

their studies of longlots, and presents an overview of French longlots throughout North America. Standing alone, it would serve as an excellent introduction to French settlement patterns in North America. The appendix, which discusses gristmills and river vessels, will appeal to those interested in material culture.

In his conclusion, Ekberg sums up his thoughts about each of the major settlements of the region—Vincennes, Cahokia, Kaskaskia, St. Louis, and Ste. Genevieve—as well as his thoughts on the end of the open-field system, the clash of cultures between French Creoles and Americans after independence, and their differing mentalités. Many will find this last discussion to be too brief. He ends by noting that Thomas Jefferson found village life in France—and no doubt, by extension, in the Illinois country—to be anathema. Jefferson believed that living on their own farms rather than in compact villages would make the villagers happier and more virtuous. Ekberg disagrees. His study demonstrates that village life in the Illinois country was altogether more peaceful and virtuous than in later American Illinois, and that “village and parish life in colonial Illinois did in some sense make the inhabitants of the Creole villages there more rather than less virtuous, if part of virtue consists in respecting the lives and limbs of one’s neighbors” (263).

Anyone who wants to better understand the early history of the middle Mississippi valley needs to read this book.

Daily Life on the Nineteenth-Century American Frontier, by Mary Ellen Jones. Daily Life through History Series. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998. xiv, 269 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, chronology, index. \$45.00 cloth.

Reviewer Anne B. Webb is professor of history at Metropolitan State University in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Her research and writing have focused on pioneer and Indian women on the midwestern frontier.

Mary Ellen Jones has written a compact, fact-filled, easy-to-read book on America’s frontiers. After discussing various frontier myths and stressing the complexity of the reality, Jones gives each of the various frontiers—fur trade, explorers’, miners’, and farming and ranching—one of the next four chapters. The Indian experience on each of the frontiers is included as appropriate.

Besides the amount of information in the book, its greatest strength comes from Jones’s ability to pull the reader into the thoughts, accounts, and actions of the people who influenced the times. She does so by using their own words. The book opens with an account of an Indian

attack on a wagon train going west as seen through the eyes of a pioneer woman. In the next few pages the reader hears what ordinary and not-so-ordinary men—Frederick Jackson Turner, Edmund Burke, Washington Irving, Timothy Flint—thought about America's march to the West. The illustrations reinforce the immediacy of daily life on America's frontiers. Although small and in black and white, the photograph of a herd of buffalo racing toward the reader with nothing behind the animals but rolling hills allows readers to experience the reality of the western frontier. Jones uses the description of a cowboy, Teddy Blue, to paint a never-to-be-forgotten picture of buffalo hunters. "The buffalo hunters didn't wash, and looked like animals. They dressed in strong, heavy, warm clothes and never changed them. You would see three or four of them walk up to a bar, reach down inside their clothes and see who could catch the first louse for the drinks. They were lousy and proud of it" (160). Who could ever forget buffalo hunters after reading that?

The final chapter deals first with the life of a soldier in the frontier army, then with some of the most pronounced issues connected with Indian wars and reservations. This is a welcome reversal of histories written in the past that all too often started with Indian experiences and then dropped any further reference to Indians as the writer turned to the actions of white men. Explaining the relationship of the Indians and the army, Jones writes, "In the last third of the nineteenth century, the army and the Indians . . . were in reality joint protagonists in a conflict more properly described as an inexorable movement west of eastern material and technical culture" (211). Somehow the Indians and the army played parallel roles as an unstoppable culture spread west. Here neither Indians nor the army nor anyone else is blamed, for apparently no one could stop modern culture from taking its place in the West.

Jones concludes the book with Black Elk's famous statement on the massacre at Wounded Knee: "The nation's hoop is broken and scattered . . . and the sacred tree is dead" (251). Many Indians today would take issue both with Black Elk's judgment on the demise of Indian culture and with Jones's statement: "The Indians lost everything" (211). To the contrary, many contemporary Indians take delight in pointing out that despite a century-long effort by the dominant society to assimilate them, they are still here and much of their culture is still here with them. More than a hundred years after the Meskwaki in Iowa had fought their last battle against U.S. troops, a mixed audience attended a conference on "Iowa's Indians." A white scholar and friend of the Meskwaki reported, "I could see how totally involved they [the

Meskwaki] were in keeping their culture alive and in forming the kinds of ties with the outside world that allowed them to continue their old ways." A Meskwaki speaker agreed. He said, "We have to fight to maintain the culture that makes us Indians." But the speaker was not referring to a static past because he continued, "I just want to say that there are beginnings and there are ends. Where there is a beginning there is an end. When we have found an end, then we must seek for a beginning" (Fred McTaggart, *Wolf That I Am* [1976], 188-89).

Frontier Swashbuckler: The Life and Legend of John Smith T, by Dick Steward. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000. x, 264 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.

Reviewer Silvano Wueschner is associate professor of history at William Penn University. He is the author of *Ormanville: Life on the Iowa Frontier, 1850-1900* (1993).

The story of the frontier is frequently told from the perspective of a variety of colorful characters who often loom larger than life. Dick Steward has provided an account of one such man in his biography of Colonel John Smith T, a Tennessee transplant who emerged as one of early Missouri's most prominent men. Although Steward admits at the outset that Smith T never accomplished a single grand objective, his goal is to resurrect Smith T, the myths, legends, and lore that surrounded him. Rather than portraying Smith T as larger than life, Steward's objective is to relate his "checkered career" by detailing his successes and failures.

What emerges is the story of one man who migrated to Missouri to seek his fortune. He played a key role in Missouri's economic life. An associate of General James Wilkins and Aaron Burr and archrival of Moses Austin, Smith T was, by Steward's account, no Daniel Boone. While Steward claims that Smith T embodied the frontier pioneer life, he also states that Smith T did not explore, trap, or "hunt in the uncharted wilderness" (19). Instead, he formed the vanguard of the occupation stage, during which "the dialectic of civilization and barbarism often played out in desperate fashion" (19). Smith T proved to be the consummate opportunist who found a variety of ways to generate wealth. His myriad economic activities touched on river ways, turnpikes, slaves, lumber, lead, salt springs, land claims, and the overland trade. In achieving his objective to garner the riches promised by the frontier, he readily relied on the myths that developed about him and by and large operated somewhere between frontier common law, territorial and federal law, and stable government. In Missouri he was

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.