



Peter Norbeck

Dakota Images

Born to pioneer Lutheran parents in 1870 in a dugout in the southeast corner of what is now South Dakota, Peter Norbeck became the first native-born governor and United States Senator of the state.

His political career began in 1908 when he became the state senator from Spink County, a position he held for three consecutive terms. He was elected lieutenant governor in 1914 and served as governor for two terms, from 1917-1921. In 1920 he was a delegate to the National Republican Convention in Chicago and was a leader in the nomination of Calvin Coolidge for vice-president. He also won a seat in the United States Senate in 1920, a seat he held for sixteen years.

Norbeck's political career reflected his concern for wild-life conservation and park development. His vision and labor contributed to the development of the Custer State Park, the Iron Mountain Road, the Needles Highway, the Wind Cave National Park, the Badlands National Monument, the Mount Rushmore National Memorial, and the Grand Teton National Park. He was also instrumental in the passage of the Migratory Waterfowl Act.

Badger Clark immortalized him as the Poet of the Park when he wrote:

A feather is the politician's fame,
Blown upward on the crowd's applaudive roar,
But a good poet wins a surer name
Disclosing beauties never seen before.
So, when the issues change and voters vote
For other leaders in another age,
Man yet will love the poem he wrote
Here on a hundred-thousand-acre page.

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All pictures in this issue are the property of the South Dakota State Historical Society except the following: p. 96, A lime kiln and a skip hoist, and p. 105, The interior of the mill of the Standby Mine from the Homestake Mining Company; The Map of the Black Hills, p. 92, General George A. Custer's initials, p. 96, The mine manager's home in Cambria, p. 99, Banker Allen's home in Cascade, p. 102, The shaft house at the Maitland Mine, p. 104, The Standby Mine's mill, p. 107, Miners' cabins at Mineral Hill, p. 108, The Cleopatra Mine, p. 111, Houses in Glendale from Watson Parker; pp. 116–130, photographs of the Black Hills by Earl Sampson; and p. 102, The Branch Mint Mine layout, p. 103, The remains of the mill and the hoist of the Golden Reward Mine at Astoria, p. 112, Deserted miners' cabins and an office building in Tinton from Kenneth Stewart.