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Review of *Gold Rush: The Black Hills Story* Compiled by John D. McDermott

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Gold Rush: The Black Hills Story. Compiled by John D. McDermott. Pierre: South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2001. 144 pp. Photographs, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$17.95 paper.

The Black Hills Gold Rush, instigated by Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer's 1874 expedition to the Hills confirming that there was gold there "among the roots of the grass," was an event important to both the nation and the future state of South Dakota, not to mention to the Native Americans who had inhabited the area for centuries. Watson Parker's *Gold in the Black Hills* (1966) provided an excellent account of the gold rush, and John D. McDermott, the compiler and one of the authors of this volume, acknowledges his pioneering work on the subject. This collection of essays succeeds in probing more deeply into several aspects of the phenomenon, especially the business and promotion of the gold rush, thus enhancing our understanding of events and engaging our interest as well.

McDermott's essay on the military problem facing the Army in 1874-1875 sets the stage for what is to follow. The Army, while making substantial efforts to uphold the Treaty of Fort Laramie by blocking non-Indian gold seekers from the Hills, simultaneously maneuvered to open them up for economic exploitation and to force the Indians to accept the results. Army leaders thus played a major role in the coming of warfare to the Plains in 1876, McDermott contends.

Harry H. Anderson provides an interesting case study of entrepreneurial zeal in describing efforts of businessmen and politicians in Yankton to promote their town as a frontier

jumping-off point for individuals and groups who wanted to go prospecting in the Hills. James D. McLaird provides background information on Leander P. Richardson's five-day visit to Deadwood in late July and early August, 1876, and carefully analyzes the journal Richardson kept and relied on to write his later accounts of the trip. In the process, McLaird clarifies some disputed matters and lays to rest some allegations surrounding Wild Bill Hickock and other subjects.

Bob Lee goes beyond the business of gold mining to discuss a wide variety of economic activities in the Hills, from transportation and freighting to retail trade, cattle and sheep herding, and agriculture. Finally, Ernest Grafe and Paul Horsted reflect ingenuity and tenacity in describing their most recent effort to rephotograph places in the Black Hills through which the Custer Expedition passed on its thousand-mile-round journey from Fort Abraham Lincoln. Together, these essays do not constitute the whole story, but they provide a well-researched and engagingly written supplement to other treatments of the subject.

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