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■ Tapping into a rich trove of letters, historian Paul L. Hedren offers a close look at some formative years, 1875–76, in neighboring South Dakota. His edited collection of letters, *Ho! For the Black Hills: Captain Jack Crawford Reports the Black Hills Gold Rush and Great Sioux War* (Pierre: South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2012, 297 p., cloth, \$29.95) presents the words of John Wallace Crawford, aka “Captain Jack,” a young Pennsylvanian who first went west in 1875, part of the Dodge Expedition that sought to investigate rumors of gold in the Black Hills. Prospector, poet, journalist, showman, and scout during the Great Sioux War, Crawford wrote vivid, detailed letters that were published in the *Omaha Bee* and other newspapers. Hedren’s introduction to both Captain Jack and the Black Hills gold rush sets the scene, as do the helpful chapter-by-chapter headnotes that precede the transcribed letters.

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