

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **The Badlands of Dakota**

Like California, South Dakota was the scene of a "gold rush." Gold was discovered at Custer, the mother city of the Black Hills, where the first settler arrived in 1874. The discovery site is marked, as are the sites of the first miners meeting, the first post office, and the place where Fly Speck Billy was hanged. Just outside the city Korczak Ziolkowski is carving a heroic memorial to the American Indian. The completed memorial will depict Crazy Horse, noted Sioux chieftain, mounted on a spirited pony.

Custer was named in honor of General Custer who had a camp site in the area. It was laid out with wide streets so that eight ox teams could turn.

We spent the night in Rapid City and the next morning set out to see the Badlands, now a national monument. The Badlands cover an area of 122,972 acres in the southwestern part of South Dakota. The most scenic section, we were told, lies between the White and Cheyenne rivers. According to geologists, it is one of the most spectacular exhibits of weathering and erosion in the world. Irregular ravines, fantastic ridges, low hills and cliffs of variegated coloring alternate with the grayish white soil. One can imagine seeing castles, towers, cathedral spires and pinnacles. For 25 miles we drove through this wonderland with the coloring changing at each turn of the road. It was almost as amazing as the Grand Canyon.

The world's only Corn Palace is located at Mitchell, S.D. We visited it today and were amazed at what an artist can do with an ear of corn. Each Indian summer, the palace is freshly decorated, a process which requires between two and three thousand bushels of corn, all in its natural color. The individual cobs, with the corn on, are sawed lengthwise by small power saws, the halves then nailed, flat side in, to wooden panels which are fastened to the brick walls of the building. Each panel on both the inner and outer walls of the building, depict a theme relating to corn. Our visit to this unique "palace" was well worth the time spent there.

We have thrilled over the corn fields, the huge red barns, the cattle on the thousand hills and the courtesy of the tourists and natives alike. We haven't seen a

highway patrolman since we left California. Everyone seems to obey traffic laws without being watched,

In Wyoming we visited Mt. Rushmore National Memorial. We are sure that most of our readers have either seen or read a great deal about this work of sculpture on the side of a granite mountain in the Black Hills. It is often called "The Shrine of Democracy" and in a few short years has become one of the most visited of the parks.

The portraits were sculpted by the late Gutzon Borglum on the side of Mt. Rushmore to commemorate four outstanding Americans. The sculptured likenesses of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt constitute a national memorial established by an act of Congress and placed by order of the President under the administration of the National Park Service. Rushmore is in the Harney National Forest.

The memorial was dedicated in 1927. The head of Washington was unveiled in 1930, that of Jefferson in 1936, Lincoln in 1937 and Theodore Roosevelt in 1939. He artist died in March 1941.

The beauty, the grandeur and the size of the heads cannot be realized from a mere picture, they must be seen to be fully appreciated. The sight is awe-inspiring and can be seen from many angles as one travels up the winding mountain road to the site of the memorial.