

DOW / INGALLS

Block 44, Lots 7 & 9 De Smet Cemetery

• Both Grace and Nathan Dow and his parents, Caroline and Thomas Dow, are buried in Block 44, where the Charles Ingalls family also lies. There is a sidewalk from the Ingalls graves in Lot 9 west and north to Grace and Nate's graves; his parents' graves are to the east of Grace & Nate.

The Thomas Dow family is not mentioned in the Little House books, but the family has multiple connections of interest to Little House readers. Thomas Dow's son, Nathan, married Grace Ingalls, of course. A daughter, Chloe, married Charleton S.G. Fuller, De Smet hardware merchant. Another daughter, Bersha, married Thomas Dunn; they were the parents of famous South Dakota artist, Harvey Dunn.



A distantly-related Dow family (they shared a common ancestor more than seven generations back) also lived in De Smet and vicinity during the Little House years. James Chase Dow and sons Frederick Neal Dow, Edwin Ruthven Dow, and Horace Albert Dow homesteaded northeast of De Smet. Fred Dow married Mary Glover; Laura Ingalls taught Mary's siblings in the Wilkin School. Edwin Dow married Mary Cooley, sister of Frank Cooley from *On the Way Home*. Horace Dow married Emma Cooley's sister, Anna Newell. Another son, James Jabez Dow, ran the blind school in Faribault, Minnesota, during the Little House years.

THOMAS WELLINGTON DOW

Block 44, Lot 7 De Smet Cemetery
May 19, 1829 – July 1, 1899; died at age 78

Son of Benjamin and Lydia Dow.
Husband of Caroline (Fish) Dow; married December 25, 1854.
Father of Elvira, Nathan, Bersheba, Chloe, and Edna.

• There are 2 stones. From L-R (north-south): main marker reads: T.W. Dow / born May 19, 1829 / died July 1, 1899 / Caroline wife of T.W. Dow / born March 23, 1839 / died Nov. 3, 1899. Thomas Dow's Civil War marker reads: Thos. W. Dow / Co. I. / 16 Wis. Inf.



Thomas Dow / Caroline Dow

Thomas Wellington Dow was born May 19, 1829, in Yorkshire (Cattaraugus County) New York, to Benjamin Dow and Lydia (King) Dow. His biography and military service is detailed in George Ogle's book below.

Many fairly close Dow relatives came to Kingsbury County to file claims, including Lafayette, Benjamin, William B., Lorenzo, Ozelus, Owen and Charles. They mostly settled in School District 44 south of Manchester; the Bouchie district was nine sections removed from the original district. In 1880, Benjamin Dow built the first house in the western half of Kingsbury County.

Thomas and Caroline Dow followed their son Nate to Kingsbury County, filing on a homestead in Section 9-110-57 on October 19, 1881. Dances and parties were held quite often at the the Dow home, with

music provided by what was called the "Dow band."

The following appeared in THE WISCONSIN STATE REGISTER (Portage, Wisconsin), on May 13, 1882: "Mr. T.W. Dow left, last Monday, for Dakota, his family having proceeded him. He is about the last one of the descendants of the late Benjamin Dow, one of the earliest settlers of this town, and who have filled many important positions here. May success attend him." And the note: "Register of Deeds Swift has bought the farm lately owned by T.W. Dow."

The following biography was published in George A. Ogle's *Memorial and Biographical Record, An Illustrated Compendium of Biography* (Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle & Co., 1898), 623-4. Note that the biography was published the year before Thomas Dow's death.

Thomas W. Dow is a prominent agriculturist of Kingsbury County, and one of its most enterprising and public-spirited citizens. Mr. Dow, who resides on Section 8, Manchester township, was born in Wyoming county, New York, May 19, 1829. His parents, Benjamin and Lydia (Lawrence) Dow, were both natives of Vermont, the former having been born in Caledonia County, in 1793, and the latter in Rutland County in 1797. Benjamin Dow went to Columbia County, Wisconsin, in 1851, and made his home there until his death, in March 1865. Mrs. Dow died in Columbia County, Wisconsin, in 1867. Our subject left New York in his twentieth year, intending to settle in the west. He finally located in Columbia County, Wisconsin, where his parents joined him two years later. He entered forty acres of land originally and later entered and bought some state lands. He continued to add to his possessions until he owned two hundred and forty acres. In 1864, Thomas enlisted in the Sixteenth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, Company I, under Captain William L. Munroe, and served until the close of the war. His company first camped at Madison for a time, and then went to Nashville, Tennessee, and from there to Chattanooga. The campaign was then continued to Atlanta, where the regiment joined the hosts under Sherman, and took part in the famous march to the sea. Mr. Dow was discharged at Washington in June, 1865, and immediately returned to Wisconsin with his company. They encamped in that state for a short time, after which he returned to his home in Columbia County. He remained there until 1881, meanwhile cultivating his farm with great success. In the year just mentioned he went to

Kingsbury County, South Dakota, which was then a territory, and selected a government claim. He returned to Wisconsin, and in the spring of 1882 removed permanently to Kingsbury County, bringing his family at the same time. The claim he chose, and upon which he still resides, contains one hundred and sixty acres of very good land, all of which has been improved by Mr. Dow. Most of it is broken to the plow, and presents the appearance of a carefully-tilled and prosperous farm, while the house, barns, outbuildings, etc., are well constructed, and in thorough keeping with the rest of the place. Mr. Dow is a Republican politically, and is a member of Harvey Post, G.A.R., at De Smet, of which he is also commander.

On the 25th of December, 1854, Mr. Dow married Miss Caroline Fish, at Dekorra, Columbia County, Wisconsin. Mrs. Dow was born on the 23rd of March, 1833, and is a daughter of Royal and Chloe Fish. Mr. and Mrs. Dow are the parents of five children. Elmira is now forty-one years of age [married Ain Bump]; Nathan is thirty-nine [married Grace Ingalls]; Bersheba is thirty-five [married Thomas Dunn]; Chloe has just turned thirty-three [married Charleton Fuller], and Edna is twenty-one [married Samuel Howard].

Thomas Dow died on July 1, 1899, and was buried in the De Smet cemetery. Text on the main Dow marker is barely readable, but according to *The Ancestry of Harvey Dunn* (1972), the stone reads: "T.W. DOW, BORN MAY 19, 1829, DIED JULY 1, 1899. Caroline, wife of T.W. Dow, born Mar. 23, 1838, died Nov. 3, 1899." The base once read (no longer legible): "IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE ARE MANY MANSIONS." No obituary has been located in Kingsbury County newspapers.

July 28, 1899. THE REPUBLICAN-JOURNAL (Darlington, Wisconsin).

Mr. Thomas W. Dow, who served with the 16th Wis. Volunteers during the war of the rebellion, died at his home in De Smet, South Dakota, June 30.

CAROLINE (FISH) DOW

Block 44, Lot 7 De Smet Cemetery

March 23, 1838 – November 3, 1899; died at age 61.

Daughter of Royal and Chloe (Hutchinson) Fish.

Wife Thomas Wellington Dow; married December 25, 1854.

Mother of Elvira, Nathan, Bersheba, Chloe, and Edna.

Caroline Fish was born March 23, 1838, in Canada, the daughter of Royal Fish and Chloe (Hutchinson) Fish. She married Thomas Wellington Dow on 25 Dec 1854 in Dekorra (Columbia County) Wisconsin. Civil War Letters from Thomas Wellington Dow to Caroline Fish Dow are archived at Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison, Wisconsin. They were published in 1989 by Nancy Tatnall Fuller.



Thomas Dow / Caroline Dow

Chloe and Thomas Dow had five children: **Elvira** (married Ain Bump), **Nathan William** (married Grace Ingalls), Bersheba “**Bersha**” Caroline (married William Thomas Dunn; they were the parents of Harvey Dunn), **Chloe** Thomasa (married C.S.G. Fuller), and **Edna** Alvilda (married Samuel Hopkins Howard). Chloe Dow died November 3, 1899 in Manchester, South Dakota.

November 4, 1899. PORTAGE DAILY DEMOCRAT (Portage, Wisconsin):

In Manchester, South Dakota, Nov. 3, died Mrs. Caroline F. Dow, widow of Thomas W. Dow. For many years, beginning in 1850, they were residents of Columbia County.

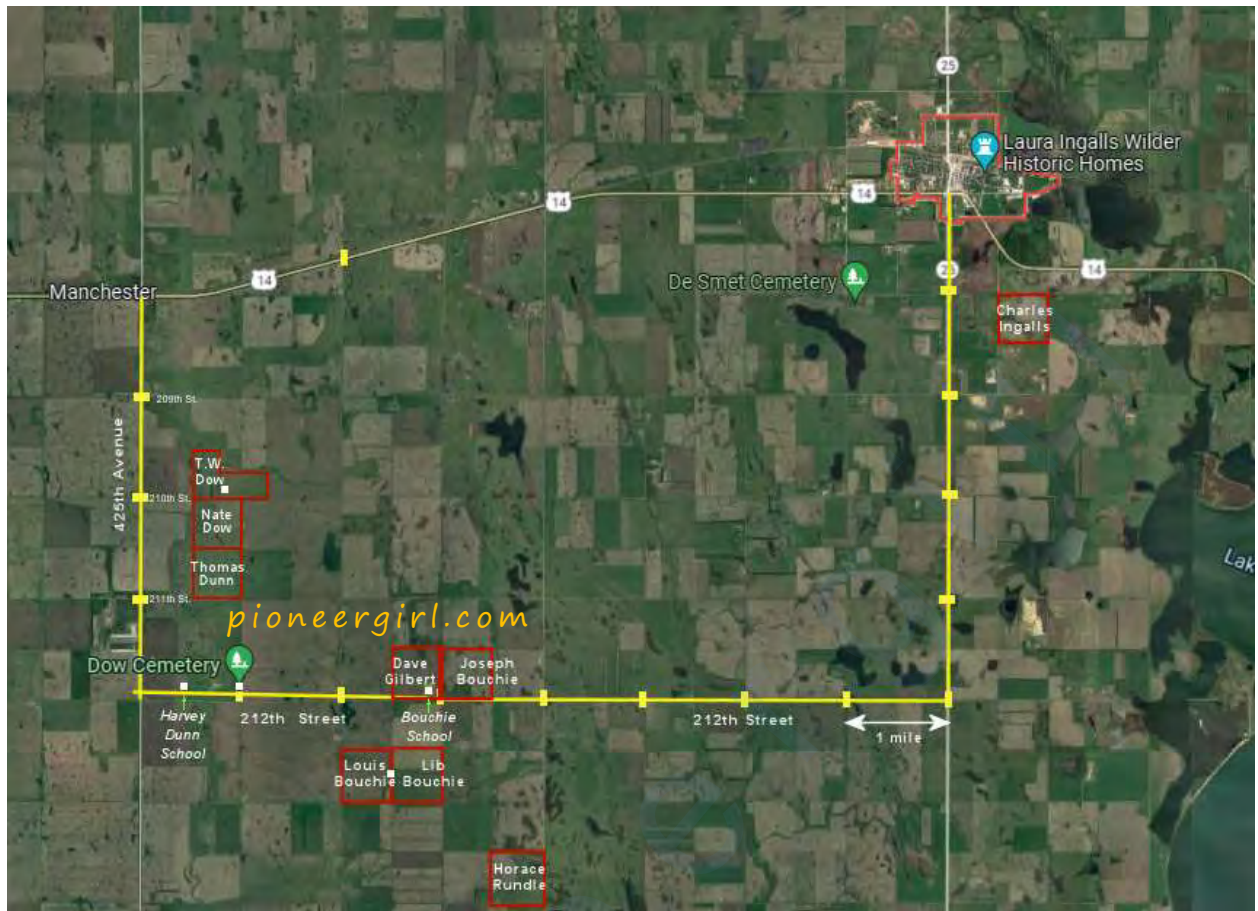


Thomas Wellington Dow / Nathan Dow farm south of Manchester, South Dakota

After the October blizzard that began the Hard Winter of 1880-1881 in Kingsbury County, on November 8, 1880, Nathan Dow, his brother-in-law Ain Bump, and his brother-in-law William Thomas Dunn filed on adjoining homestead claims in Kingsbury County. Dunn filed on the SE 17-110-57; Dow the NE 17-110-57, and Bump the NW 17 17-110-57. After filing, they returned to Wisconsin for the winter, able to get back on the second train to arrive in May 1881. Nate Dow relinquished his homestead in October 1881, immediately filing on the quarter section as a tree claim. At the same time, Thomas W. Dow (Nate's father) filed on an L-shaped homestead claim made up of parcels relinquished by two others; his homestead was the W-SE 8 & SE-SE 8 & SW-SW 9 110-57, just north of Nate's claim.

When deciding on which land to file on, they had been told that a large rock on Section 17 had Indian signs on it which pointed to a spring, so they took up their claims near it. The spring was about 40 rods north of Thomas Dow's homestead; the water ran west from this spring into Redstone Creek, which meandered through the section. The rock from the tale may be the large rock located on the southwest corner of Thomas Dunn's claim; William Anderson said he had heard stories about the rock when we went to the site in 2012.

When his father and mother moved to their homestead, Nate lived with them and worked his father's land. After his parents died, Nate purchased his father's farm. Once he and Grace Ingalls were married, the Dow homestead became their home. Caroline Ingalls, Laura and Almanzo Wilder, and other family members visited Grace and Nate here.



NATHAN WILLIAM DOW

Block 44, Lot 5 De Smet Cemetery

April 25, 1859 – May 13, 1944; died at age 94.

Son of Chloe and Thomas Dow.

Husband of Grace Ingalls; they married October 16, 1901.

No children.

Nathan William Dow was born April 25, 1859, in Pacific (Columbia County) Wisconsin, to Chloe and Thomas Dow. He had siblings Elvira (born April 29, 1856), Bersheba Caroline (born March 17, 1863), Chloe Thomasa (born February 24, 1865), and Edna Alvilda (born February 17, 1876).

On November 8, 1880, Nate filed on a homestead in Kingsbury County, the NE 17-110-57. His father filed on a homestead just north of his son. They returned to Wisconsin, arriving back in Dakota on the second train to enter the county after the Hard Winter. Nate cancelled his claim on October 4, 1887, and immediately filed on the quarter section as a tree claim; he made final proof on February 8, 1896.

On October 16, 1901, Nathan Dow married Grace Ingalls in the parlor of the Charles Ingalls home on Third Street in De Smet. The couple lived on their farm or in the town of Manchester until Grace's death in 1941. Nate was taken to the County Poor Farm to live immediately after the funeral, although it appears that a niece, Caroline Aspinwall, lived with Nate on the farm at least one summer before he returned to the Poor Farm. He died there on May 13, **1844**. Note that his death year is *incorrect* on the cemetery marker.



Nathan William Dow



DOW / Grace P. 1877-1941 / Nathan W. 1859-1943 [sic]

May 18, 1944. The De Smet NEWS.

Nate Dow Died; Manchester Pioneer.

Nate W. Dow, a resident of Manchester township since 1882, died Saturday night.

Funeral services were conducted from the funeral parlors in De Smet with the Rev. L.W. Sachse officiating. Interment was in the De Smet cemetery. His wife preceded him in death three years ago.

He is survived by a niece, Mrs. Caroline Aspinwall of Manchester, and a nephew, Harvey Dunn of Tenafly, New Jersey.

GRACE PEARL (INGALLS) DOW

Block 44, Lot 5 De Smet Cemetery

May 23, 1877 – November 10, 1941; died at age 64

Daughter of Charles and Caroline Ingalls.

Sister of Mary, Laura, and Carrie Ingalls.

Wife of Nathan William Dow; they married October 16, 1901.

No children.

Grace Pearl Ingalls was born May 23, 1877, in Burr Oak (Winneshiek County) Iowa, the fifth child of Charles and Caroline Ingalls. She had older sisters Mary (born 1865), Laura (born 1867), and Carrie (born 1870). A brother, Charles Frederick Ingalls, was born in 1875 and died at nine months of age.

Shortly after Grace's birth, the Ingalls family moved back to Walnut Grove, where they remained until the summer of 1879. Grace, her mother, and sisters traveled on the train west to join Charles Ingalls, who was working for the railroad (see *By the Shores of Silver Lake*, Chapter 3, "Riding in the Cars"). The Ingallses settled near the De Smet townsite, and Grace and the new town grew up together.



Nate and Grace, wedding photo



Grace Ingalls, age 16

Grace was educated in the De Smet village school. In *These Happy Golden Years* (see Chapter 26, "Teachers' Examinations"), Wilder mentions that "Carrie and Grace stayed at home" during the spring teachers' examination, implying that Grace was in school at this time. The new schoolhouse in De Smet was occupied and dedicated in January. Grace attended Normal School in Redfield and taught several terms of school, including the primary department of the De Smet school. former District 37 west of the Ingalls homestead, and former District 58 school in Esmond Township, south of Manchester.

October 16, 1901, Grace Ingalls married Nathan William Dow. They were married in the parlor of the Ingalls' home on Third Street. The wedding announcement in the De Smet News read:

Dow-Ingalls, Oct. 16, 1901 - At the home of the bride's parents, Mrs. and Mrs. C.P. Ingalls, Grace Ingalls and Nathan Dow were married Wednesday. The happy event was of a quiet nature, only the relatives of the contracting parties being present.

The bride is a young lady who has grown from childhood in this city and enjoys the respect and confidence of the entire community. She is possessed of all the womanly traits that enter into the general makeup of a devoted and loving wife. For some time she has been one of the leading lady teachers in this county and has met with splendid success wherever she has been employed. We are truly sorry to have her leave our social circles where she has always been an industrious and cheerful worker, but we are glad to know she will remain in the vicinity, living at Manchester.

The groom is one of the industrious and prosperous farmers south of Manchester where he has the friendship and confidence of his neighbors for his upright dealings and honest character in everyday life. He is a young man who by careful and business-like investments has secured for himself the comforts of life and is enjoying prosperity. They will make their home on the farm for the present. The News joins with the large circle of friends of this estimable couple wishing them abundant joy and happiness in the future.

Grace and Nate Dow were close friends with Carleton Fuller, De Smet hardware merchant, who married Nate's sister Chloe. The two couples often took trips together, included an extended summer visit to the Oregon seacoast in 1908. The Dows rented their farm out, so they lived with Grace's mother and sister Mary upon their return. Nate's sister Bersha Dow married Thomas Dunn. They were the parents of the artist Harvey Dunn, famous for his paintings of the Dakota landscape.

When Laura Ingalls Wilder was writing the De Smet Little House books, she wrote to sister Grace to tell her about the wildflowers growing on the Dakota prairie when they were little, which Laura could no longer clearly remember. Grace wrote back to describe “flowers that used to grow here, some are here yet, but lots of kinds we don't see anymore,” including crocus, wild onion, violets, buttercups, and windflowers.

Grace died November 10, 1941 in Manchester, the week after *Little Town on the Prairie* was published. She was buried in the De Smet Cemetery.



DOW / Grace P. 1877-1941 / Nathan W. 1859-1943 [sic]

November 13, 1941. The De Smet NEWS.

Death came to Mrs. Nathan W. Dow of Manchester, longtime resident of Kingsbury County, late Monday after an illness of several weeks, following several years of ill health.

Mrs. Dow was a daughter of the first residents of De Smet vicinity, Mr. and Mrs. C.P. Ingalls, and had lived

in the county from girlhood. The experiences of the Ingalls family have been described in a series of historic novels written by her sister, Mrs. Laura (Manley) Ingalls Wilder of Mansfield, Mo.

Surviving in her death are her husband and two sisters, Mrs. Wilder and Mrs. D.N. Swanzey of Keystone, and a niece, Rose Wilder Lane of Connecticut, the novelist.

Grace Ingalls was born at Burr Oak, Iowa in 1877. Her parents moved to Dakota Territory in 1879 in the company's office shack, located on the west shore of Silver Lake, and when the townsite was located and platted moved here to one of the first structures erected, later living on a farm a mile southeast of town.

After attending the local school, Miss Ingalls went to Redfield College and then taught school in Manchester township. She was married to Mr. Dow October 16, 1901, and they lived on their farm south of Manchester for some years, his health forcing them to retire some years ago, since living in De Smet and for some years in Manchester.

Until her health prevented, Mrs. Dow was active in social activities, in ladies' aid society and club work, and having a natural talent for writing was correspondent for THE NEWS and THE HURONITE for years.



1895 gathering at Caroline & Thomas Dow home; they are seated on porch. Nate Dow is standing to the right of far left column.