count of New Orleans philanthropist and builder Andrés Almonester. Anthropologists John C. Ewers and Carl Chapman provide useful assessments of Spanish attempts to manage Indian affairs. One of the finest essays in the collection is John G. Clark’s perceptive analysis of the role of municipal government in the economic development of New Orleans. In the final selection, McDermott marshalls an array of documentary evidence to help rescue Upper Louisiana’s Lieutenant Governor Fernando de Leyba from charges of ineptitude.

Much that is contained in these essays will be familiar to students of the Mississippi Valley. Those expecting to find significant amounts of new material are likely to be disappointed. The book covers a wide range of topics, but it also reflects Spain’s limited impact upon Louisiana after more than forty years of rule.

As in any undertaking of this type, the essays vary in quality. Unfortunately many tend to be more descriptive than analytical. Still the collection is solid, if not exciting. It provides useful summaries, and in a few areas it expands knowledge and understanding of Spanish Louisiana.

Central Missouri State University, William E. Foley
Warrensburg


This rich anthology assembles excerpts from the stories of well known folk heroes like Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, Kit Carson, and Buffalo Bill as well as almost two dozen other “voices from the wilderness,” many of them practically unknown to modern readers. Selections range from the mid-eighteenth century pioneers in the Old West to the trappers and traders on the Plains and in the Rockies in the nineteenth century. Designed for the general reader, the accounts are relatively short, presented with brief introductions by the current editor but without editorial changes from the early printings and with only an occasional editorial note by an original editor.
Most of the men of the frontier knew how to tell a good story! Here one feels the terror of Alexander Henry, a trader caught in the fort at Mackinac during Pontiac's Rebellion, watching the massacre of his fellow Englishmen. One shares the purposefulness of Daniel Boone walking away from his Indian captors to hike over one hundred sixty miles in five days with only one meal in order to warn the settlers of Boonesborough of impending attack or marvels at John Colter's race for survival, naked, chased by vengeful Black-foot for six miles.

As the editor notes, the frontiersmen helped to shape America's image of itself. But excitement and color have too often made for myth and obscured reality. The frontier frequently coarsened men. Arrogance and brutality are evident in many of these accounts, as well as an attitude of cultural superiority toward the Indians. In search of private gain or adventure, the frontiersman inevitably helped blaze the trails and passes that carried the nation westward, but he also senselessly slaughtered the beaver and buffalo, provoked and killed Indians, and sometimes exhibited a selfish callousness toward his own companions. On the other hand, these accounts also offer surprising expressions of tenderness, appreciation of the grandeur of the wilderness, and a remarkable sensitivity.

Despite the subtitle and the dustjacket not all the accounts are true, as Froncek cautions, and some of the tales are told about the frontiersmen and not by them. Readers must remember that tall tales came naturally to the westerner, a typical kind of frontier wit often intentionally perpetrated on the eastern dude.

Hopefully, this collection will lead the interested reader back to the original, full accounts, whetting his appetite for more about the story of our way west.

Butler University, Indianapolis

George M. Waller


During his active political career, William H. Crawford was regarded by most of his contemporaries as a major national figure. He was senator from Georgia during the last