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**Review of *A Vast and Open Plain: The Writings of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in North Dakota, 1804- 1806* Edited and with an introduction by Clay S. Jenkinson**

Douglas Munski  
*University of North Dakota*

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*A Vast and Open Plain: The Writings of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in North Dakota, 1804-1806.* Edited and with an introduction by Clay S. Jenkinson. Foreword by James Ronda. Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 2003. xxi + 594 pp. Illustrations, color plates, appendixes, references, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$34.95 paper.

Definitely not to be overlooked in the ever-growing mass of publications concerning the Lewis and Clark Expedition during its bicentennial commemorations is this crucial reference work produced under the auspices of the State Historical Society of North Dakota and the North Dakota Humanities Council. Jenkinson's edition is a special contribution to Corps of Discovery literature because it highlights the 215 days the expedition spent in North Dakota's Missouri River region in the words of the voyage's major and minor journal keepers, superbly annotated by Jenkinson and richly illustrated. *A Vast and Open Plain* also includes the Mandan Miscellany document of Lewis and Clark plus the editor's appendixes

of instructive commentaries regarding the journals, Sakakawea, and various other participants. Jenkinson offers useful data for North Dakota's Lewis and Clark campsites as well. Soundly crafted, the text provides both the flavor of the journal keepers' stay in this area of the Great Plains and thorough but readily graspable annotations. Anyone interested in nineteenth-century North American exploration will find value in this volume.

Great Plains scholars may be particularly drawn to Jenkinson's view into the Middle Missouri River Valley fur trade. Jenkinson illuminates the attempts of Lewis and Clark to promote Americanization of the Knife River Village Indians much as the Mandan and Hidatsa had already been affected by European influences from the French, Spanish, and British. Moreover, he places the activities of Lewis and Clark in the context of the fluctuating inter-tribal relations of the Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Assiniboiné, Ojibwa (Chippewa), Lakota (Siouan) and other First Nations. He makes sure the voices of the Corps of Discovery's often neglected minor journal keepers—Ordway, Gass, and Whitehouse—are heard. And he incorporates a superb set of illustrations, principally from the early nineteenth century, to give richer details to the words of the journal keepers experiencing the Great Plains environment.

Overall, the encounters of the Corps of Discovery with the First Nations of the Middle Missouri River Valley in 1804-1806 are comprehensively treated, making *A Vast and Open Plain* a valuable addition to the bicentennial publications on the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

DOUGLAS C. MUNSKI  
Department of Geography  
University of North Dakota