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McHenry County, North Dakota p. 167-168

Iver Gjelstad from Askim, Smaalenene, Lewis Larson from Hedemarken, Lars Hansen from Storelvedalen, Hans Tjone from Nissedal and Sam Koto who settled in the area of Velva and Villard in 1882, were the first Norwegians in this county. Next after them came Erik espeset from Lærdal, Sogn, M. Bredalen and A. Jevnager from Solør, Simon Hestnes from Hedemarken, Simon Thompson, Arnt Walley and G. G. Walley from Hatfjelddalen, George Opsahl and Christian Halseth from Hedemarken, Gustav Wolhowe and O. H. Wolhowe from Ullensaker, Axel Lyng and Johannes Lyng from Værdalen, and Chr. Rensla and Herbrand Lee from Hallingdal.

The first in the area of Towner were the brothers Hans, Eivind and Johannes Oium from Nordre Fron and Tjøstøl Kongslien and family. These then, were the first in the so-called Deep River Settlement.

Some of the new settlers built log cabins, others dug dugouts. Cattle raising was the leading source of income. And Bismarck was their nearest marketplace, it was ca. 100 miles away and they had to drive with oxen.

Norway congregation, that was established in 1883 by Pastor O. H. Aaberg of The Norwegian Synod, was the first Norwegian congregation in the county. Pastor T. S. Reishus was its first serving priest. The first Norwegian church in the county was built by that congregation in 1886. Now there are 12 Norwegian congregations and 3 churches, 4 belong to The Norwegian Synod, 3 to Hauge's Synod, 2 to The Lutheran free Church, 2 to The United Church and 1 to The Evangelical Free Church.

Norwegian place names; Berwick, Odin and Martha.

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