

After Lewis and Clark: The Forces of Change, 1806–1871

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Book Reviews and Notices

After Lewis and Clark: The Forces of Change, 1806–1871, by Gary Allen Hood. Tulsa: Gilcrease Museum; distributed by University of Oklahoma Press, 2006. 96 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper.

Reviewer W. Raymond Wood is professor emeritus of anthropology at the University of Missouri–Columbia and a coauthor of *Karl Bodmer's Studio Art*.

The Lewis and Clark bicentennial commemoration has come and gone, but retrospectives on that expedition continue to appear, as well as examinations of the expedition's legacy. In *After Lewis and Clark*, Gary Allen Hood examines the art created by the artists who often accompanied explorers as they entered landscapes of the Louisiana Purchase and encountered still vibrant Native American cultures in the American West. The artists created lasting images of that great frontier, illustrated here by 63 paintings, drawings, and prints in the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma, each of them richly reproduced in color.

This slim volume is the catalog for an exhibition of the imagery of the American West in the years between the return of Lewis and Clark and the end of the Civil War. The selection illustrates the rich and diverse body of images in the Gilcrease Museum. The artists' work, created in the years before the advent of photography, was needed. Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery had produced nothing in the way of art, and it was nearly two decades before any significant views of the Louisiana Purchase were created. The first of them were engravings by Samuel Seymour and Titian Ramsay Peale published in 1823 in the report of Stephen A. Long's 1819–1820 expedition to the Rocky Mountains. Other artists quickly followed, creating works that illustrators in the East sometimes would raid to falsely depict eastern Indians.

These images of an advancing frontier not only informed eastern readers of the West, but they were also important elements in helping preserve some of the treasures of that uncombed wilderness. Indeed, Congress created the legislation authorizing Yellowstone National Park after seeing Thomas Moran's first paintings of its beauties. The ever expanding American frontier was a current nationalist theme, typified by Emanuel Leutze's 1861 oversize painting, *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way*.

Three plates of particular interest to Iowans depict lithographs and engravings of four renowned Sauk and Meskwaki Indians and an Oto Indian chief. But by far the most significant portraits of Native

Americans were those created by George Catlin and Karl Bodmer between 1832 and 1834, both of whom captured images of groups whose cultures on the Missouri River, like those of Native Americans elsewhere, would finally collapse in the years spanned by this volume.

Although many of these artists sometimes created surreal, romanticized, and exaggerated images of what they saw, they nevertheless conveyed a surprisingly realistic picture of the new land and its peoples to their audiences. Western history enthusiasts will enjoy the insights provided by Gary Hood's narrative accompanying the portraits and western scenes reproduced so handsomely in this book. He correctly asserts, "Their paintings were not mere reportage. These artists were interpreters of what they encountered." He then quotes Thomas Jefferson regarding the explorations he sponsored into the new purchase: "The work we are doing is for posterity" (85). The contents of this volume affirm that what these artists created likewise preserved for posterity indelible images of a lost frontier.

Little Crow and the Dakota War, by Mark Diedrich. Rochester, MN: Coyote Books, 2006. 341 pp. Map, illustrations, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 paper.

Reviewer William E. Lass is emeritus professor of history at Minnesota State University, Mankato. His research and writing have focused on the frontier period in Minnesota and the Dakotas, including their native populations.

In 1862 Little Crow, a Mdewakanton Dakota chief, led his tribe's war faction in the Dakota War on Minnesota's southwestern frontier. The short-lived conflict, in which Dakota warriors killed about 450 white settlers, was the major Indian-white conflict in the history of the upper Mississippi region. Because of his role in it, Little Crow is usually remembered as the most famous Dakota chief.

This book has far more scope than its title suggests. Diedrich's coverage extends from the ancient origins of the Dakota to the fate of Little Crow's descendants in the twentieth century. His excellent portrayal of Dakota culture provides the historical setting for Little Crow's strong adherence to tribal tradition and resistance to the federal government's assimilation policy. In great detail, Diedrich skillfully describes the complexities of Dakota-white relations, with emphasis on the troubled reservation years after the Dakota ceded their lands in Minnesota and Iowa in 1851.

In considering the background of the Dakota War, Diedrich covers such long-range causes as the ill effects of treaties and the Dakota schism into traditionalist ("uncivilized" to assimilationists) and as-