Today's visitor driving along Interstate 90 finds South Dakota's numerous tourist attractions self-evident: Wall Drug, Mount Rushmore, Pioneer Auto Museum, the World's Only Corn Palace. Yet these and others like them are all man-made and are actually addenda to the natural beauties of the state, which have attracted transients—if not actual tourists—from ancient times. In the eastern part of the state, these natural attractions include Sica Hollow, a verdant glen north of Sisseton that is replete with waterfalls,
swamp gas, and Indian legends of evil doings. The glacial lakes of the northeast and the falls of the Big Sioux River have brought travelers to those areas. Water (or the lack of it) also played a part in tourism development west of the Missouri River. The warm springs in the southern Black Hills are the most obvious example, but the Cheyenne, Belle Fourche, and Grand rivers drew fur trappers and traders into the west river country in the early part of the nineteenth century. Migratory natives and European settlers alike associated water with transportation rather than recreation, yet these waterways and lakes also served as a source of diversion and relaxation to early inhabitants. By the end of the 1930s, the human desire for such diversion had given rise to South Dakota's second largest industry—tourism.

The counties east of the Missouri River were settled many years before the west river area, and the state's economy remained solidly agricultural until the dual magnets of Yellowstone and the Black Hills began drawing newly mobile Americans across the prairies after the turn of the century. Paradoxically, the Hills region (which was not even opened to white settlement until the last quarter of the nineteenth century) was a leader in the development of tourism despite its inaccessibility and relative anonymity. It is popularly believed that tourism in the Black Hills dates from the summer of 1927 when Calvin Coolidge, the president of the United States, spent his summer vacation in Custer State Park, bestowing millions of dollars' worth of free publicity on the little-known area. Undoubtedly, 1927 does mark the beginning of the modern industry known as travel and tourism, in which a significant segment of the population actively pursues visitor dollars. However, people had been seeking out the pleasures offered by pure mountain air, natural wonders, and recreational opportunities (with little or no invitation by the natives) as long ago as the eighteenth century, and probably much earlier.

Unknown peoples traversed the southwestern corner of the state as early as twelve thousand years ago, leaving pictographs in the Craven and Red Canyon areas as witnesses to their presence. While we know little about these migrating American Indians, later native groups came to the southern Black Hills specifically to soak away their aches and pains in the warm springs and thereby qualify as tourists, perhaps the earliest ones. Each succeeding wave

of Indian emigration had discovered the Minnekahta area of the southern Hills in turn, and each had laid claim to it. No one knows exactly how many hundreds of years the various Indian tribes had been making special pilgrimages to the Hills to cure their sick in the magical warm springs. By the time the first white man laid eyes on the original rock tub in the 1870s, however, it was worn and smooth from years of use. The rocks of tepee rings dotted both the valley floors and level heights of the area, indicating numerous occupations by these first tourists. This more or less continuous use of the Vale of Minnekahta makes Hot Springs not only the

In the summer of 1927, President Calvin Coolidge spent his summer vacation in the Black Hills. The president, with his wife Grace beside him, wears a straw hat on a wagon trip from Mystic to Slate Creek.

oldest town in the Black Hills but the first tourist attraction as well.²

Pierre Lodge, on the banks of Rapid Creek, was a vacation retreat for families from the capital city.
Despite this precedent, the white settlement of the Hills brought different priorities. Because of mining interests, early promotional efforts stressed the varied and rich mineral resources present in the area, with agricultural opportunities coming in a close second. Tourism remained a footnote in promotional materials well into the 1920s and does not appear to have been seriously considered as a source of livelihood. Some of the earliest tourist-related businesses were resorts such as the Latchstring Inn in Spearfish Canyon and various dude ranches scattered throughout the Black Hills. Natural outgrowths of working ranches and stagecoach stops of pioneer days, dude ranches were modest affairs, reflecting the resources of a clientele that came from nearby states and eastern South Dakota. The Pierre Lodge, situated on the banks of Rapid Creek west of Rapid City, operated as a private club. It had been designed so that a working man from Pierre (about two hundred miles away) could keep his entire family at the lodge for a week and join them for the weekend, all for less than forty dollars including train fare.

Aside from dude ranches and occasional resorts, however, the promise of a Black Hills vacationland remained unfulfilled. With a shortage of paid attractions in the Hills, brochures promoted scenery, the health-building qualities of the climate, and the allure of the West (not necessarily the “Old West” promoted in current publications). A brochure published by the Rapid City Commercial Club about 1920 described the pleasures of the Black Hills in this way: “A day of sight-seeing, of fishing, of hunting, of berrying, of bathing, or kodaking from the train or automobile, of picnicking or experimenting with the pan for gold, all have their fascinations. The mountains are yearly drawing thousands who are just becoming acquainted with the wonders of this most scenic part of the United States.” A 1932 brochure praised the climate: “The nights are cool and provide the proper temperature for restful and energizing sleep. Night covering is required, but no mosquito netting is used. The Black Hills have no mosquitoes.” Such advertisement appealed to city dwellers, luring them from the heat of urban streets in July and August.

3. Private papers of Hoadley Dean, Rapid City, S.Dak.
4. Rapid City, South Dakota, the City of Seven Valleys (Rapid City, S.Dak.: Rapid City Commercial Club, [1919]), p. 38.
5. Rapid City, Gateway to the Black Hills of South Dakota, a Mountain Vacation Land (Rapid City, S.Dak.: Rapid City Chamber of Commerce, 1932), p. 3.
Once in the Hills, the relatively unsophisticated travelers of the 1920s and 1930s were encouraged to visit the Museum of Geology in Rapid City, Hangman's Hill, the government Indian school, the state cement plant, Fort Meade, the Orman Dam in Belle Fourche, Battle Mountain Sanitarium and plunge baths in Hot Springs, and the Spearfish fish hatchery. Geographical highlights included Harney Peak, Terry Peak, Sylvan Lake, Rapid Canyon, Dark Canyon, and the Badlands.\(^6\)

Since automobile travel was in its infancy early in this century, most promotional materials emphasized such sightseeing from railroad cars. The Black Hills had been blessed with numerous lines throughout the area (which undoubtedly contributed to the slow development of costly mountain roads), and as late as 1920, an article in the *Pahasapa Quarterly* outlined complete rail tours of the Black Hills.\(^7\) In time, Rapid City's Crouch Line, which was originally intended solely as rail transportation between Rapid City and Mystic, became the area's number-one tourist attraction. Its famed 105 trestles spanning the gorges up and down Rapid Canyon attracted locals and out-of-town visitors alike. By 1932, the forty-four-mile round-trip fares ranged from $1.05 to $2.70, and literature stated that the train "will drop passengers off anywhere on the route and pick them up on the return, allowing them ample time for fishing."\(^8\) Conductors on the Spearfish Canyon line and other scenic Black Hills routes that catered to local picnickers, hikers, and berry pickers also practiced this casual attitude toward unscheduled stops.\(^9\)

In the early years then, practically the only place a tourist could spend money, other than on food, lodging, and railroad fares, was on admission to one of the three cave tours open to the public since 1902. Souvenir shops were practically nonexistent, and commercial enterprise targeted at travelers was minimal. This dearth of private business interest in the tourism sector, coupled with the strong mining and agricultural economies of western South Dakota, conspired to make citizens slow to awaken to the potential of tourism.

---


\(^7\) A. I. Johnson, "Touring the Black Hills," *Pahasapa Quarterly* 9 (June 1920):159-73.

\(^8\) *Rapid City, Gateway to the Black Hills*, p. 24.

The attitude was not restricted to the Black Hills area, however. Boosters throughout the state regarded tourism as merely a way to attract investors and immigrants so that they would then settle in South Dakota. A state Immigration Department report for 1911-1912 stated, "The advent of more tourists would mean the possibility of securing more investors, more people to make it a
permanent home, and more wealth for those now here.’” By 1920, when tourism, limited though its scope was, had already become the number-two industry, attitudes expressed in state publications


Alfalfa Palace, 1917
and actions taken by the farmer-dominated legislature still reflected a strong psychological loyalty to agriculture. Ironically, many successful tourist attractions and events were agricultural in origin: the Corn Palace in Mitchell, the Alfalfa Palace in Rapid City, the state fair in Huron, and numerous regional fairs, stock shows, rodeos, and chautauquas throughout the state.

Another important development for tourism also had direct benefits for agriculture but encountered opposition from farmers. Nationwide, good automobile roads were being promoted as a weapon that the farmers could use against the tyranny of the railroads. Proponents of this Good Roads movement promoted the direct farm-to-market potential of the roads as economically and socially beneficial to the farmer. Even so, Joseph W. Parmley of Ipswich, the father of South Dakota's Good Roads movement, felt compelled in a February 1909 speech in Mitchell to state, "The automobile demands better roads and is here to stay whether the farmer is willing or not." Parmley had apparently encountered South Dakota farmers who were suspicious of townsfolk's motives in pushing for road development.

The Good Roads movement reached South Dakota in 1910 when organizations were formed throughout the state in the larger towns. Aberdeen motorists formed an automobile association in that year, the primary purpose of which was "the entertainment of the tourists." Following an initial "reliability run" (a motor excursion between Minneapolis and Aberdeen) to attract attention to the movement, the Aberdeen Daily American established an Automobile Department designed to "educate and assist auto tourists and to boost the good roads movement." A five-dollar prize was offered for descriptions and mileage records of the shortest and best motor road from Aberdeen to Fargo, North Dakota. Ideas for summer tours near Aberdeen were also solicited.

Aberdeen became a pacesetter in eastern South Dakota tourism, and its civic leaders quickly appreciated the value of improved

15. Ibid.
roads. In 1913, the Aberdeen Daily American stated in its support of the proposed Yellowstone Trail: "[The road] will prove of tremendous advantage to the Hub City in many ways. When the highway is finally constructed, it will bring thousands of automobilists from all parts of the country through Aberdeen on their way to Yellowstone. This will put Aberdeen 'on the map' in a way that will prove of great advertising value, and will enable this city to exploit its own advantages and those of the state of South Dakota most effectively among a class of people who have money to invest and many of whom are combining business with pleasure in their trips across the country."^\textsuperscript{16}

Despite the enthusiasm of local automobile clubs and individual tourism promoters, the state as a whole was slow to respond to their pleas for improved transportation arteries, and road conditions remained appalling in most rural areas. State senator and road booster Joseph Parmley had introduced legislation as early as 1907 that would have required standardization of road construction under the supervision of county commissioners, but the bill was soundly defeated. The legislature did create a highway com-


Joseph W. Parmley, the father of the Good Roads movement in South Dakota and founder of the Yellowstone Trail Association, is seated second from left in this picture of the organization.
mission in 1913, but no appropriation was made for salaries or expenses, and the commissioners complained in their first annual report that they were obliged to pay for postage, railroad fare, and stationery out of their own pockets.17

Private organizations formed to take up the slack. Most of these were national associations, but one—the Yellowstone Trail—originated in South Dakota and became one of the best known throughout the country, thanks to its founder, Joseph Parmley. In 1910, the senator from Ipswich began hiring engineers and organizing publicity stunts to improve a stretch of road between Aberdeen and Mobridge. His success led to the formal organization of the Twin-City-Aberdeen-Yellowstone Park Trail Association in 1912, with expanded plans for a good road from “Plymouth Rock to

In the teens and twenties, road building involved a combination of heavy machinery and horsepower as shown in these photographs of the Shipman Brothers road crew.
At top, the Stevens Brothers road crew works on a Campbell County road, while an unidentified crew works in a cut (center). Below, such early roads in the Badlands, Missouri Breaks, or Black Hills presented greater challenges and more expense.
Parmley himself bought yellow paint to mark stones along the route (carrying spare rocks in his car in case the locale lacked its own) and was its prime promoter for the next thirty years. The original Aberdeen-to-Ipswich highway became known locally as the Parmley Highway, and many other area attractions were named in his honor.

By the time Parmley formed his association, the Good Roads movement had taken hold in the American consciousness, but apparently without consistent results. A news item describing the first annual meeting of the Yellowstone Trail association in Miles City, Montana, on 17 February 1913 stated, "This is no mere good roads meeting because we propose to pave this highway with something more substantial than good intentions. . . . it is a business meeting of business men." As this declaration implies, many of the numerous highway associations that sprang up in the first decades of the twentieth century were mainly promotional, though they often ended up actually building the roads they touted because of a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the state and federal governments. In South Dakota, a state highway department was not fully activated until 1919, after the federal government promised matching funds for road construction.

In the Black Hills, Lawrence County led the campaign for good roads, inaugurating a comprehensive system of road building in 1911. The state legislature, dominated by east river farmers who preferred to sponsor farm-to-market routes, denied funding for Black Hills road-building. In response, Lawrence County purchased the old stagecoach toll roads and standardized road maintenance. Deadwood's "souvenir book" of 1915 urged motorists to come to "the center of good highways in the Black Hills" that summer, and by 1919, Lawrence County was universally recognized as hav-
ing the finest roads in western South Dakota, entertaining "tourists from all over the United States." 24

There are probably a number of reasons why Lawrence County took the lead in this area. Until World War II, when Rapid City finally became the premiere town of the Black Hills, that honor belonged to Deadwood, with her colorful past and booming gold economy. The tax base of Lawrence County was—thanks to the Homestake Gold Mine—extremely solid, and revenues for road improvements were therefore available. In addition, the United States Forest Service made possible much of the early Black Hills road construction and signage, establishing a forest highway system even before the state highway commission was formed. 25

Along with good roads came a revolutionary idea in sightseeing that was to become one of the Black Hills' most potent selling points. Although Peter Norbeck would receive much-deserved credit for carrying out the idea, mining engineer Arthur I. Johnson might have been the first public advocate of scenic roads. In the April 1919 issue of the Pahasapa Quarterly, he promoted the concept of scenic highways as tourist attractions in themselves. Despite the progress made in improving roads for automobile traffic, most Black Hills arteries were still woefully inadequate, and Johnson blamed the lack of good roads for the low attendance at caves (virtually the only commercial tourist attractions at the time) and for preventing travelers from reaching the more scenic areas of the Hills. In his words, "It lies within these hills to become as attractive to the American tourist as the mountains of Switzerland." 26 Three years later, the scenic highway through the Needles opened the inner beauties of the central Hills to the touring motorist. 27

The automobile also brought an entirely new kind of traveler. Railroad touring, at least for recreation, was still beyond the means of most families. Of necessity, it required additional expenditures for lodging and meals, plus any side trips while at the destination. Automobiles, on the other hand, not only provided individual freedom but also allowed travelers the opportunity to bring their

own roof and larder with them. Across the United States, "'the auto tourist camp' [had been] almost unknown in 1918, [but was] well-established by 1923,"28 and although the Black Hills were less than fifty years removed from wilderness at the time, their development paralleled that on the national level. (Even so, it was necessary for a contemporary national magazine to caution its readers, "A gun is no longer needed when you visit the western states.")29

Throughout South Dakota, cabin camps and campgrounds sprouted up, many of them absolutely free. Every town along an "improved" road had its own municipal camp, offering (eventually) modern toilet facilities, running water, wood, stoves, lights, a

29. Quoted ibid., p. 110.
community cabin, dance floor, swimming pool, fishing, and patrol system. Some also provided laundry facilities, hot showers, and cabins. As amenities multiplied, municipalities found it necessary to charge fees, thus inviting competition from private enterprise. The first businessmen to enter the campground business were the owners of gas stations and roadside refreshment stands. By the late twenties, these private entrepreneurs dominated the business.\(^30\)

The state also got into the campground business with the formation of a state park board in 1920. At that time, there was only one state park, Custer State Park in the Black Hills, officially des-

ignated as such in 1919. By 1924, the park contained three tourist facilities. The State Game Lodge boasted rooms and tents, a lunch counter and store, and a five-hole golf course. The lodge was apparently self-sufficient with its own dairy barn, bakery, and orchestra, the members of which provided dance music (nightly except Sundays) after their duties as waiters were dispatched. Even as early as 1923, the fifty tent spaces were reportedly full every night of the summer. The second facility operating at that time was Camp McMaster, a campground located on the lower end of the Needles Highway near Iron Creek. Sylvan Lake Hotel, privately built in 1898 and purchased in 1920 by the state, was the third. By 1929, there were also thirty private cabins in the park, and some officials, including future United States senator Francis Case of Custer, proposed that there be five thousand more. He suggested leasing twenty-acre plots to private individuals as

a means of raising revenue for the park. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed, and the proposal was not only discarded but a moratorium on private construction was eventually adopted.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{32} South Dakota, Department of Agriculture, \textit{South Dakota, the Golden Nest Egg of North America: The Greater South Dakota Congress} [1929], p. 9.

\textbf{President Coolidge made the State Game Lodge the Summer White House in 1927.}
Trains continued to play a major part in Black Hills tourism through the 1940s, but a subtle shift in advertising indicated that sightseeing had changed with the evolution in transportation. In 1932, the Chicago & North Western Railway offered packaged tours to the Black Hills that now claimed, "Every item of necessary expense included—rail tickets, Pullman and hotel accommodations, meals, motor coach sightseeing trips. The care-free way to go."\(^{33}\)

It is interesting to note that admission fees were not listed in the all-expense fee, indicating that, even as late as 1932, paid attractions were still so rare in the Black Hills that they were not even mentioned in a typical sightseeing tour. Even as late as 1938, a guidebook failed to mention the existence of Wall Drug, an attraction that today is visited by as many as ten thousand tourists a day.\(^{34}\)

With the advent of suitable roads for the new motorized vehicles, another new phenomenon appeared on the scene—tour buses. The Smith brothers of Hot Springs introduced the first "touring cars" into the Black Hills in 1908 to transport visitors to and from Wind Cave. Others followed suit, but motorcoach touring does not seem to have become a major factor in Black Hills tourism until the late 1920s when Rapid City booster Paul Bellamy established his Black Hills Transportation Company. Beginning with a fleet of Buick touring cars, Bellamy developed his business into the premiere sightseeing company of the twenties, thirties, and forties. His canvas-topped buses were pictured year after year in local and state advertising as they maneuvered a hairpin curve, accented a scenic spot along a canyon floor, or parked in front of the State Game Lodge with dignitaries aboard.\(^{35}\)

All Rapid City trains were met by these "comfortable, air-cushioned motor coaches," which conveyed passengers to their hotels and provided elaborate tour schedules of from one to five days, beginning and ending each day in a new location. Promotional materials assured prospective visitors, "Tourists will find this method of touring the Hills carefree and most pleasant as the

\(^{33}\) Rapid City, Gateway to the Black Hills, back cover.


\(^{35}\) See Paul E. Bellamy and G. D. Seymour, A Guide to the Black Hills ([Rapid City, S.Dak.]: Black Hills Transportation Co., 1927); A Visit to the Black Hills of South Dakota (n.p., [1931]), p. 46.
Senator Peter Norbeck (center) stands with Rapid City booster Paul Bellamy (right) and a White House official near a cabin in Custer State Park, 1927.
tour conductors look after the comfort of the passengers and explain all the points of interest.”

Still another advertising pamphlet extolled the virtues of the company’s employees: “Experienced and trained escorts accompany the passengers throughout the trip, whose pleasure as well as duty, is to aid the passengers in every way possible. Points of interest are explained, entertainment furnished, room reservations made, etc.”

In 1929, an all-day tour cost ten dollars including lunch, but as the depression deepened, the fee dropped to six dollars per person.

It is probably no coincidence that tour buses appeared in the Black Hills almost simultaneously with what was to become its most important attraction. Work on Mount Rushmore had begun in 1927, and although progress was slow in the early years, the mountain carving became an instantaneous success with tourists. Peter Norbeck completed the second of his masterful scenic

36. Visit to the Black Hills of South Dakota, p. 46.
37. Rapid City, Gateway to the Black Hills, p. 7.
highways, the Iron Mountain Road, in 1932, and thereafter motorists could view the monument from the various tunnels and vantage points artfully laid out en route to the carving. Sculptor Gutzon Borglum himself turned out to be a valuable asset to tourism, welcoming curious onlookers who carried home stories of the stupendous undertaking and its eccentric creator. Borglum's generosity even extended to his studio, a corner of which was devoted to souvenir sales, but which he eventually abandoned altogether as curios enveloped the entire space.\textsuperscript{39}

With President Coolidge's visit to the Black Hills and the dedication of Mount Rushmore in 1927, the tourism floodgates were

opened at last. The hundreds of datelined articles appearing in
daily newspapers throughout the nation did more to fix the Black
Hills in the public mind than all the promotional efforts of the
previous fifty years. And every word was absolutely free! Tourist
traffic along South Dakota's main arteries increased yearly after

*President Calvin Coolidge rode horseback to the dedication
of Mount Rushmore, giving his speech in his cowboy boots.
Sculptor Gutzon Borglum (in knickers) listens attentively.*
Growth of Tourism

1927, and tourist facilities and attractions developed proportionately. The state seemed to be awakening to the potential of tourism dollars. One South Dakotan describing the "Value of Tourist Travel" in 1924 proclaimed, "With millions of our people on the highways seeking rest and enjoyment and willing to pay for it there seems rather a lack of patriotism and good faith to our neighbors if we do not tell the story of South Dakota's delights for the traveler."  

Still, the benefits of tourism to the state's economy were not universally evident. Another 1924 source, a report probably sponsored by the Watertown Chamber of Commerce, admitted that hunting and fishing at nearby Lake Kaneska drew sportsmen, but it recognized no consequent economic impact on the community. Likewise, the summer homes that sprouted along the lake's shoreline were viewed as merely pleasant retreats for local residents. The report listed two tourist camps, one on the shore of Lake Kaneska, and cited "thousands" of tourists passing annually. Yet Lake Kaneska's commercial value was measured in the sale of bottled water, ice, sand, and gravel.  

As late as 1932, Rapid City promoter Paul Bellamy deemed it necessary to proclaim the benefits and realities of tourism to a gathering of secretaries of South Dakota chambers of commerce. "The recreational or tourist industry," he remarked, "brings new money into the state. . . . we must continue to improve our highways to meet the demands of our customers, the tourists. They are at our borders, with their money in their hands, ready to give to us for what they want. If we do not supply their desires, unquestionably, they will go elsewhere."  

At the time, the best highways in South Dakota were surfaced with gravel, and the realities of travel in the dirty thirties created an image problem for the state. For years, all promotional efforts had been funneled through the immigration division of the Department of Agriculture, but highways and tourism were finally linked in 1937 when a state tourism publicity agency was established.

40. Chas. McCaffree, "Value of Tourist Travel," Sunshine State 5, no. 5 (May 1924): 15. For more information on the Coolidge visit, see Smith, Carving of Mount Rushmore, pp. 124-49.
41. "Watertown, South Dakota, and Its Environs," [1924], s.v. "Watertown, S.D."
42. Paul Bellamy, A Discussion of South Dakota's Recreation or Tourist Industry and Its Relation to Our State Highway System (Rapid City, S.Dak.: By the Author, [1933]), p. 15.
Large crowds patronized the city park at Lake Kampeska near Watertown (above).
Campers and fishermen enjoy an outing at Lake Herman, one of the glacial lakes of northeastern South Dakota.

Hitching up a boat trailer and packing their gear on the running board, early sportsmen prepare for a trip to Opitz Lake in Day County.
within the Department of Highways. The department readily accepted its new directions, and in 1938 United States Highway 16 connecting Sioux Falls and Rapid City was completely oiled, followed shortly by Highways 14 and 18. The advertising budget for tourism publicity that first year was ten thousand dollars, and countering the dust-bowl image was the agency’s number-one priority. Brochures were printed in cool greens and blues, depicting a South Dakota oasis of coolness and moisture to prospective visitors. In addition to the state’s entry into image-building through tourism promotion, the private sector established other agencies for the same purpose. The Greater South Dakota Association was founded in 1938, followed by Black Hills, Badlands, and Lakes Association in 1939.

Visitation to the state increased. Traffic statistics for east-west arteries are not available for this period, but we do know that in 1935, two hundred thousand people visited the still-unfinished

Mount Rushmore. Roadside attractions began to sprout along the main arteries of the state—one of which actually capitalized on the thirsty travelers produced by the long trip across the prairie. After five years of barely breaking even, Wall Drug began advertising free ice water in 1936 and has grown steadily ever since. Other major attractions born in the late twenties and early thirties were Cedar Pass Lodge in the Badlands, Duhamel Trading Post and the Hotel Alex Johnson in Rapid City, Blue Bell Lodge in Custer State Park, Jewel Cave National Monument, Timber of the Ages, and the Reptile Gardens.

The federal government’s Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) program also helped foster tourism by providing the labor to dam up recreational lakes and construct public projects such as the Custer State Park museum and Dinosaur Park in Rapid City. In addition, CCC workers produced campgrounds, culverts, bridges, and landscaping in Custer State Park and at Mount Rushmore, adding to the comfort and traveling ease of visitors to the area. Another federal program, the Works Progress Administration, actually constructed 651,087 miles of road throughout the United States and produced 378 regional guidebooks, including a number for South Dakota.

During the ensuing war years, shortages and rationing drastically curtailed travel throughout the country, and tourism’s hard-won place in South Dakota’s commerce seemed threatened, but fortunately the setback was only temporary. Still, it would take another fifty years before the state fully recognized the importance of tourism to its economy. Not until the late 1980s would South Dakota finally establish a cabinet-level Department of Tourism with a budget commensurate with the industry’s contribution to the state’s economy. The foundation for this modern tourism industry had been laid during the formative years prior to 1939.

45. Patton, Open Road, pp. 236-38. Patton suggests, however, that South Dakota refused to distribute its state guide because of differences in politics between its authors and state officials (p. 238).
Copyright of South Dakota History is the property of South Dakota State Historical Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.

All illustrations in this issue are property of the South Dakota State Historical Society except for those on the following pages: p. 163, from Deuel County Auditor’s Office, Clear Lake; p. 164, from Dedication, Codington County Courthouse, Watertown, South Dakota, June 19 and 20, 1929 [Watertown, S.Dak., 1929]; p. 174, from Mitchell Chamber of Commerce and Goin Company, Mitchell; p. 177 (top), from State Game Lodge, Custer State Park; pp. 180–81, from Jack Boucher, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.; p. 188, from Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minn.; p. 254, from Siouxland Heritage Museums, Sioux Falls.