

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-

similizationist (usually called “civilized” by government officials) factions. He also assesses the impact of the 1857 Spirit Lake Massacre in northwestern Iowa led by Inkpaduta, a renegade Wahpekute Dakota chief. The Iowa incident caused many Dakotas and white settlers to worry that a broader conflict was inevitable. Interestingly, Inkpaduta and Little Crow were estranged. Little Crow was not only allied with a Wahpekute chief whom Inkpaduta bitterly opposed, but he also cooperated with the government in the abortive effort to apprehend Inkpaduta after the Spirit Lake incident.

Much of the author’s information about Little Crow has been published previously. However, Diedrich challenges the longstanding portrayal of Little Crow as a feckless leader undistinguished in battle. He supports his claim with evidence of Little Crow’s warrior exploits against the Dakotas’ Indian enemies and his activities and strategy during the Dakota War. Furthermore, he calls attention to a false chronology that was contrived by wartime Dakota agent Thomas Galbraith to shift blame for the war from his own malfeasance to Little Crow.

Although the book is generally lucid and well documented from a variety of sources, including many eyewitness accounts, it would have been enhanced by professional editing. Diedrich repeatedly uses “the fact that,” which invariably contributes to verbosity and redundancy. He also uses *capitol*, the word for a building, when he obviously means *capital*, the city (63). Likewise, an editor would have questioned the persistent identification of individuals, including a president, vice president, cabinet member, Indian trader, and historian, as Masons. The purpose of including that information is not apparent and will cause readers to be skeptical of the author’s objectivity, because he does not identify the fraternal affiliations of other men.

Nonetheless, I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in Indian culture in general and the greatest conflict in Dakota history in particular. It definitely contributes to our understanding of an important chapter in the history of the upper Mississippi region.

From French Community to Missouri Town: Ste. Genevieve in the Nineteenth Century, by Bonnie Stepenoff. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006. xiii, 232 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Robert R. Archibald is president and CEO of the Missouri Historical Society. He is the author of *A Place to Remember: Using History to Build Community* (1999) and *The New Town Square: Museums and Communities in Transition* (2004).

Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, is an eighteenth-century town on the west bank of the Mississippi River. France governed the territory when the