

(9) Wakonda

Wakonda, originally called Star Corner and located about a mile northeast of its present site, takes its name from the Lakota word *wakan*, meaning 'holy' or 'mysterious.' The literal translation is 'it is sacred.' Wakonda exists because of the Chicago and North Western Railroad, which built the line through town in 1884.

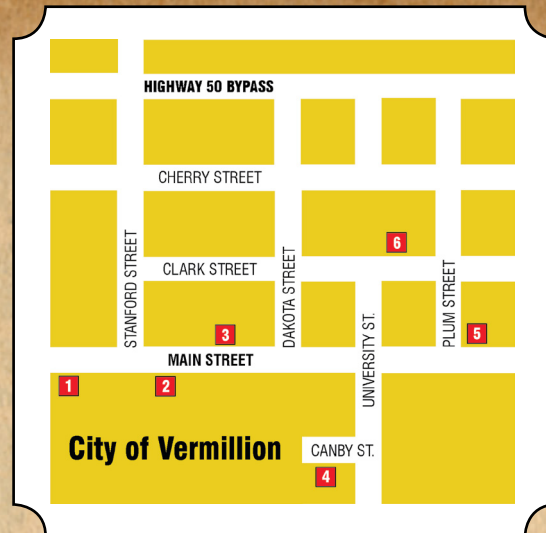


(10) Meckling

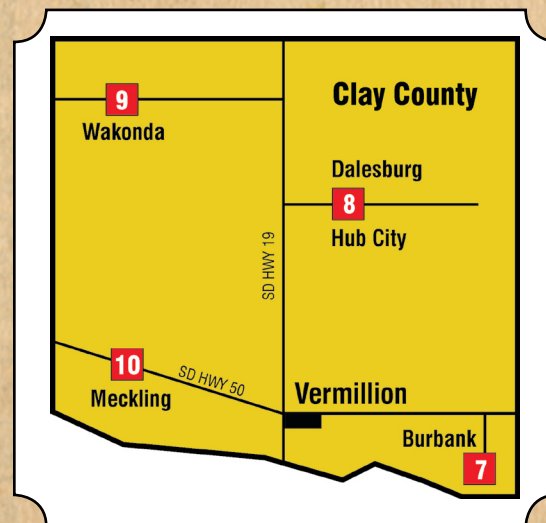
Meckling, like so many small American towns, was built by progress, and it was progress that slowly took the town away. The town was named for railroad grading contractor Jonas S. Meckling, who helped to build the Dakota Southern Railway through the area in 1872. Many residents of nearby Lincoln moved to Meckling after it was platted in 1873.



City Map Sites 1-6



County Map Sites 7-10



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The following documents
are available at no charge
from the Clay County
Historic Preservation Commission

Tour of Vermillion Downtown Historic District
A walking tour guide.

*Tour of the University of South Dakota's
Historic Buildings*
A walking tour guide.

Vermillion Downtown Masonry Tour
A walking tour guide.

*A Guide to the Architecture of Vermillion,
South Dakota* by Julie Schlarman

*Guide to National Register of Historic Places
in Clay County, South Dakota*

*The Clay County Courthouse: A Centennial
Celebration* by Art Rusch

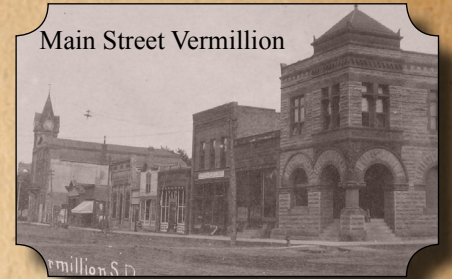
*Magic of Glass: Documentation of Stained
Glass Windows, St. Agnes Church,
Vermillion, SD* by Evelyn Schlenker

*Stories in Glass: Documentation of Stained
Glass Windows, St. Patrick's Catholic Church,
Wakonda, SD* by Evelyn Schlenker

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Contact the Clay County Historical
Preservation Commission
on line at cchpc.org

Guide for Interpretive Signs in Clay County, South Dakota

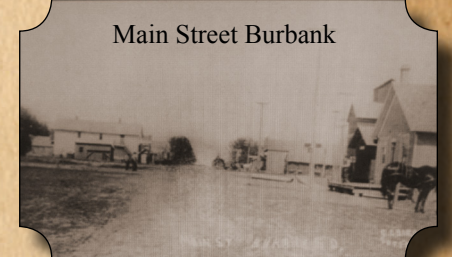
Main Street Vermillion



University of South Dakota



Main Street Burbank



Meckling School



(1) Bliss Hill

Overlooking the Missouri River floodplain, Bliss Hill is believed to be a site once occupied by the Oneota, ancient Great Plains Indians dating back to AD 900. Two types of occupation are found at Bliss Hill – an archaic village with a hunting / gathering lifestyle, and a late Plains village characterized by an agricultural lifestyle and large villages.



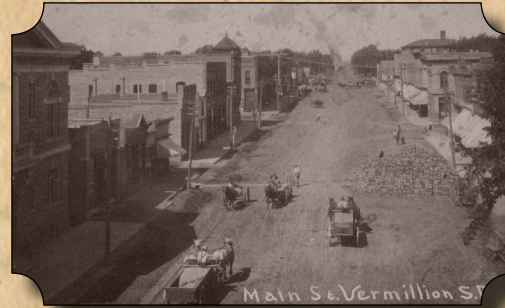
(2) Old Vermillion 1

The original town of Vermillion was located on the narrow strip of land between the Missouri River and the bluffs. The business district grew along Broadway Street with small, one-story wooden structures. Once the population grew larger, more permanent buildings took their place.



(3) Downtown Vermillion

Vermillion's downtown district moved from below the bluff after the 1881 flood destroyed the original town, forcing development on higher ground. Some of the pre-flood buildings were salvaged, but most were completely rebuilt as businesses along both Vine (Main) and Market Streets.



(4) Old Vermillion 2

Early Vermillion was built below the bluff and was susceptible to flooding from the Missouri River, which at that time ran next to the bluff. The winter of 1880-81 started early and did not subside until an early thaw rapidly melted the ice on the Missouri River. In March, an ice gorge broke, pouring ice and water all over the plain and through the streets of Vermillion. The flood demolished 132 buildings, carrying many of them down river.



(5) Prentis Park

Vermillion's third city park was created in 1923 when Charles E. Prentis donated ten acres of land for that purpose in memory of his late wife. The land was originally part of the A. A. Carpenter homestead, including an apple orchard and nursery, which made for a natural park setting. Later on, a swimming pool and baseball field were added to the park.



(6) University of South Dakota

Promised by Territorial Legislature to Vermillion back in 1862, the University of Dakota came about after the flood of 1881. On April 30, 1881, a group of four town leaders formed an association that was later formally incorporated as the University of Dakota. The first classes were held in the Clay County Courthouse in the fall of 1882 while University Hall was being built on campus.



(7) Burbank

Non-Indians had resided in the Burbank area, originally known as Alec C.'s Point after fur trader Alexander C. Young, since 1855. The town that became Burbank began its life in Union County under the name Liberty. In 1873, the town was moved to a new plat on its present location and renamed for territorial governor John A. Burbank.



(8) Dalesburg & Hub City

The once thriving community of Dalesburg, a mile and a half north, is now deserted. Created in 1869 and named Dahlsborg for immigrants from Sweden's Dalarna Province, Dalesburg was formally founded in 1892.

