Book Reviews


If you thought the hype associated with Y2K and the millennium was excessive, just wait. Lewis and Clark are coming. Already there is a National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council (http://www.lewisandclark200.org/), web sites devoted to the expedition (http://www.lewis-clark.org/, http://www.lewisandclark.org/, http://www.lewisandclark.net/), and the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (http://www.nps.gov/lecl/). In fact, there is so much on the web that there is a site devoted strictly to keeping track of it all (http://www.vpds.wsu.edu/LCExpedition/Resources/index.html), and the U.S. Forest Service recently opened the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Great Falls, Montana. The books are already coming; Amazon.com (http://www.amazon.com/) lists more than 200 titles and growing. So too are the films, most notably “The Journal of the Corps of Discovery” by Ken Burns (http://www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/). All this and the formal start for the celebrations of the Lewis and Clark Expedition does not begin until 2003!

In many respects the reason for all of this interest can be attributed to the scholarship of Gary E. Moulton, a professor of history at the University of Nebraska. Tall, dashingly handsome, gray-haired and bearded, Moulton has a rich voice and gifted writing style. Perfect for the documentary film—the next Shelby Foote. Yet none of this is why Moulton has become the reigning scholar of Lewis and Clark. That resides in his now twelve-volume edited work *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (1983–1999).

The facts of the expedition are known to every school child. President Thomas Jefferson sent his personal secretary, Meriwether Lewis, and a young military officer, William Clark, westward to find a route up the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean starting in the spring of 1804. Jefferson, long interested in the westward lands, charged Lewis with the task of reporting on all aspects of the land, especially the natural resources. Along the way they came upon Sacagawea (see the newly minted U.S. dollar coin), lists as 1a and 1b). In the calendar he presents all of the label data on each sheet. This is followed by full page (typically “7”×10″) images of each sheet. Having seen the original photographs, however, I am disappointed the Press chose not to use glossy paper as the images have a faintly fuzzy feeling to them. Nonetheless, the images are basically clear and certainly usable for the identification of the species in the majority of cases.

The appendices that follow are the valuable section of the work. The “Table of the Herbarium” (Appendix A) is