

SOUTH DAKOTA

HISTORY

Native farmers and hunters, fur traders, soldiers, miners and homesteaders each helped make South Dakota.

The First Peoples

People have lived in South Dakota for thousands of years. The Arikara built villages of round **earth lodges** along the Missouri River. They grew corn, beans and squash and traded their crops. In the 1700s, the Lakota moved west onto the plains. With horses, they became skilled bison hunters. Dakota bands lived and hunted in the east.

Traders and Explorers

In 1743, two French brothers named La Verendrye buried a lead plate near today's Fort Pierre. Schoolchildren found it in 1913. In 1804, Lewis and Clark traveled up the Missouri. Near the Bad River, Lakota leaders and the explorers drew weapons, but no one fought. Fur traders soon built posts along the river.

War, Trade and Treaties

In 1823, Arikara warriors attacked a party of fur trappers on the Missouri and killed about 15 men. That summer, Army soldiers and Lakota allies attacked the Arikara villages. The Arikara left their villages in the night. Fort Pierre, a big trading post, opened in 1832. In **treaties**, Native nations gave up land in the east and kept **reservations**. Congress made Dakota Territory in 1861, with Yankton as its capital.



Treaties and Gold

An 1868 treaty set aside a huge Great Sioux Reservation west of the Missouri, with the Black Hills inside it. In 1874, soldiers led by George Custer found gold in the Black Hills. Miners rushed in, and Deadwood and Lead grew fast. The Lakota and Cheyenne fought the Army in a war in 1876 and 1877. In 1877, Congress took the Black Hills from the reservation.



Sod Houses and Statehood

Railroads crossed the eastern prairie in the late 1870s and 1880s. The **Homestead** Act offered 160 acres to a settler who farmed the land for five years. Many families came from Norway and Germany. Trees were few, so many built houses of sod. South Dakota became the 40th state on November 2, 1889. Pierre became its capital. That same year, the Great Sioux Reservation was split into smaller reservations. In 1890, soldiers fired on a Lakota camp at Wounded Knee Creek and killed more than 200 people.

Dams and Visitors

In the 1930s, drought and dust ruined crops. Mount Rushmore was finished in 1941. In the 1950s and 1960s, four big dams were built across the Missouri. Their lakes covered some reservation land, and families moved to new homes. Oahe Dam was finished in 1962. Nine tribal nations live in South Dakota today.

SOUTH DAKOTA THROUGH TIME



PEOPLE TO KNOW

Sitting Bull	Lakota leader born on the Grand River.
Black Elk	Oglala Lakota holy man.
Laura Ingalls Wilder	Wrote about her family's life in De Smet.
Ernest Lawrence	Scientist from Canton. Won a Nobel Prize.
Oscar Howe	Dakota painter from Crow Creek.

WORDS TO KNOW

earth lodge	a round house covered with soil
treaty	a written agreement between nations
reservation	land kept by a Native nation
homestead	land a settler could own by farming it