

ESCORT NOTES

THE GHOST DANCE

By 1890, Native Americans in South Dakota were unhappy. They were no longer free to roam the plains. The great buffalo herds were being killed off, and food was inadequate. In the summer of that year, they began performing the Ghost Dance, so called because they believed that this magical dance would bring back the dead and the buffalo, as well as eliminate the whites. Non-Indians living near the reservation became frightened and demanded protection - leading to the Wounded Knee Massacre.

In 1890, the army moved west to try and force the Natives from performing the Ghost Dance. There were many small battles. The first one claimed the life of Sitting Bull. At this time the Natives of Sitting Bull's tribe decided to move south to the Badlands. They had heard that other tribes were performing the Ghost Dance in that area. When the Lakota reached the Badlands, they were taken captive by soldiers and moved to a small village – Wounded Knee.

On December 29, 1890, the Natives were gathered to enable the soldiers to search them for weapons. A shot was fired and the soldiers quickly eliminated several hundred unarmed Natives. It was the last massacre and bloody confrontation between the US Army and Native Americans.

HISTORY OF RAPID CITY

Rapid City is the gateway to the intermountain west and was founded 1876 by a group of disheartened prospectors that had come to the Black Hills in search of gold. The city was named for the limestone spring stream that passes through the city and originates high in the Black Hills. In June 1972, the city was struck by a severe flash flood after heavy rains caused the collapse of two nearby earth dams. More than 200 lives were lost and property damage was estimated at \$120 million.

CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE

The economic base in Rapid City remains fundamentally the same as it was in the 1800's. Since its beginning, Rapid City has been a center for commerce, culture, transportation and education for the entire high plains. Rapid City enjoys a diverse economy that includes agriculture, forestry, government, tourism, health care, manufacturing and an extremely strong service sector. The city is also the tourist center of the Black Hills and the gateway to many attractions, including Mount Rushmore National Memorial, Badlands National Park and Wind Cave National Park.

THE LEGEND OF JACK MCCALL

Famed gunman Wild Bill Hickok was shot in the back of the head by a man known as Crooked Nose Jack McCall in Deadwood, in August 1876. But McCall was not heralded as a hero, nor was he allowed to go free. Throughout his trial and sentencing, McCall put on a bold front and a casual air. On the morning of his execution, Jack McCall looked out over a throng of onlookers. As the Marshal drew the noose over his neck, Jack McCall's last words were only, "Draw it tighter, Marshal." Seconds later, Jack McCall paid his debt to society.

THE HOMESTAKE MINE

In the spring of 1876 two brothers, Moses and Fred Manuel, discovered the Homestake Lead (pronounced "Leed"). This rich vein was eventually purchased by the Hearst family, and by 1900, had become the largest and most famous of all Black Hills mining operations. The mine, the deepest in North America, has more than 500 miles (805 km) of tunnels from 150 feet (45.7 m) below the surface to more than 8,000 feet (2,438 m) deep. The mine, near Lead, closed in 2001 but has been selected by the National Science Foundation as a site for an underground laboratory to study sub-atomic particles.

INDIAN TRIBES

The familiar tipi of the Plains Indian tribes was a remarkable dwelling. It was warm in winter, cool in summer, sturdy enough to withstand gale-force winds, yet was so easy to assemble that two people could put one up in an hour.

THE GOLDEN DAYS

"Gold has been found." George Armstrong Custer's 1874 field reports from the Black Hills echoed across the United States and brought prospectors, gamblers and adventurers scrambling for riches into the sacred mountains of the Lakota. Within two years, what had been remote wilderness was changed forever. Stories of gold in the Hills brought the rush of 1876. Thousands of miners converged on Deadwood Gulch and nearby areas. Many people who came to the Hills were not able to find a paying claim and ended up "mining the miners" by providing supplies, entertainment and other services. Stories about gambling and violence during the Gold Rush may have been exaggerated, but the gold frenzy did bring colorful characters to the area. Famous gunfighter Wild Bill Hickok was shot to death playing poker in Deadwood's Saloon #10. Calamity Jane, who claimed that she and Wild Bill were lovers, is buried next to him in the Mount Moriah Cemetery, also in Deadwood.

WOUNDED KNEE

In 1890 Sitting Bull was murdered on the Standing Rock Reservation. Following this event, Big Foot and his Mnikowoju band flee to Pine Ridge to seek protection under Red Cloud. More than 250 members of Big Foot's band are massacred by the 7th Cavalry on December 29th at Wounded Knee. The event is often described as the last major conflict between the U.S. Army and the Great Sioux Nation.