

ship, and law enforcement” (p. 12) resulted in election to the Montana territorial council in 1871, and in 1873 he served as sheriff of Lewis and Clark County. A Democratic majority in Montana, however, made it difficult for the politically ambitious Republican, and an economic downturn led Bullock to form a partnership with merchant Sol Star and join the gold rush to the Black Hills.

Bullock arrived in Deadwood on 3 August 1876, the day after James Butler (“Wild Bill”) Hickok was killed. There, he and Star opened a hardware store and auction house. Soon Bullock was involved in Deadwood’s political and civic life, as well, becoming a member of Deadwood’s first governing body, the Board of Health and Street Commission. He then left town for five months, forming a political relationship with territorial governor John L. Pennington. Not surprisingly, many local politicians were resentful when Pennington appointed Bullock sheriff of the newly created Lawrence County in March 1877, and Bullock lost subsequent bids for reelection.

Although popularly identified as a lawman, Bullock mostly engaged in business activities. While continuing his partnership with Star, Bullock invested in mining ventures, hotels, and a ranch. He also promoted railroad building in the region, especially to locations that enhanced his property values. These ventures did not always pan out, sometimes due to bad luck and economic downturns, other times because in civic and business affairs Bullock “often gave the initial push, but then he let the project go,” (p. 53) trusting others to bring his proposals to fruition.

Bullock’s friendship with Theodore Roosevelt, stemming from their leadership of volunteers during the Spanish-American War, led to federal appointments. He was named superintendent of the Black Hills Forest Reserve in 1901 and, in 1905, marshal for South Dakota, a position he held until retirement in 1914. He died on 3 September 1919 at the age of seventy-three. At his wish, he was buried on a prominence high above Deadwood.

Wolff’s biography of Seth Bullock is balanced and objective, and his assessment

Seth Bullock: Black Hills Lawman

David A. Wolff. South Dakota Biography Series. Pierre: South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2009. 216pp. Illus. Notes. Biblio. Ind. Paper, \$12.95.

Seth Bullock, the first sheriff of Lawrence County and later United States marshal for South Dakota, well deserves to be included in the South Dakota Biography Series. Not only did his contemporaries consider him one of the leading figures in the Black Hills, but recent publicity derived from the HBO television series *Deadwood* has increased interest in him. Until now, only a family account of his career has been available, a deficiency rectified in *Seth Bullock: Black Hills Lawman* by David Wolff, associate professor of history at Black Hills State University.

Bullock joined the gold rush to Montana in 1867, working mostly as commission merchant and auctioneer rather than miner. His “passion for politics, community leader-

that Bullock “deserves to be recognized as one of Deadwood’s most famous citizens” (p. 1) seems justified. Nevertheless, readers might wonder how highly Black Hills citizens regarded him in light of his election losses there. Wolff’s assertion that Bullock established law and order in lawless Deadwood also requires careful consideration, given his absence during critical months in late 1876 and early 1877. Finally, a few comments about the portrayal of Bullock in HBO’s *Deadwood* series would seem appropriate since publicity from this show likely played a role in elevating interest in him sufficiently to call for a new biography.

The strengths of Wolff’s examination of Bullock, however, override these minor deficiencies; the work is clearly written, and the author’s assertions are carefully substantiated. *Seth Bullock: Black Hills Lawman* is highly recommended for persons interested in western lawmen, the Black Hills, the *Deadwood* television series, and, in fact, anyone looking for an informative book to read.

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