

## Biography of William Greenleaf Colton

--Audrey Asmus

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Grandfather William Greenleaf Colton was born November twenty-third, 1824, in Antwerp, Jefferson County, New York, and so was a citizen of the United States. At the age of twenty-four he was married to Miss Polly Stockwell. This occurred November twelfth, 1848, in Russell, St. Lawrence County, New York.

Grandpa was induced to leave his home in New York by his younger brother, Joseph Colton, who had previously settled in Dakota territory, where the present city of Lisbon is now. Joseph Colton was the first pioneer to settle in that vicinity. Other settlers soon followed, and the town of Lisbon was started. Joseph was so attracted by North Dakota that he wrote home urging his older brother to come to Lisbon. He told Grandpa how productive and fertile the soil was and how land could be secured by homesteading. He said a cheaper living could be obtained in Dakota territory than elsewhere.

Consequently Grandpa filed a homestead consisting of one hundred and sixty acres. He proved up this homestead in 1897. His certificate states that his farm was situated in Ransom County in the northeast quarter of section thirty four, in township one hundred and thirty five, north of range fifty six west of the principal meridian of North Dakota. Besides this Grandpa purchased a quarter of land. With his family he moved to North Dakota in 1881. Their first house was a frame building made of lumber, twelve by fourteen, consisting of two rooms. Their furniture was shipped from their old home in New York to Tower City, North Dakota and then freighted to Lisbon. Grandpa came before his family so as to have everything ready on their arrival. He traveled by train until reaching Tower City which was thirty-five miles from Lisbon. Wagons and sleds were then used to carry passengers, freightage, and provisions between the two towns. Being short of money Grandpa could not hire a vehicle to carry him to his destination. During the whole thirty-five miles he saw not a farm nor a place to obtain a drink. When his family arrived he met them at Tower City. They made the journey to their new home in a wagon drawn by oxen.

The chief crop raised was wheat. The yield was bountiful, with the exception of three years, though Grandpa always had plenty for seed and flour. After the grain was threshed the necessary quantity was taken out for seed. The surplus grain was hauled to Tower City to be ground into flour.

Though Grandpa could secure provisions in Lisbon, all his shipping and important business was done at Tower City, until some years later when the railroad was built into Lisbon. This helped to make it a prosperous town. It could now furnish all the needs of the farmers.

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