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State Historical Society website includes 1898-1899 South Dakota Brand Book

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota State Historical Society-Archives recently added an online index listing more than 1,500 names of brand owners listed in the “South Dakota State Brand Book, 1898-1899.”

Volunteers created the database from the brand book index.

“We are always thankful for the help volunteers provide to the State Archives,” said Chelle Somsen, State Archivist. “This website will be a useful tool to our researchers.”

The Sioux Stock Journal Press, owned by John Hayes in Fort Pierre, published the book. The book is in the State Archives—Special Collections Library at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The State Archives has two copies of the brand book -- one of which is a copy Hayes presented to former State Historian Doane Robinson on Oct. 19, 1900.

As the book notes, “The South Dakota State Brand Book contains all the brands and marks for which certificates have been issued in the state, and now on file in the office of the State Board of Brand and Mark Committee ...”

Information includes last and first name (or company name) of brand owner, town address, and page number for their brand. The website is an index only, and does not include an image or description of the brand itself.

Visit the State Archives website at www.history.sd.gov/archives and link to the “For Genealogists” website. The website lists the “SD Brand Book, 1898-1899” index, as well as other searchable databases available on the State Archives website.

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

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

Suggested Cutline: This undated postcard is titled, “Branding on the Plains.” (Photo courtesy of the 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.