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## Reinland was capital of West Reserve

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The village of Reinland is located on the municipal boundary in the southwestern part of Rhineland Municipality. Actually the major portion of the village is in the neighboring Rural Municipality of Stanley. Prior to the last municipal boundary change in 1916, Reinland was always in the Rural Municipality of Rhineland.

Reinland was settled in the year 1875, being one of the 18 villages that were established in that first year of settlement. The part of the West Reserve first settled was the southern and western portion. Reinland, being in the general centre of the villages between Blumenort and Chortitz, became the headquarters of the West Reserve in the early years.

This was a well organized group and the villages were settled in an orderly fashion.

Each village generally had the same makeup with community pastures, cultivated fields and hayland, as they had been used to in the old country. Reinland operated what was known as the open field system until the migration to Mexico in the 1920s.

Most of the pioneers of Reinland came from the Choritz Colony (the Old Colony) in Russia. They became known as the Old Colonists even though their official name was the Reinland Mennonite Colony. The first church was built in 1876 in Reinland, which served the pioneers until the migration to Mexico. Later it became the Blumenorter Church and presently is being used as a community centre.

The love of nature that was nurtured in the old country was transplanted to this new country. The fruitful soil in this area soon produced tall cottonwood trees for shade and shelter, orchards and vegetable gardens, flowers for beauty and hedges for privacy. In fact, by 1900, the foliage was so thick that to the passerby the buildings were



Photo shows Reinland village street on Christmas Day, 1979.

barely visible. So much so that a photographer from Morden couldn't get a successful photo of the two rows of buildings, even though he visited 'til the leaves had fallen.

Over the more than one hundred years of its existence, Reinland has had at one time or another the following: An N.W.M.P. outpost, a windmill, numerous stores (there still is one operating in the village), blacksmiths, garages, industry, transfer, barber shop, egg grading station, shoe repair shop and watch repair. It also had a creamery and a cannery. Also there were at one time three churches in operation.

A private school was in operation here right from the start. In 1910 they built a new school. In 1921 a district school called Snowdon was built at the south end of the village. These operated simultaneously until 1925, when the private school became a public school and the Snowdon School was moved to Wakeham (near Pembina Hills). In 1951 a new two-room school was built which served the community



School photo in the early 1920s of the Snowdon School.

until 1981, when a larger school, Border Valley, was built outside the village to also serve the surrounding communities of Schoenwiese, Rosengart and Haskett.

In July of 1975 the village of Reinland celebrated their

centennial, not only their own but also the 100th birthday of the opening of the West Reserve.

Today this village is still growing, as a number of new residences have gone up in recent years.