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CONTACT: Jeff Mammenga, Media Coordinator, (605) 773-6000,
Jeff.Mammenga@state.sd.us

State Historical Society acquires 1930s lantern slide collection

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota State Historical Society recently acquired a collection of glass lantern slides dating back to the 1930s.

The Rev. H. J. Loemker (LOME-ker) Collection consists of 90 lantern slides, which were introduced in 1849 and allowed photographs to be projected onto a surface and viewed by a larger audience. Lantern slides were popular until the 1950s, when smaller 2x2 transparencies were introduced.

Loemker was a Methodist minister who served churches in Iowa and Illinois before eventually coming to South Dakota and ministering in the Crandon area of Spink County.

A majority of the Loemker images are from Spink County sites, but the collection also includes images from various locations throughout South Dakota. The collection includes images taken in or near the towns of Crandon, Redfield, Parker, Ashton, Woonsocket, Turton, Brookings, Clifton, Hermosa, Rapid City, Custer, Pierre, Hitchcock, Tulare and Webster.

Slide topics include churches and parsonages, agricultural scenes and machinery, tourist destinations, town scenes, automobiles, winter scenes, sod houses and courthouses.

The donor purchased the lantern slides at an auction and later donated them to the State Historical Society-Archives, located at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre.

“The Loemker Collection offers a broad range of South Dakota images from the 1930’s,” said Chelle Somsen, State Archivist. “Collections like these are what add depth and breadth to our state’s history.”

Select images from the Loemker Collection are on the State Archive’s Facebook page via <http://history.sd.gov/Archives>.

To donate items relating to the history of South Dakota, contact Matthew Reitzel, manuscript archivist, at (605) 773-3615 or Dan Brosz, curator of collections, at (605) 773-6013.

The State Historical Society-Archives is open Monday through Friday and the first Saturday of each month from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. CDT. Contact the archives by phone at (605) 773-3804 or email archref@state.sd.us

Photo Caption: Pictured is the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Depot in Redfield, one of 90 lantern slide images from the Rev. H. J. Loemker Collection recently donated to the South Dakota State Historical Society. (Photo courtesy South Dakota State Historical Society-Archives)

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The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Tourism. The Department of Tourism is comprised of Tourism, the South Dakota Arts Council, and the State Historical Society. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen. The State Historical Society is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society's world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit www.history.sd.gov for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.