for **schooling** that leads them to new opportunities other places.

And then there's farm machinery...perhaps even some of the machinery Hub City Iron made. Advances in farm and ranch **equipment** made it possible for just a few people to work land that once required lots of hands. Fewer nearby farm and ranch families meant many small-town Main Streets.....bustling in the early 20th century... were all but **abandoned** and terribly lonely by the early 21st century.

Still, some of South Dakota's most attractive towns today never saw factories, or government buildings, or millions of visitors. They may be places located a few miles from big towns, where there are plenty of jobs. Or they may be places with a comfortable pace of life...good **schools** and **parks** for kids...places not likely to grow big, and where people are content about that.