The Black Hills Historian
A Publication of The Leland D. Case Library for Western Historical Studies at
BLACK HILLS STATE COLLEGE

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The Case Library — A Beginning

Eight years ago the editor came to the Black Hills. His mission was to teach American History at Black Hills State College and he was about to undergo a learning experience. All his college career had been spent at large universities. Library facilities for teaching and research had been excellent. He had made the rounds of research libraries from the Library of Congress to the Bancroft.

Spearfish was different. It was a small campus in a beautiful town nestled on the northern edge of perhaps the most diverse and historic piece of country in the West —— the Black Hills. For a refugee from urban America it was a dream come true.

But soon it became apparent that there was one problem. Library facilities at Spearfish were cramped and the collection was small. Nowhere for several hundred miles was there a substantial collection for the person who wanted to study or write about western history.

As months in Spearfish became years, it also became apparent that studying Black Hills history was a very contagious disease. Much of the history of the Black Hills and surrounding prairies was unexplored territory. Nowhere was there a library which could serve as a base from which to explore the unknown. Because the frontier had come late to the Hills, source material was scattered everywhere.

Then circumstances conspired to create a unique opportunity. Black Hills State was able to build a fine library facility. The E.Y. Berry Library - Learning Center could house a sizeable collection in ideal circumstances. Congressman Berry's gift of his congres-sional papers gave the college its first manuscripts collection. The Berry collection was a rich source for the two decades from 1950-1970. But many of the resources necessary for basic Black Hills research were still not available in the Black Hills.
The Case Library --- A Beginning (Continued)

Still there was no focus in the library for the western historian. Western historical materials were dispersed through the collection, and there was no well-organized method for gathering and preserving them. No system existed for seeking out gifts to build the western collection.

Then Black Hills State and Leland Case got together. Case was no stranger to the Black Hills or to western history. His family ties included his brother, the late South Dakota Senator Francis Case. He was once an eager student in the old Spearfish Normal Lab School. Much of the foundation of his distinguished career in journalism came from newspaper work in Hot Springs. Case's has been, perhaps, the best selling of the Black Hills guide books.

Case's love affair with western history has spanned decades and continents. His efforts were the major ingredient in the creation of "The Westerners", an organization of western history enthusiasts which included professionals and buffs and has "corral" scattered throughout the United States and around the world. Case had meticulously traced the wanderings of western trapper-explorer Jedediah Strong Smith. Case's experience with the Stuart Library, a uniquely organized western history collection at the University of the Pacific, gave him insights into the organization of special collection materials. His skills and his energy could shape a unique institution in the Black Hills.

These circumstances provided the genesis of the Leland D. Case Library for Western Historical Studies. There were many meetings and a good deal of planning. Finally the commitments were made and the Case Library began the transition from dream to reality on April 30, 1976, when the formal dedication was held in Spearfish on the Black Hills State College campus.

Perhaps the best statement of the concepts which the library is based came from Case himself at the library dedication ceremonies:

"So today we gather appropriately in Spearfish where educational traditions run deep to inaugurate a Library for Western Historical Studies. But let no one think of it as merely a repository for books. It also is an archive for such ephemera as newspapers, letters, business account books, photos, tapes, almost anything that records the lifestyles and events of society and the individuals that compose it.

This Library for Western Historical Studies will bracket special groupings called Collections. Already trained hands under direction of Dr. W. Edwin Erickson and Miss Dora Ann Jones are sifting and sorting and making accessible for scholarly use the Congressman E.Y. Berry Collection of documents and correspondence; the Szalay Collection of Maps and Ornithology; the Mount Rushmore Memorial Society Records—which are here, thanks to the foresight of Hoadley Dean and others; the extraordinary Cox Collection of 4,000 microfilmed town and county histories and directories.

What I have personally contributed should be thought of only as nucleus, the yeast starter, a magnet, the beginnings of what can become what President Freeman has dreamed— one of America's truly great resource centers for the study of Western History.

Contributions will be welcomed—indeed sought. Let no potential donor worry about duplication of items. Guidelines of this Library provide that no books may be sold, traded, or otherwise disposed of until at least three copies are on hand, even though microfilmed. Why? Because with normal use books do wear out and this Library is looking ahead to serving students not just five years nor fifty but, like the Bodleian at Oxford, for perhaps 500.

So field historians are being appointed at strategic points through the Hills. They serve without pay, seeking to flush out materials. And they powwow fortnightly with the College Faculty Case Library Committee on where and how bits and pieces of Hills history may be saved from fire, flood, and the city dumps.

'Man's noblest delight,' Mark Twain wrote in The Innocents Abroad, is creative discovery—'to give birth to an idea, to discover a great thought—an intellectual nugget right under the dust of a field that many a brain plow has gone over before.' Essential
to such an experience is recognizing a significant relationship between what is new and what was previously known. From such psychological association came inventiveness and creativity. How this can happen even at the verbal level is partly demonstrated by the college freshmen, reared on a dairy farm, who titled a term paper in sociology, 'What I Owe to Udders.'"

At present the Case Library has no commitment to Dairy Science, but it does have an intense commitment to the study of the American West. The Case Library wants and needs the support of buffs and professionals from Spearfish to Stockholm. The purpose of this newsletter will be to keep you informed on our activities and new acquisitions and to solicit your aid in our enterprise.

**THE FOURTH ANNUAL BLACK HILLS HISTORY CONFERENCE**

Again this Spring Black Hills State will host the Black Hills History Conference. The conference will be held Friday, April 29 and Saturday, April 30, 1977, at the Holiday Inn of the Northern Black Hills near Spearfish. The format of the conference will include presentations by non-professional and professional historians from throughout South Dakota and neighboring states. Presentations will cover a number of topics ranging from Indian history in the Black Hills region to evaluations of historic artifacts and buildings in the Hills area.

Conferences should also include a bit of food and fun, and ours is no exception. Friday activities will include an evening banquet and a social hour and Saturday's program finale will be a luncheon meeting. If past conferences are any indication, participants will enjoy themselves and will have an opportunity to share ideas with many other Black Hills history buffs.

So save April 29 and April 30. Conference programs and further information are available by writing or calling:

**Dr. Sever Eubank**  
Social Science Division  
Black Hills State College  
Spearfish, South Dakota 57783  
Telephone: (605) 642-6212

**FRIENDS OF THE CASE LIBRARY**

This section of the Black Hills Historian will be devoted to news items regarding gifts to the Leland D. Case Library for Western Historical Studies. In this issue's lead article, Dr. Case sets out his goals for the Case Library. Case and the Black Hills State College Staff are committed to the concept that the Leland D. Case Library will function as a living and a growing collection.

With this idea in mind, the Leland D. Case Library must constantly strive for three basic commodities. The resource materials donated by Dr. Case are only the foundation of a collection which must be greatly expanded to serve the needs of Western Historians. The Leland D. Case Library needs books, photos, maps, newspapers, documents and all the other things that build a good secondary resource and manuscripts collection.

These materials, as they are added to the collection, can be kept in secure surroundings with controlled temperature and humidity. Compared to the average attic or file case, the surroundings of the Leland D. Case Library will insure the survival of stores of valuable historical materials which would be lost to time and the elements.

Another unique feature of the Case Library is its cataloging system. Case Library materials are arranged in working categories. Researchers interested in categories ranging from mining to Western Literature can find materials arranged conveniently by category. The Case Library is intended to be a working collection rather than a display of rare books. This basic commitment to research and writing demands that the collection be expanded. The Case Library eagerly seeks friends who can
Friends of the Case Library (Continued)

help us expand our collection of manuscripts and secondary materials.

The Case Library also needs financial support. Although the collection is housed in a state-owned facility, most of the Leland D. Case Library's publication, service and promotional activities must come from private contributions. One of the functions of the Black Hills Historian will be to solicit financial aid from the friends of the Leland D. Case Library and to recognize those friends for their kindness and generosity.

Perhaps most essential to the success of the Case Library will be the efforts of volunteers. Time given by many persons has already provided an indispensable element in the creation of the Leland D. Case Library. In this issue the editor would like to recognize the efforts of the Case Library Field Historians.

The Case Library Field Historian concept is intended to allow easy access to

individuals who know the objectives and resources of the collection. These individuals will give their time to contact prospective Case Library donors. They will serve as resource persons for groups or individuals eager to learn about the Case Library. A list of current Field Historians appears below.

Marshall Truax
2400 Hampton Road
Hot Springs, SD 57747
Rapid City, SD 57701

Richard B. Williams
Murray Addition
Sturgis, SD 57785

Mrs. Mabel Brown
Box 746
Newcastle, WY 82701

Dr. Leland D. Case
Sahuaro Homestead
9900 East Broadway
Tucson, AZ 85719

Patricia Mechling
94 Hillcrest

Lura Camery
46 South Cacite
Tucson, AZ 85705

John Gilchriese
1975 E. Kleindale Road
Tucson, AZ 85719

The Case Awards offer cash prizes for well-written historical pieces considering the past of the Black Hills and surrounding areas. Awards are offered for entries from a number of categories, and emphasis is placed on encouraging buffs as well as professionals to submit entries. Winners will be announced at the Annual Black Hills History Conference.

Leland D. Case prizes will be awarded in the following categories:

Senior Leland D. Case Awards in Western History
Entries in this category will be welcomed from professional and amateur historians representing all walks of life. First prize award will be $150 and the runner-up will receive $75.

Junior Leland D. Case Awards in Western History
Entries in this category should come from students below the college level. First prize award will be $50 and the runner-up will receive $25.

Leland D. Case Awards for Senior Citizens
Entries in this category are encouraged from senior citizens who may not wish to submit entries in the senior category. Senior Citizens have the choice of entering either the Senior or Senior Citizens Category. First prize will be $50 and the runner-up will receive $25.

RULES FOR LELAND D. CASE AWARDS

1. All entries will be type-written and double-spaced.

2. All papers should be properly documented where possible with a bibliography included. (It is recognized that personal reminiscences may not always lend themselves to formal documentation.) Use of primary source material is encouraged.

3. There are no limitations governing the length of entries.

4. All entries must be postmarked on or before March 1, 1977.

5. The title page of each entry should include the following:
   a. Title and Date
   b. Entrant's name and address
   c. Category of entry

6. No entries will be returned.

All entries will become the property of Black Hills State College and should be submitted prior to March 1, 1977 to:

Dr. Sever Eubank
Social Science Division
Black Hills State College
Spearfish, SD 57783