

*William Clark, Indian Diplomat*, by Jay H. Buckley. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008. xx, 306 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer David Walker is professor of history at the University of Northern Iowa. He regularly teaches courses on the American West and Indians in American history.

The Lewis and Clark bicentennial resulted in a wide variety of scholarly works that naturally focused on the remarkable voyage. Topics included expedition food, medicine, psychological probes, and two excellent biographies of Clark, most taking advantage of Gary Moulton's significant 13-volume edition of the *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (1983–2001). No works, however, surpassed the earlier popular success of Stephen Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (1996) that spent several years on the *New York Times* best-seller list. As might be expected, scholars did not find a definitive answer to the controversy surrounding the deaths of two individuals: Meriwether Lewis and Sacagawea.

Jay H. Buckley adds an important volume to bicentennial scholarship by emphasizing the significant post-expedition life of Clark. As the major figure in implementing U.S. Indian policy from 1807 to 1838, Clark used his diplomatic skills to negotiate 37 treaties of war, land cession, and trade; and he participated in the formal removal of thousands of Native inhabitants. Clark's diplomatic skills were developed and honed during the expedition, when he learned acceptable Indian protocol and developed strategies recognizing tribal differences. Thereafter he "used threats, force, and deception as well as generosity, kindness, friendship, . . . as part of his diplomatic repertoire" (15). Clark, who clearly enjoyed being with Indians and valued their history and culture more than a typical contemporary, firmly believed that Indian land should be purchased, not taken by force, and that trade rather than war would enhance friendships and alliances.

Clark's diplomatic career began in St. Louis in 1807, when he was appointed principal Indian agent for all tribes west of the Mississippi. As governor of Missouri Territory (1813–1820), he organized tribes to fight against Indian allies of the British and negotiated two dozen treaties, most important at Portage Des Sioux during the summer and fall of 1815. Although Clark played a prominent role in helping Missouri achieve statehood in 1821, he lost the election to become its initial governor. During the campaign he was the target of two main criticisms: he had failed to protect the frontier against Indians, and he favored Native people over settlers.

Throughout his life in St. Louis Clark was active in the fur trade, helping establish the city as the true Gateway to the West. Although he never returned to the Rockies, he used his governmental positions to enhance the trade by negotiating treaties that he considered fundamental to forging Indian alliances and by investing in and providing leadership for several formally organized companies. Yet he recommended total prohibition of liquor in the Indian trade, a position that ran counter to established views of the fur trade. Clark and Michigan territorial governor Lewis Cass played instrumental roles in developing policies that led to the important Indian Intercourse and Indian Reorganization acts of 1834, legislation fundamental to federal relations with western tribes for decades.

Clark, a skilled cartographer, produced an extremely valuable map of the West in 1810. From that base, at the end of his territorial governorship he sent a map to Secretary of War John C. Calhoun outlining a permanent Indian territory on the Great Plains. He believed that in order to "improve," Indians needed to be isolated from potentially corrupt frontier society. That meant assisting tribes from the East and protecting them from settlers and Indians already residing on the Plains. This was a major focus of his effort as Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis from 1822 until his death in September 1838, the longest term in American history.

Buckley clearly presents a balanced portrait of Clark, as neither purely the Indians' antagonist nor the tribes' humanitarian friend. Clark promoted federal policies based on the belief that westward expansion benefited Indians. Ultimately, he was "a federal representative first and foremost" (27). Buckley demonstrates that although Clark's expedition legacy can never be diminished, his service for more than three decades helping to formulate and implement the nation's Indian policy is an equally important historical legacy. He was indeed "antebellum America's most important and influential Indian diplomat" (242).

Buckley immersed himself in a voluminous array of primary sources, and the publisher added an excellent collection of contemporary portraits as well as eight essential maps. The narrative is well written and flows smoothly through its chronological organization. The book will appeal to a wide variety of readers, especially those interested in Indian, western, and regional history.