us ours. My people are crying for the children they have lost. Is it American justice that we must give up everything and receive nothing?” (p. 209). Despite the efforts of some Navajos to live in peace, raiding and reprisals continued.

Some army officers were convinced that the Navajos would never maintain peace until the tribe had been thoroughly humbled, and they looked forward to an all-out war. In the treaty of 1859 the Navajos agreed to reimburse citizens and Pueblo tribes for thefts committed during the preceding year, though they did so with the understanding that restitution would be mutual. It was not, and some officers who sought peace realized that the people of New Mexico must be restrained from raiding Navajo lands. Slave-raiding resumed, nevertheless, as soon as the treaty was announced. On one occasion a citizens’ party raided Navajo rancherias while the men were away rounding up stolen livestock to be returned to the owners. After the massacre at Fort Fauntleroy, the Navajos began raiding again. Colonel Edward Canby ordered the troops he sent against them to shoot all male Navajos they captured.

This thoroughly researched account makes it clear that the Navajos were as much sinned against as sinning. Unlike the majority of Indian tribes, however, they were eventually allowed to occupy their own lands and to follow their accustomed ways, with the result that their numbers increased greatly. They were, in fact, the first tribe to reverse the “vanishing red man” theme.

Donald E. Worcester

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James Pierson Beckwourth’s life was the stuff from which tall tales are made. His mother was possibly a quadroon; his father, as “now generally acknowledged” (p. 11), was Jennings Beckwourth, F.F.V. Jim was raised in Virginia and on the dangerous War of 1812 Missouri frontier. Somehow he learned to read and write, knocked about the Mississippi Valley for a few years, and, in 1824, headed for the Rocky Mountain fur fields where he died over forty years later in an Indian village.

Harper and Brothers published Jim’s memoirs in 1856—he had dictated them to T. D. Bonner, a rather mysterious con man who gathered in the entire royalty—and they have been republished at least six times. Although historians—notably Francis Parkman, H. H. Bancroft, and Hiram M. Chittenden—damned the memoirs and although some popular writers—such as Frank Triplett and Charles Christy—used them
ruthlessly to sell books, other writers, such as Henry Inman, William Connelley, and William E. Dellenbaugh, defended the accuracy of much of what Jim told Bonner. Even the late master of fur trade literature, Dale Morgan, “was tolerant of Jim” (p. 6).

Elinor Wilson, Jim’s latest biographer, is a professional writer and a tenacious researcher. She has dug deeply into manuscript collections and county archives to clarify many of the controversial dates and events in Jim’s life and has buttressed the walls of her book with copious footnotes, a carefully organized bibliography, clear, detailed maps, three dozen illustrations, and several appendices (on Jim’s use of language, on the various editions of his memoirs, and on his California ranch). Since she presents her evidence logically and argues her conclusions judiciously, her portrait of Jim is convincing: he was an extrovert who delighted in “vivid dramatic description” (p. 187). She proves that his memoirs contain far more truth than fiction, yet her prefatory statement that Jim “contributed richly to the development of the West’ (p. vii) lacks historical perspective. Certainly, however, he was an extraordinary individual, perhaps, as H. H. Bancroft has written, even an heroic figure better suited to ancient Greece or Rome than to Wyoming or California. But, although Jim was an adventurer par excellence, he was simply not a leading character in the great drama called western history.

We have accumulated many books and articles about Jim Beck-worth. Wilson’s biography is the best of the shelfful; nevertheless, may we also hope that it is the last of the lot.

John E. Sunder

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This is the second volume to be published of the five projected in the Missouri Sesquincentennial Series. The period of Missouri history covered in this volume is essentially a frontier era, and if there is a theme which runs through the account, it is that Missouri politics were more or less chaotic until the middle 1820s when Jacksonian democracy began to manifest itself as the ruling principle. This principle was destroyed in the 1850s by the controversies over slavery expansion and perhaps by the inflexibilities of Thomas Hart Benton’s political style. In this study Jacksonian democracy is taken to mean western democracy and to be synonymous with egalitarianism and social reform. It sounds very Turnerian, but Perry McCandless is cautious and shies away from generalizations. In fact, he seems to suggest that Jacksonian democracy did not really exist, and yet when he puts all the facts together, it seems to be there. This is due, more likely, to the compelling influence of