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Review of South Dakota Leaders: From Pierre Choteau, Jr., to Oscar Howe and Over a Century of Leadership: South Dakota Territorial & State Governors

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BOOK REVIEWS

South Dakota Leaders: From Pierre Choteau, Jr., to Oscar Howe. Edited by Herbert T. Hoover and Larry J. Zimmerman. Preface by Frederick Manfred. Vermillion: University of South Dakota Press, 1989. Maps, photographs, bibliography, contributors' notes, index. xxv + 500 pp. \$47.50.

Over a Century of Leadership: South Dakota Territorial & State Governors. By Charles Dalthorp, edited and revised by Lynwood E. Oyos. Sioux Falls, South Dakota: Center for Western Studies, 1987. xx + 224 pp. \$76.50 deluxe hardcover, \$19.45 paper.

Special events in the history of a state have customarily stimulated an unusual variety of commemorative writings. Such is the case with the books under review, both of which grew out of South Dakota's centennial in 1989. Moreover, both books deal with one theme—leadership. One concentrates on political leadership while the other includes a broader representation.

Over a Century of Leadership was published in 1987 as a kind of “prelude” to the state's centennial. It is a revision and expansion of Charles Dalthorp's *South Dakota Governors* (1953). Editor Lynwood E. Oyos of Augustana College in Sioux Falls added material on Dakota's territorial governors and on the governors

who have held office since 1953. The essays are short, three to six pages, and thus provide a very short sketch or summary of the life and work of each of ten territorial and twenty-seven state governors. Consequently, there is little serious interpretation or evaluation of these men and their contributions as political leaders. This volume will best serve as an encyclopedia or ready reference for information on the state's governors and their administrations.

Editors Herbert T. Hoover and Larry J. Zimmerman in *South Dakota Leaders* take a broad view of leadership. They include essays on a few of the state's outstanding political figures, such as Peter Norbeck and George McGovern, but their leaders come from a wide variety of occupations and professions. There are essays on artists, writers, women, native Americans, scientists, and others who contributed significantly to the life of the state and nation. Even as a native South Dakotan, this reviewer is impressed anew with the many outstanding individuals who got their start or made their reputations in the state. A few of the essays that emphasize this point are those on Niels E. Hansen, an outstanding horticulturalist, Oscar Howe, Indian artist extraordinary, and writer Laura Ingalls Wilder. It is especially gratifying to have the essays on Doane Robinson and Herbert S. Schell, the state's leading historical scholars.

The selection of whom to include was more or less arbitrary. Specialists in South Dakota history might differ with the editors, but the book includes a good cross section of the state's leadership. Most of the essays are ten to twenty pages long, and the volume contains an index and a short sketch on each author.

These books provide a good deal of information on South Dakota leaders during the state's first century. They should be in the library of every school in South Dakota, but readers outside the state will find them useful as well. South Dakota has much to be proud of in its leaders.

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