

The Great Northern & Bannerman



In 1906 the Brandon, Saskatchewan and Hudson's Bay Railway, a part of the Great Northern Railway from the U.S., began service from Brandon to the small North Dakota town of St. John's, where it made connections to destinations across the United States.

The line was important to several communities south of Brandon.

Anything that would reduce the length of those trips to the elevator was welcomed by farmers.

A Ride on the Great Northern

The train departed from St. John's, North Dakota, just a few kilometers south on the Manitoba / US border.

Charlie Bryant, long time conductor, well-known to folks all along the line, was a man who wouldn't hesitate to make an unscheduled stop or other accommodation for a good customer.

Bannerman

Before long it reached the border and four kilometers past that was the new village of Bannerman.



Bannerman

Of all the newly created villages along the line, the rise and fall of Bannerman was the most dramatic.

In 1905 it was a field. In 1906 it was a brand new village. Soon a hotel with large dining room and bar encouraged visitors. A feed and livery barn and a lumberyard were open for business. A poolroom and barbershop, a store and post office, a blacksmith shop, a harness and shoe repair shop, all were built. Soon a second grocery store and additional blacksmith shop were needed, along with two dealerships for the fast growing farm implement business.

Because it was the first stop in Canada it was an official Port of Entry with a Customs and Immigration Office.

When the railway line closed in 1936 Bannerman became a town without a purpose. There were several other towns nearby that still had rail lines. It faded away quickly and is now back to being a field.