

# VIDEO SCRIPT

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**TITLE: Big Towns And Little Towns**

**PREPARED FOR: Dakota Pathways**

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**V I S U A L**

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FADE IN:

Open

Nat Sound Up and Under

“ “

MUSIC UP AND UNDER DWCD 0358 Cut 3 "Standing Together"

“ “

Music under.

Sioux Falls.

NARRATOR:

Big towns.

Any small town.

Little towns.

Newark

Ghost towns.

Aberdeen SD

South Dakota claims some of each. But why do some towns grow, others stay small, and some disappear?

Main Street Britton SD.

Hammer SD (abandoned)

Brandon SD street shot

Towns sometimes grow because they're next to valuable natural resources, like good farm land...

WS Farmland

Lead SD Homestake in view

...or gold mines.

Morrel's Packing Plant interior

Or they grow because business people build factories and hire workers who move to town.

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Old Main at USD.

NARRATOR:

Or because community leaders work hard to win colleges and other institutions for their towns.

Spearfish SD Main Street

And more and more towns grow because they're built in pretty locations where people simply like living.

**POP-UP FACT: "Of 349 cities and towns in SD the largest is Sioux Falls at a population of 123, 975 and the smallest is Hillsview at pop. 3." US Census 2000**

Chamberlain and the Missouri with bridge in background

Big or little, there are always stories of high hopes behind towns.

Detroit, Michigan skyline PCD 737  
Photonet

Let's take a look at Detroit. No, not Detroit, Michigan—which grew huge in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century because car factories sprang up there.

Ford Motor Company Factory NARA  
Newcent 005v17

**MUSIC UP AND UNDER DWCD 0081 Cut 45  
"Robertsons Rag"**

MAP South Dakota marking location of Detroit SD (West of Britton)

No, let's look at this Detroit, in northeastern South Dakota. There's nothing here now. But this Detroit once existed as a little town that hoped to grow big and ended up a ghost town...

Township Hall, old Ghost Town

Empty field near where Detroit , SD in Brown County once sat.

Plaque marking spot. WS

...a place where only memories of a community linger.

CU plaque

From 1883 to 1886, Detroit, Dakota Territory boasted a post office, hotel, store, newspaper, and blacksmith shop.

WS Old abandoned buildings montage

Detroit's people spent Saturday nights in a town dance hall, and Sunday mornings in a Methodist Church. And all the while they waited for something that would make their town boom...

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Cut to rail tracks.

NARRATOR:

the railroad. But...

Tracks disappear.

trains never came.

Abandoned buildings on prairie

MUSIC OUT

After three years Detroit disappeared. Or, rather, pieces of Detroit were loaded up and moved. The store went to the nearby town of Claremont.

Old farmsteads with falling down buildings.

Farmers bought the hotel, dance hall, and blacksmith shop for barns or granaries.

MAP showing railroad routes to the area.

MUSIC UP AND UNDER DWCD 0081 Cut 27 "Off the Cuff"

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."

PHOTO: Early Aberdeen.

Prior decided to please his boss, the railroad president, by naming the new town after the boss's hometown...

PHOTO: Aberdeen, Scotland.

...a place far across the Atlantic Ocean, in Scotland, called Aberdeen.

MAP showing rail lines converging.

Another railroad, the St. Louis, liked Prior's idea of crossing the Northwestern rails at Aberdeen, Dakota Territory. So three rail lines converged there, and on a map that reminded people of a wheel...

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SUPER image of old time wagon wheel with wood spokes.

NARRATOR:

...a wheel with spokes that meet at a center point, or hub.

PHOTOS: Aberdeen, SD

By 1886 a railroad map called Aberdeen "The railroad hub of Dakota." Later Aberdeen folks shortened that to "the hub city."

PHOTOS: Aberdeen, SD

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...

PHOTO: Hub City Iron

who helped make Aberdeen a factory city.

PHOTO: Aberdeen, SD

Like most everyone else, Green came to Aberdeen by railroad. In fact, he worked for a railroad, creating or repairing things made of steel.

PHOTO: Iron workers LOC General Collection

Green went into business for himself in 1892, building a factory and hiring workers who turned out steel for buildings...

PHOTO: Drilling rig LOC General Collection

...steel drilling rigs...

PHOTO: Threshing machines LOC General Collection

...farm machinery...

VIDEO: Fire escape at Ward Hotel in Aberdeen.

...fire escapes...

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Manhole cover.

NARRATOR:

...and manhole covers.

CU :Hub City Iron" stamp on  
manhole cover

Green's company became Hub City Iron, and in  
the twentieth century it sent steel parts to Detroit.

WS The field in Brown County.

No, not that Detroit.

PHOTO: Detroit, Michigan, factory  
with car production **LOC General  
Collection**

Detroit, Michigan. Lots of cars that rolled out of  
car factories there had Hub City Iron parts.

PHOTO: Early 20<sup>th</sup> century factories  
**LOC General Collection**

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.

PHOTO: Railroad yard **Mills C&NW In  
South Dakota p 64**

Also, business leaders reasoned, if South  
Dakota's economy hit rocky times, factory goods  
could be shipped and sold where finances were  
brighter.

PHOTO: Cigar Factory **NARA 00098**

PHOTO: Soap Factory **NARA Facinsi 2**

While more industrial plans failed than  
blossomed across South Dakota, the state's  
factories nonetheless made products ranging  
from soap...

PHOTO: Cement works **NARA 38-2703A**

to cement in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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PHOTO: Watertown Paint Co. SDSHS  
4200 tmp2

NARRATOR:

Watertown was known for making paint.

PHOTO: Cigar Factory NARA 0314

Wilson Packing Co. SDSHS D7

PHOTO: RR Depot Mobridge 1909  
Mills C&NW in SD

MUSIC UP AND UNDER DWML 004 Cut 17 "Hully  
Gully Blues"

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 t

PHOTO: Brookings RR Depot  
Steicher collection 100614

han western towns.

PHOTO: Redfield SD Steicher  
Collection 0002

PHOTO: Early Sioux Falls buildings  
SDSHS

Sioux Falls also developed factories and in 1909  
became home to another kind of big industry...

PHOTO: Morrell Plant in Sioux Falls  
John Morrell & Company

...the John Morrell and Company meat packing  
plant. Thousands of men and women found  
work there, contributing to the city's steady  
population climb.

WS Ladies in Bacon Department

WS County Courthouse

There was another way for South Dakota towns  
to create jobs and grow.

MUSIC OUT

MUSIC UP AND UNDER DWCD 067 Cut xx "Doubting  
Thomas"

PHOTO: State capitol building

Government. Pierre secured its future by  
successfully campaigning to be state capital, in  
1890.

Montage

POP-UP: "Construction on the present day  
capitol building took 5 years to complete from  
1905 to 1910 for just under \$1,000,000"

MUSIC OUT

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Aberdeen Brown County Courthouse

NARRATOR:

Other communities campaigned—and sometimes  
battled one another—to become county seats...

WS Court house interior.

...home of the county court house...

CU Office door sign: clerk of courts.

...and county jobs.

**MUSIC UP AND UNDER DWCD 241 Cut 10 "The  
River"**

Old main at USD.

Other big prizes were the state's universities and  
colleges.

Penitentiary in Sioux Falls

Sioux Falls got the state penitentiary, and Hot  
Springs the state's home for retired soldiers.

State Soldier's Home in Hot Springs

State homes and schools for South Dakotans  
with disabilities went to Aberdeen, Redfield, and  
Sioux Falls.

MAP: Marking towns

Cut to U. S. flag at Fort Meade

In addition to state government, the United  
States government came to South Dakota towns  
to build...

Fort Meade sign

creating, among other things, military hospitals  
and Ellsworth Air Force Base near Rapid City.

Ellsworth AFB

Ellsworth planes

Think someone in Washington, D. C. pointed at a  
South Dakota map and said, "Here is where we'll  
build," like Charles Prior? It never worked that  
way. Organization and hard work by South  
Dakotans were always behind government  
projects like Ellsworth.

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WS Modern day Huron.

NARRATOR:

Another building in Huron

In fact, planning and years of effort are usually behind any town development. Huron, for example, lost some businesses and jobs in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and then went to work to create new ones.

Shawn Lyons ON CAMERA

Shawn Lyons ON CAMERA

SUPER: Shawn Lyons Exec. Director  
Greater Huron Development Corp.

(Discussing Huron's recent successes in attracting businesses)

MUSIC UP AND UNDER DWCD 238 Cut 13 "My Old Kentucky Home"

PHOTO: Keystone, SD

NARRATOR:

PHOTO: Keystone, SD

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.

NAT SOUND UP and UNDER

PHOTO:Gutzon Borglum

But then a group of out-of-town business people and a sculptor named Gutzon Borglum showed up. With a team of men, many out-of-work Keystone miners...

FILM: Borglum & crew sculpting  
Mount Rushmore

Borglum blasting and drilling on  
Rushmore.

Borglum blasted and drilled into a nearby  
mountain...

FILM: FDR Dedication of Mount  
Rushmore.

SOVTR UP then OUT FDR Dedication speech.

MUSIC UP AND UNDER DWCD 0237 Cut 4  
"America the Beautiful"

NARRATOR:

WS Mount Rushmore with tourists

...creating Mount Rushmore National Memorial.

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POP-UP FACT "Even School children donated their pennies to help build Mount Rushmore."

WS Keystone with tourists

Factory

State Capitol at Pierre

Air Force Jet flies by

CU Mount Rushmore

WSj Rapid City skyline.

WS Small town in South Dakota

Small town with skateboarding kids on main street

USD campus with students

NARRATOR:

Far from a ghost town, Keystone now sees three million visitors every year.

MUSIC OUT

Factories.

Government.

Air Force jets.

Big presidents.

MUSIC UP AND UNDER DWCD 0238 Cut 6 "In the Sweet By and By"

All can help communities grow. But what makes them shrink?

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.

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WS Modern farming with big equipment

NARRATOR:

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.

Abandoned farm house.

Fewer nearby farm and ranch families meant many small-town Main Streets...

Busy small town main street

...bustling in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century...

Very abandoned looking main street

...were all but abandoned and terribly lonely by the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**MUSIC UP AND UNDER DWCD251 Cut 1 "Easy Come, Easy Go" (close music)**

Small town attractive residential street

Still, some of South Dakota's most attractive towns today never saw factories, or government buildings, or millions of visitors.

Brandon

They may be places located a few miles from big towns, where there are plenty of jobs.

Small town life

Or they may be places with a comfortable pace of life...

Small town school yard

good schools and parks for kids...

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Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

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Another small town

NARRATOR:

places not likely to grow big, and where people are content about that.

Close Credits

MUSIC UP

FADE TO BLACK

MUSIC OUT

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