

## Brown Water: A Narrative of My Personal Journey in the Wake of Lewis and Clark

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sources into a comprehensive account of some of the dangers that faced the newly formed United States at that time, an account that casts new light on the life of one of America's most famous figures between late 1797 and 1803. The voyage down the Mississippi helped shape the river experiences and skills that Clark put to such good use on what he would call his "western travels" – the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

*Brown Water: A Narrative of My Personal Journey in the Wake of Lewis and Clark*, by Butch Bouvier. Onawa, Iowa: Butch Bouvier (keelboat@long-lines.com), 2015. xv, 186 pp. Illustrations, glossary. \$20.00 paperback.

Reviewer Norman Fry is a retired Southeastern Community College American history instructor with a longstanding interest in life in Iowa's small towns and along the Mississippi River.

*Brown Water* is Butch Bouvier's personal narrative of his boat journey along the route taken by Lewis and Clark on the Missouri River. Bouvier describes himself as a "hands on" historian with a passion for living history, and his goal is not only to take the journey but to recreate the boats used by early river explorers. The narrative of *Brown Water* is composed of three parts. The first is Bouvier's own narrative describing the boat building and the journey. The second narrative, written in journals given to the crew by the author, offers the volunteer crew's perspective on the river journey. The third narrative includes "Knowledge Nooks," short explanatory inserts that illustrate the history and techniques of boat building.

Rather than a standard history, *Brown Water* is a modern boatwright's account of the building of traditional riverboats. Bouvier gives abundant details on the selection of wood for boat construction, the construction process, and the navigation by shallow draft keelboats and pirogues. Readers interested in riverboat architecture will find Bouvier's book an informative read. Readers fascinated by a personal adventure story, one that relates that adventure to the history of early Iowa and the perils of navigating the Missouri River, will find *Brown Water* a raconteur's delight.

*Working the Mississippi: Two Centuries of Life on the River*, by Bonnie Stepenoff. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2015. xxii, 182 pp. Illustrations, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$36.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Patrick Nunnally is editor of *Open Rivers: Rethinking the Mississippi*, a digital journal published by the University of Minnesota.