

I visited Deadwood in the early 1990's (I think it was 1992) to promote the Queens Poker Classic the 2nd largest poker tournament in the world at the time. Deadwood had a city wide poker tournament in those days. You paid and drew a seat that could have been in any casino in the city. Most only had 2 or 3 tables. Seats and casinos were combined as players were eliminated. If I remember right I played in 3 different casinos before busting out. The final 3 tables were in 1 casino. It was a lot of fun and I got several casinos to run satellites for the QPC. I made sure I visited all of the casinos and got a chip. The Bodega had BJ coin inlays at the time.

I did not realize the history of the Bodega at the time. I did not check this fact but IMO it has to be the longest running gambling joint ever featured in an "Illegal Of The Day," 122 years, 98 as an illegal and 24 as a legal casino.

Enough of that:

Enter our "Friend Of The Hobby."

### **Bodega**

These two chips were among many recently offered on eBay by a seller in Colorado who said the chips were picked-up by his dad who had told him they were "from old gambling joints around the state."



Several of the chips which were offered by the eBay seller are confirmed Colorado chips. However, the Mason & Co. manufacturing records show that the BB in horseshoe chip was delivered in 1939 and 1940 to Ike Shalhoob at the Bodega Bar in Deadwood, South Dakota. There are no records for the B. C. Wills small key (\$5 on back) chip but it is most likely also from the Bodega in Deadwood.

My note: I have 1 Bodega \$5 Skey to trade, if any one needs it,

A legendary town of the old "wild west," Deadwood was the scene of one of the most famous incidents of that era when Wild Bill Hickok was shot in the back of the head while playing poker at a Main Street saloon in 1876.

pic of Wild Bill:

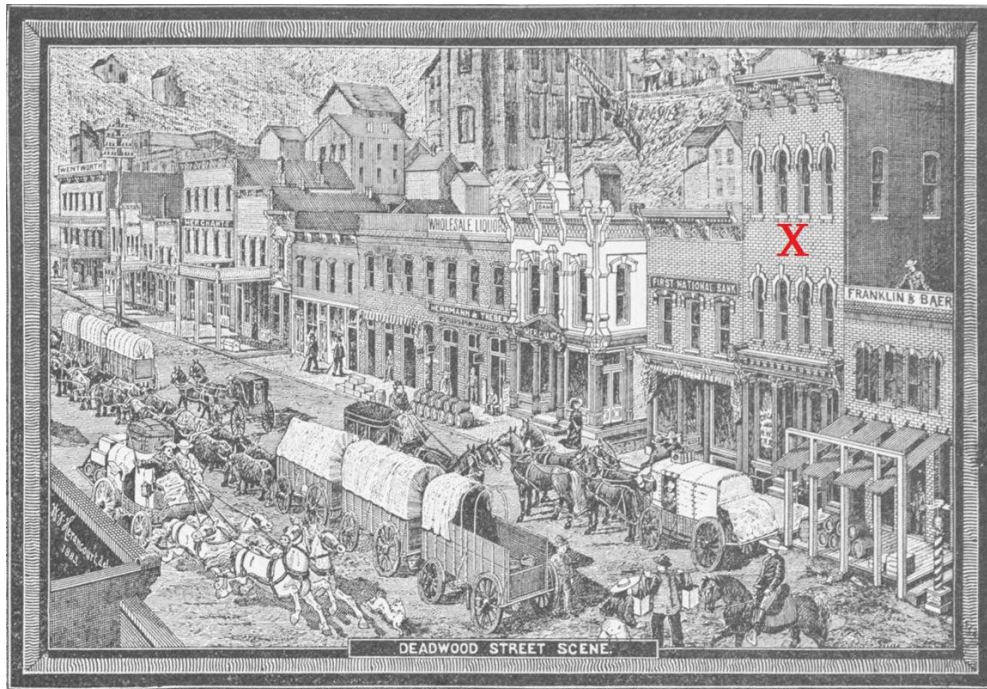


BBshoe2

Just prior to the parting of his flowing locks with lead, the long time gambler was dealt his final hand: aces and eights, the famous “dead man’s hand.” No one knows for certain if Hickok actually held those cards. A lesser known detail of Wild Bill’s moment of departure is that seconds before being shot, Hickok asked the saloon’s bartender to bring him some poker chips. The bartender brought the chips, placing them on the table in front of Wild Bill. Before the bartender could return to his place behind the bar, the fatal shot was fired. In a newspaper account written 2 days after the shooting, the bartender is quoted as saying he delivered \$15 worth of chips. The same bartender, in his memoir of 1915, says it was \$50. So, take your pick--either a \$15 or a \$50 stack is the “dead man’s stack”.....

My note: If Wild Bill had waited fifteen years to get shot he could have joined 2 other famous Wild West people at the Bodega. <g> Read on.

In 1880, four years after Hickok’s murder, a new 3 story brick building was constructed about a block down Main Street from where Wild Bill cashed-in. In 1891 the structure’s first floor address, 664 Main Street, became the home of the Bodega—and it’s been there ever since, doing business today as the Buffalo-Bodega Gaming Complex. Here’s an image of Main Street from 1883; 664 Main marked with an X:



BBshoe3

Two of Deadwood's most famous characters are known to have spent time in the Bodega: Martha "Calamity Jane" Canary (1852-1903) and Alice "Poker Alice" Ivers (1851-1930).

pic of Calamity Jane:





BBshoe4

In 1960 a 94 year old who had been a working cowboy in the 1890's recalled going to Deadwood in his youth:

**KREIGER** remembers, "About once a year we would saddle our horses, take a pack horse or two along and go to Deadwood to see the sights. There were lots of women at Deadwood at that time. Johnnie Gorum had 120 women working for him in his place of entertainment. Calamity Jane was there working at the Bodega Saloon and Theater. She was a pretty good looking woman — rather tall with an angular face and piercing eyes.

'It took us three days of hard riding to get there. The gamblers and the long haired sex had us cleaned in a week, then we would hang around a couple of days sobering up before making the long ride back to the ranch to talk about the wild times we'd had until we had a chance to go again the next year.

BBshoe5

My note: "She was a pretty good looking woman." But IMO, not exactly a pin up girl. <g>

pic of Poker Alice:



BBshoe6

My note: I would be scared to death if I had drawn out on her 2 wired A's. <g>

This snip from a 1957 article quotes a man who had lived in Deadwood from 1886 to 1910; he worked at a bank next door to the Bodega:

Cigar-smoking Poker Alice, a native of England, was regarded by other gamblers as an "educated gentlewoman." She took up gambling after her first husband, Frank Duffield, was killed in a mining accident.

"Poker Alice was at times a lookout on faro games in Bodega saloon," says Mr. Flower. "She did not operate the games, to my knowledge, but she did gamble and was a clean player."

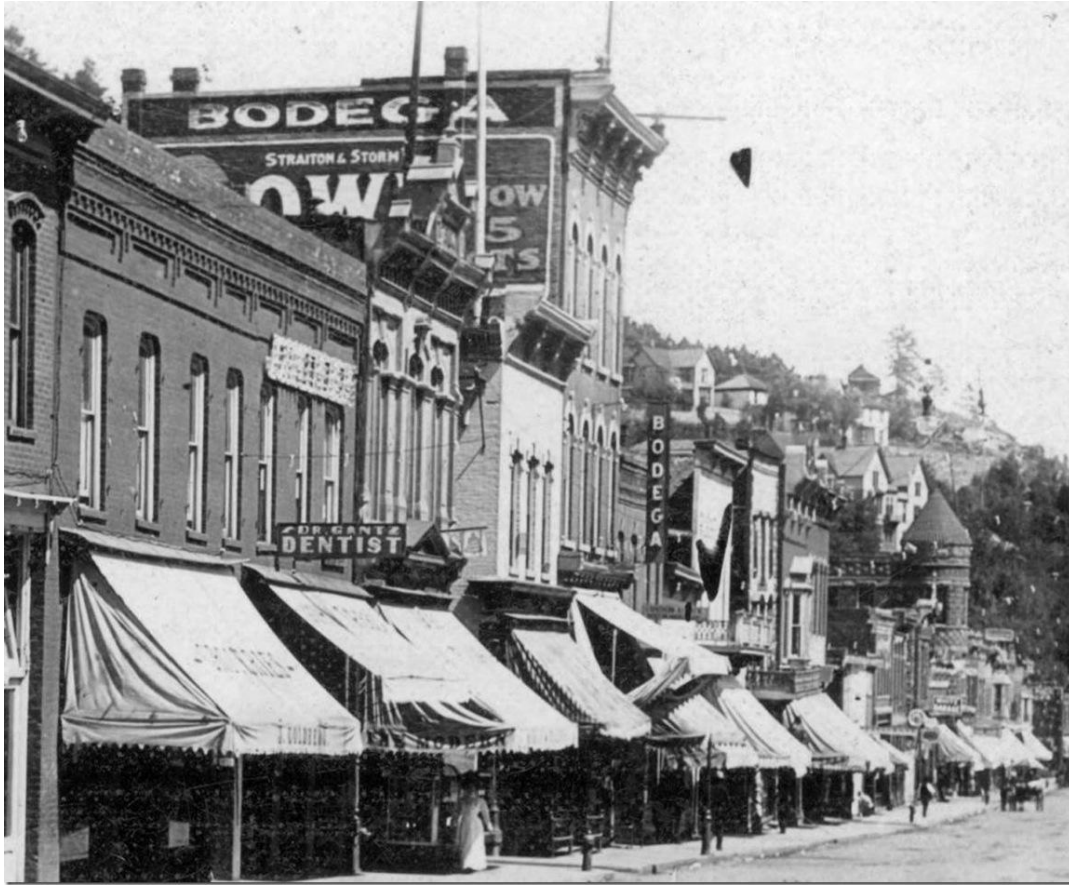
Once gypped of \$1,500 by a faro dealer, Poker Alice firmly drew her gun and got the money back. Poker Alice used to say:

"I believe in resting on Sunday and working like hell and the devil the rest of the week."

BBshoe7

Here's a pic of Main Street from around 1900; note the Bodega name painted on the top of the building and sign on the 2nd floor—reproductions of both are on the building today:





BBshoe8

1895:

**HE IS MINUS A NOSE.**  
 Special Dispatch to the World-Herald.  
 Deadwood, S. D., Aug. 16.—John Tierney, proprietor of the Bodega saloon and gambling house here, had his nose bitten off in a street fight tonight by Tom Seaton, a saloon rounder. The trouble was the result of an old grudge.

BBshoe9

My note" "OUCH." <g>

ad from 1909:



# *Bodega Club Rooms*

Deadwood's Most  
Popular Resort

Cafe and German Restaurant  
in Connection

TIERNEY & RUSSELL,  
Props.

664 Main St.      Deadwood

BBshoe10

In the 100 plus years that the Bodega's been around it's had numerous owners and operators (an enormous variety of chips must have been passed around there in that time). Izise "Ike" Shalhoob, the guy who ordered the BB in horseshoe chips, was associated with the Bodega in the 1930's and 1940's. Shalhoob, born at Omaha, Nebraska in 1898, was brought to Deadwood around 1903 by his parents who had emigrated from Syria in the 1890's. Ike's father Carl operated a pool hall in Deadwood for several years next door to the Bodega.



BBshoe11

Prior to his association with the Bodega, Ike Shalhoob was arrested for operating a gambling establishment called the Silver Dollar. His father Carl helped pay for his bond.

March 29th 1932:

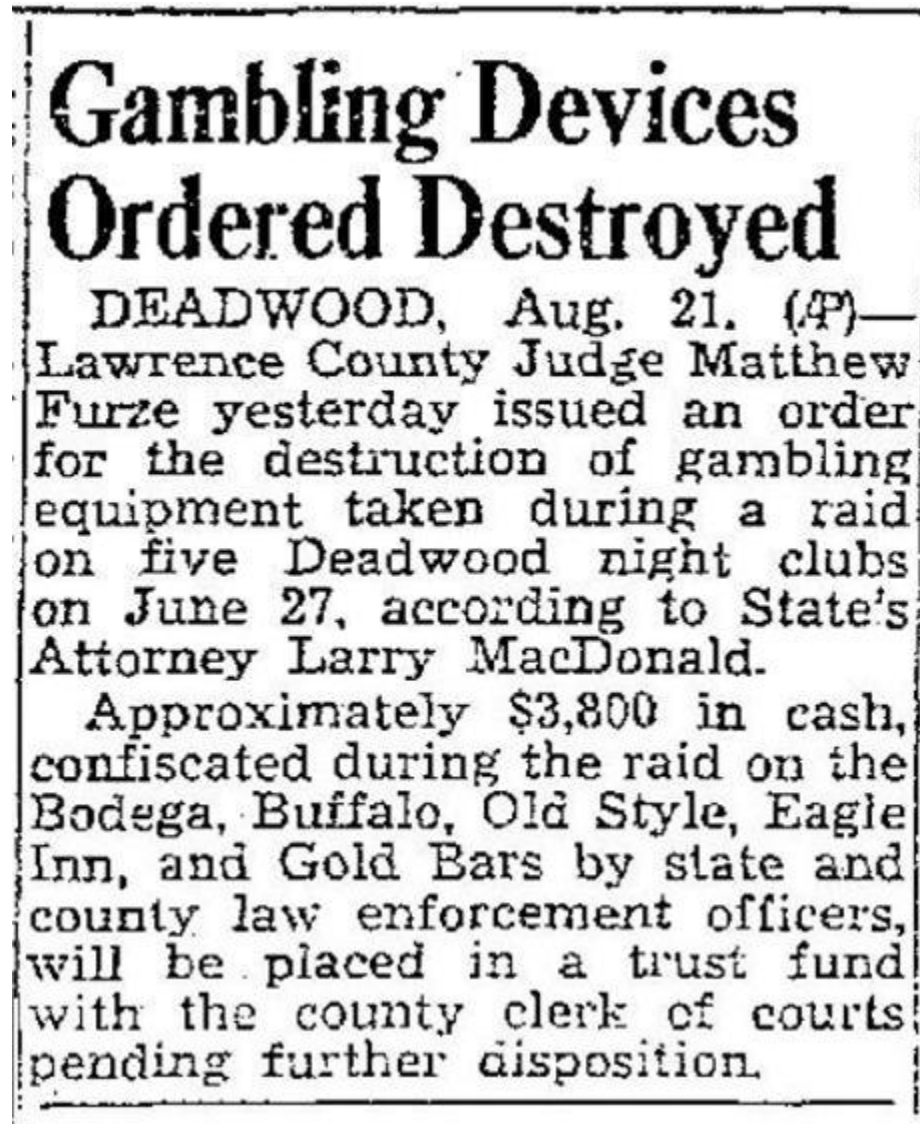
## **Alleged Operator Of Gambling Den Taken**

DEADWOOD, March 29.—Ike Shalhoob, proprietor of the "Silver Dollar" pool hall on Main street, was arrested by county authorities on the charge of operating a gambling establishment and apparatus. Before County Justice C. T. Stirrett he waived preliminary hearing and was bound over to the June term of court. The \$5000 bonds were furnished by Carl Shalhoob and William Glassen, Deadwood.

BBshoe12

During the years of Shalhoob's association with the Bodega, Deadwood was pretty much a wide-open town. In the rooms above the Bodega one could find female companionship at a place called the "Mecca Rooms." Like many places in the US after WW2, Deadwood was hit by a reform movement and in 1947 it came down on the gamblers.

August 21st 1947:



BBshoe13

pic of the Bodega from the 1950's:



BBshoe14

Several years later, in 1976, the Bodega appears to be catering to a somewhat different clientele:



BBshoe15

pic of the Bodega's storefront from the 1970's--Bar on the left and Café on the right:





BBshoe16

Pistol fire at high noon by guns in the hands of Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane echoed down Deadwood's Main Street. The shots were blanks, the shooters were actors and the date was November 1st 1989. On that day legalized gambling commenced in Deadwood, the shots signaling operators to let the games begin (poker, blackjack and slots).

The Bodega was one of several dozen Deadwood businesses which received a gaming license. Looking towards its new future as a gaming room, the Bodega took a look back and restored its exterior to the way it appeared almost 100 years prior.



BBshoe17

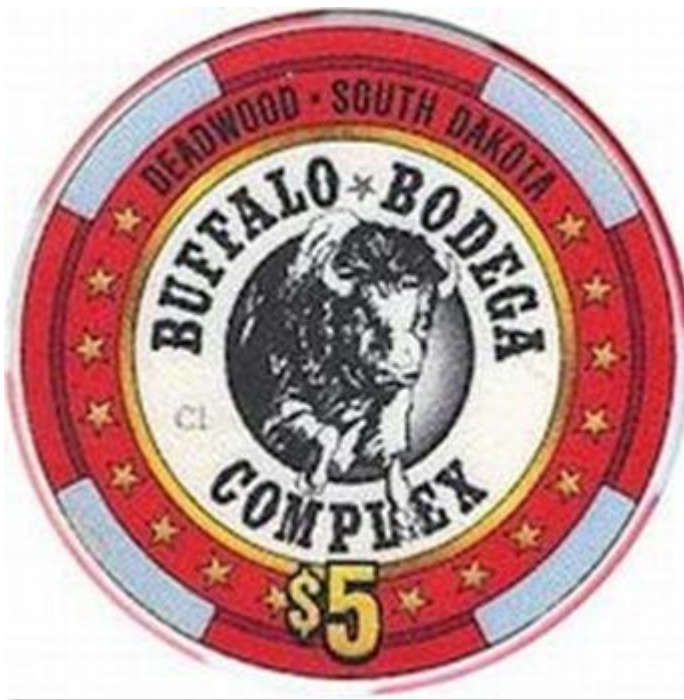
My note: This is the way I remember it.

According to The Chip Guide, this chip was issued for the Bodega in 1989:



BBshoe18

Today the Bodega is part of the Buffalo Bodega Gaming Complex: <http://www.buffalobodega.com/>



BBshoe19

One last article. This one datelined Deadwood, October 1, 1876 (two months after Wild Bill's death). The article demonstrates that whether its Deadwood in 1876 or anywhere in the world today, this will always be true: "It ain't easy bein' green."



### **Bucking the Tiger in Deadwood.**

[From the Denver Tribune.]

DEADWOOD, October 1, 1876.—A friend whom I had favored in a small way, sent me a \$20 greenback in payment. Now, here was a go. What could I do with it? Couldn't send it out of the country in these unsettled times. Dust being the only currency in the camp, a bill of that denomination would be looked at with suspicion. Didn't dare offer it for grub, didn't want to carry it around for a year or two. No banks. Why, yes, there is the faro bank. Happy thought, I'll try it on at the faro bank. I went to the biggest and toniest club room in town, edged in through the crowd of players and lookers-on, and in my most sepulchral voice demanded a stack of reds. The dealer knew I was not a pilgrim, and that I had no business with the paper money, but after looking at me long enough to attract general attention, passed out the checks without a word. I knew enough about faro to tell when a card won or lost; also the relative value of "cases" and "doubles" for betting purposes. But, despite my native cheek and assumed non-chalence, I felt that every man around that green table knew I was a novice, and sooner or later some of them would get away with my chips. The thought did not tend to lessen my embarrassment. To undeceive the gamblers about my greenness, I climbed upon a chair, sat down on the back and essayed the shuffle trick with my "chips;" that is, divide the twenty checks in two equal stacks, and, by a dexterous manipulation with the thumb, index and little finger, slide the two piles into one. Did you ever try it, Mr. Editor? Especially while the perspiration was flowing from every pore in your body? If you have'nt, don't; for my firm belief is that you will fail. At least I failed; my checks were scattered to the four winds; and when I counted up, after the engagement, but seventeen checks remained. Some fellow, at the end of the table remarked, in a stage whisper, that "if he were a national bank and wanted to play faro, he'd fetch a covered basket, or string his checks on a wire." Another requested a friend to "stag his knibs with the big nose; don't he look rattled, though?" He was correct; I was rattled, and maddened at the laughter following these remarks. I slapped nine chips on the "ten" to take the "queen," and the other eight on the "six"; got whip-sawed, and knew my double-X no more.



My note: I would love to know what was on the chips this "Green" gambler was shuffling at a Faro bank in Deadwood in 1876. I wonder if some of those hustlers could do the chip shuffling tricks some poker players can do today.

BTW, I agree with him, "It ain't easy bein' green." when it comes to gambling. I learned the "Hard" way to watch carefully and always know what they were doing to you. <g> Once you knew what was going on, it was easy to play it back over them. I had a good teacher. <g>