

## The Corps of Discovery

The Lewis and Clark Expedition was one of the most dramatic and significant episodes in the history of the United States. It stands, incomparably, as our Nation's epic in documented exploration of the American West. In 1804-06, it carried the destiny as well as the flag of our young Nation westward, from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean, across thousands of miles of land known only to the native Indian Tribes. This epic feat fired the imagination of the American people and made them feel the full sweep of the continent on which they lived. In its scope and achievements, the Expedition towers among the major explorations of the world.

In 1803, the United States, while attempting to purchase New Orleans from France, was unexpectedly sold the entire territory called Louisiana. This enormous, 838,000-squaremile area doubled the size of our national domain. It included most of the lands drained by the western tributaries of the Mississippi River, from the Gulf of Mexico to present Canada, and west to the Continental Divide.

Although Thomas Jefferson had previously proposed expeditions of western exploration, the purchase of Louisiana now provided the impetus to move forward and Congress authorized the Expedition. A primary objective was to find a practical transportation link between the Louisiana Territory and the "Oregon Country," claimed by the U.S. following discovery of the mouth of the Columbia River by Captain Robert Gray in

However, the Expedition was conceived as more than geographic exploration. Jefferson wanted information on the resources and inhabitants of the new territory. The party was to scientifically observe and, if practicable, collect plant, animal, and mineral specimens: record weather data; study native cultures; conduct diplomatic councils with the tribes; map geographic features "of a permanent kind" along their route; and record all

important observations and events through daily journal entries.

Assigning high priority to the quest for knowledge, Lewis and Clark meticulously recorded observations about the characteristics, inhabitants, and resources of the country through which they passed. Not many explorers in the history of the world have provided such exhaustive and accurate information on the regions they probed.

Before the Expedition, the trans-Mississippi West was an unmapped land. The members of the Expedition made their way through this vast country, living off its resources and adapting themselves to its harsh conditions. On foot, on horseback, and by boat they pushed over massive mountain ranges, across seemingly endless plains, through dense forests, and against powerful currents of raging waters.

Meriwether Lewis began the journey at Washington D.C., on July 5, 1803. At Pittsburgh, he gathered supplies of arms and military stores from Harpers Ferry and Schuylkill (Philadelphia) Arsenals. These and a wide assortment of other items were loaded aboard a specially designed keelboat, on which Lewis "with a party of 11 hands" departed down the Ohio River, August 30. Other men were recruited along the way. At Clarksville, opposite Louisville, Lewis was joined by his co-commander, William Clark. The party established its 1803-04 winter camp along the Mississippi River, above St. Louis at Wood River (Illinois), opposite the mouth of the Missouri River.

After a winter of diplomatic duties and final preparations, the explorers, on May 14, 1804, headed their boats into the current of the river "under a jentle brease." The party numbered 45 from Wood River to its 1804-05 winter establishment at Fort Mandan (North Dakota) and 33 from Mandan to the Pacific and return in 1805-06. This included Clark's black slave,

York. Also accompanying the party throughout the journey was Lewis' Newfoundland dog,

Ascending the Missouri in 1804 proved arduous and slow as the men towed the keelboat and two smaller more maneuverable craft, called pirogues, against the swift current. Sergeant Charles Floyd, the only Expedition member to die on the journey, succumbed to apparent appendicitis and was buried near present Sioux City, Iowa. The difficulties of the first summer and autumn forged the party into a hardened "Corps of Discovery."

The first of many councils with Indian Tribes took place north of present Omaha, Nebraska, at a place the captains called "Councile Bluff." Here they gave presents and peace medals to the Oto chiefs and informed them of the new sovereignty of the United States.

The Expedition spent a productive winter at Fort Mandan, which they built in November 1804 near present Washburn, North Dakota. The fort was close to the five Knife River villages of the friendly Mandan and Minitari (Hidatsa) Indians. Here the commanders gained valuable knowledge of the country west to the Rockies and recruited as interpreters the French-Canadian fur trader, Toussaint Charbonneau, and his Shoshoni wife, Sacagawea. Together with their newborn son, Jean Baptiste, they would journey with the party to the Pacific and back to the Mandan villages.

In April 1805, the keelboat departed for St. Louis, and the "permanent party" of 33 continued up the Missouri in the two pirogues and six dugout canoes. As they forged westward, the explorers met dangers as a matter of course, suffering hunger, fatigue, privation, and sickness.

They encountered the Great Falls of the Missouri in mid-June 1805 and spent 3 weeks portaging their heavy canoes and equipment 18 miles around the falls. They reached the source of the Missouri in August. Miraculously, the Shoshoni band contacted there were Sacagawea's people, led by her brother, Chief Cameahwait. This remarkable coincidence. together with Sacagawea's ability to speak Shoshoni, greatly enhanced the trading for horses. These were needed for travel over the Continental Divide and through the Bitterroot Mountains to navigable waters of the Clearwater River (Idaho). Here, the party made new dugout canoes, left their horses with the friendly Nez Perce Indians, and were once again waterborne.

Navigating down the Clearwater, Snake, and Columbia Rivers, the explorers, in November 1805, reached the "great Pacific Otcean which we been so long anxious to See." The north

shore of the Columbia estuary proved sparse of game and too exposed to the fury of winter storms, so they crossed to the south side of the river. In December 1805, the Expedition constructed Fort Clatsop on a sheltered site near present Astoria, Oregon. The winter months were wet and dismal; Christmas dinner consisted of spoiled elk meat. Their 41/2-month stay at Fort Clatsop was a busy time. The captains worked over their field notes and maps, entertained and bartered with Indians for food, and gained from them important geographic and ethnographic information. They sent hunters out daily and dispatched a detail of men to the ocean to make salt by boiling sea water. On March 23, 1806, after the disappointment of no contact with coastal trading vessels for possible return by sea, the Corps of Discovery began the long

Struggling upstream against the current of the Columbia, they traded their canoes to Indians for pack horses near today's The Dalles, Oregon. Traveling overland, they returned to the Nez Perce villages and retrieved the horses left there but met nearly a month's delay in crossing the Bitterroots due to deep

In July 1806, they reached Travelers Rest Camp near present Missoula, Montana. Here, the party divided. Lewis, with a small detachment, explored today's Blackfoot, Sun, and Marias Rivers and became engaged in the most serious Indian skirmish of the entire journey. Two Blackfoot Indians were killed.

Clark and his group headed southeast to the Yellowstone River traversing Shoshoni tribal lands. Sacagawea contributed important guide services to Clark as she pointed out Indian trails that led to the Yellowstone. Clark and his party once again made dugout canoes and explored the river downstream to its confluence with the Missouri where they met Lewis' party. After a short stop at the Mandan villages, the homeward-bound voyageurs made a rapid descent of the Missouri to St. Louis, arriving there on September 23, 1806.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition traveled more than 8,000 miles over a period of 2 years, 4 months, and 10 days. Its findings contributed vital new knowledge concerning the vast western land, its resources, and its native inhabitants. The resulting geographical impact of the mission had far-reaching effects upon international boundaries and relations. The Lewis and Clark journals are among the treasures of our Nation's written history, disclosing in simple eloquence, extraordinary deeds of a sincere, determined frontier breed, that endure as a lasting legacy to be enjoyed





Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (2) Missouri River (20)





Pompeys Pillar (37)



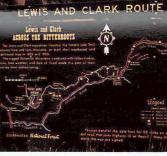
Clark's Signature (37)



leader of the Expedition.



Great Falls of the Missouri (Rainbow Falls) (43)



Bitterroot Mountains Trail Route (62)



Fort Canby State Park (79)

## The Co-Commanders

Meriwether Lewis was born August 18, 1774, near Charlottesville, Virginia, and was a boyhood neighbor of Thomas Jefferson. In 1794, Lewis joined the militia and, at the rank of Ensign, was attached to a sublegion of General "Mad Anthony" Wayne commanded by Lieutenant William Clark. In sharing the experiences of the Northwest Campaign against the British and Indians, Lewis and Clark fashioned the bonds of an enduring friendship.

On March 6, 1801, Lewis, as a young Army Captain in Pittsburgh, received a letter from the soon-to-be-inaugurated President, Thomas Jefferson, offering Lewis a position as his secretary-aide. It said, "Your knolege of the Western country, of the army, and of all it's interests & relations has rendered it desireable for public as well as private purposes that you should be engaged in that office." Lewis readily accepted the position.

The reference to Lewis' "knolege of the

Western country" hinted that Jefferson was again planning an expedition to explore the West and had tentatively decided that Lewis would be its commander. On February 28, 1803, Congress appropriated funds for the Expedition, and Lewis, who had worked closely with Jefferson on preparations for it, was commissioned its leader.

As he made arrangements for the Expedition, Lewis concluded it would be desirable to have a co-commander. With Jefferson's consent, he offered the assignment to his friend and former commanding officer, William Clark, who was living with his brother, George Rogers, at Clarksville, Indiana Territory. Clark accepted, stating in his reply, "The enterprise &c. is Such as I have long anticipated and am much pleased.... My friend, I do assure you that no man lives whith whome I would perfur to undertake Such a Trip &c. as yourself."

Also a native Virginian, Clark, born August 1, 1770, was 4 years older than Lewis. In capability and background, he and Lewis shared much in common. They were relatively young, intelligent, adventurous, resourceful, and courageous. Born leaders, experienced woodsmen-frontiersmen, and seasoned Army officers, they were cool in crises and quick to make decisions. Clark, many times over,





would prove to be the right choice as joint

In temperament, Lewis and Clark were

opposites. Lewis was introverted, melancholic,

and moody; Clark, extroverted, even-

tempered, and gregarious. The better-

Merinether Lenis

educated and more refined Lewis, who possessed a philosophical, romantic, and speculative mind, was at home with abstract ideas; Clark, of a pragmatic mold, was more of a practical man of action. Each supplied vital qualities which balanced their partnership.

Their relationship ranks high in the realm of notable human associations. It was a rare example of two men of noble heart and conscience sharing responsibilities for the conduct of a dangerous enterprise without ever losing the other's respect or loyalty. Despite the frequent stress, hardships, and other conditions that could easily have bred jealousy, mistrust, or contempt, they proved to be self-effacing brothers in command and leadership. During their long journey, there is not a single trace of a serious quarrel or dispute between them.

After the Expedition, Lewis was appointed Governor of Louisiana Territory; Clark was promoted to Brigadier General and appointed

to the Superintendency of Indian Affairs. Lewis, at age 35, died tragically on October 11, 1809, just 3 years after the Expedition. His grave lies within Natchez Trace National Parkway, near Hohenwald, Tennessee. Thomas Jefferson, who held life-long affection for his protege, is credited with the Latin inscription on Lewis' tombstone: Immaturus obi: sed tu felicior annos Vive meos, Bona Republica! Vive tuos. (I died young: but thou, O Good Republic, live out my years for me with better fortune.)

Clark lived a long and productive life in St. Louis, dying September 1, 1838, age 68. He is buried in the Clark family plot. In deserved tribute, both Meriwether Lewis and William Clark are recognized members of that generation of our young nation's heroes who launched within themselves a drive of nationalistic vision and patriotic will that would form the spirit and richness of American history itself.







Sergeant Floyd Monument (18) Bitterroot (Lewisia Rediviva)





Lewis and Clark Center (4)



Prairie Dog



Hat Rock (72)



Fort Clatsop (80)

## Exploring with Lewis and Clark

Today you can follow in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark, exploring the route they traveled and reliving the adventure of the Corps of Discovery. By boat or canoe, by car, or on foot, you can retrace portions of their historic route. Along the way, you will learn about the Expedition from numerous interpretive signs, exhibits, museums, visitor centers, and living history displays. Some of these are identified on the map on the reverse side of this brochure. They are keyed by number to the accompanying text and to the pictures on this

In 1978, Congress established the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail as a component of the National Trails System. The National Park Service administers the trail in partnership with many Federal, State, and local agencies, private organizations, and private landowners. These cooperating interests manage existing retracement routes, recreational and interpretive sites, and work to develop additional opportunities.

The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail provides three types of retracement opportunities:

Water Trail-Portions of Lewis and Clark's route where the Expedition traveled by watercraft. These can be retraced by boat or canoe. Long portions of the rivers they traveled are today impounded lakes. Dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers have locks: those on the Missouri do not. Commercial boat trips are available on some segments, such as the Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River (38) and the Gates of the Mountains

Land Trail-Portions of the Lewis and Clark

National Historic Trail that will be developed for travel on foot and/or horseback. Segments open for public use: Katy Trail State Park (6), the Lolo Trail (62), and the trail over Tillamook Head in Ecola State Park (82).

Motor Route-Portions of Lewis and Clark's overland route where modern-day roads closely follow the historic route.

These three types of retracement opportunities and selected interpretation and recreation sites are shown on the map. Because it is only a general map, it may be necessary to consult highway maps or make local inquiry to find these routes/sites. Some sites have no development and/or public access. Please respect the rights of private

The entire route of Lewis and Clark can be

approximately retraced by following the Lewis and Clark Trail Highway established by State highway agencies in the late 1960's. The highway is marked with rectangular signs that utilize the same figures of Lewis and Clark as the national historic trail marker.

Additional information can be obtained from state tourism agencies, park and recreation areas, and historical societies, as well as local chambers of commerce, and other public agencies. Many of them publish information and maps about specific sites and segments of the Lewis and Clark Trail. Contacting state tourism agencies is a good way to start. The US Forest Service publishes several informative brochures and maps of Lewis and Clark in the Rocky Mountains and on the Lolo Trail. Contact the Clearwater National Forest, 12730 Highway 12, Orofino, Idaho 83544. Information on the Upper Missouri National

Wild and Scenic River segment can be obtained from the Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 1160, Lewistown, Montana 59457.

Several excellent guide books to the trail have been published and are available in most bookstores. These generally provide a comprehensive source of site and segment specific maps and information, as well as hotel, camping, and other travel information.

The National Park Service maintains a Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail home page on the World Wide Web. The site includes a list of major sites, a calendar of events, relevant publications, and periodic updates on trail activities, including planning for the coming bicentennial observance of the Expedition's 1804 - 1806 journey. The site can be accessed at http://www.nps.gov/lecl.

Information on certification of sites or segments, marking the trail, and trail administration can be obtained by writing to: Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, 700 Rayovac Drive, Suite 100, Madison, Wisconsin 53711, or telephone 608-264-5610.

You Can Help establish the trail and promote public interest in matters relating to the Lewis and Clark Expedition by joining or supporting the efforts of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. The Foundation promotes public interest in Lewis and Clark, publishes an informative quarterly magazine, holds an annual meeting, and assists the National Park Service in its efforts. Information can be obtained by writing to: Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, Montana Foundation's web site can be accessed at http://www.lewisandclark.org.



14. Lewis and Clark

Monument - Located in

Council Bluffs, Iowa, park

15. Fort Atkinson State

listorical Park - The

and Clark held the first

council with the Oto and

August 3, 1804, is just east

of the fort. Clark's report that

the site was ideal for a fort

led to the construction of

Fort Atkinson in 1820.

Visitor center.

Missouri Indians on

"Councile Bluff" where Lewis

6. Katy Trail State Park -

This rail-trail traces Lewis

and Clark's route on the

Missouri River for 165 miles

from St. Charles to Franklin.

The Manitou Bluffs noted by

Clark in his journal can be

seen from the trail. Hiking,

bicycling, interpretive signs.

7. Arrow Rock State Park

Clark noted Arrow Rock

Bluff as they passed it on

June 9, 1804. Interpretive

sign and museum exhibits

recorded, "Those bluffs

Interpretive sign in New-

22. Spirit Mound - On

hill which the Indians

August 25 1804. Lewis and

Clark walked to this conical

believed to be the residence

Interpretive sign along State

of "little people or Spirits."

Route 19 about 7 miles

north of Vermillion.

private landowner.

castle city park.

appear to have been lately

on fire." Access permitted by

south of Kenel.

reconstructed.

29. Fort Abraham Lincoln

State Park - Contains the

Mandan village noted by

Clark in his journal. Five

earth lodges have been

30. North Dakota Lewis

overview of the Expedition

with an emphasis on the

and Clark Interpretive

Center - Interpretive

displays provide an

site of an abandoned

near the confluence in 1828

Today, Fort Union Trading

Post National Historic Site is

exhibit interprets Lewis and

Clark's visit to the area. Fort

Buford State Historic Site,

remains of a military fort

nearby, preserves the

constructed near the

36. Fort Peck Dam -

and at overlooks.

Interpretive sign at spillway

confluence in 1866.

open to the public. An

U.S. Highway 2 about 22

miles west of Cut Bank.

42. Two Medicine Fight

Site - Lewis and three of his

eight Blackfeet Indians. Two

Indians were killed. Access

by permission from private

43. Great Falls - Lewis

described them as "this

sublimely grand specticle.

The falls, as they appear

today, may be viewed from

Missouri River canyon

Commercial boat trips

49. Canyon Ferry

**Recreation Areas** -

Numerous state recreatio

areas are located around

have Lewis and Clark

interpretation.

Canyon Ferry Lake. Some

50. Missouri Headwater

State Park - Located where

the Jefferson, Madison, and

Divide and left the territory

of the Louisiana Purchase

Shoshoni Camp - Site of

Shoshoni village where

horses for crossing the

Bitterroot Mountains. No

56. Lost Trail Pass -

Interpretive sign, hiking trails

public access.

Lewis and Clark obtained

55. Cameahwait's

Access on unimproved road.

named by Lewis.

available.

82. Ecola State Park - On January 7 - 8, 1806, Clark and 14 others crossed over of View" (Tillamook Head)

79. Fort Canby State Park Major interpretive center devoted to a comprehensive Located on the site where on their way to the site of a beached whale. A 7.5-mile the Expedition achieved its hiking trail retraces their principal goal - the Pacific

80. Fort Clatsop National

Memorial - Replica of the

Expedition's 1805-06 winter

quarters. Visitor Center with

exhibits, living history in

summer, and other

and the role of Sacagawea

72. Hat Rock State Park -

Clark on October 19, 1805.

73. Horsethief Lake State

Park - Site of Expedition's

Falls" of the Columbia

Interpretive sign.

portage around the "Great

Hat Rock was named by

(Park uses popular but

incorrect spelling

Interpretive sign

center devoted to the

with Indians in nearby

68. Boyer Park - Major

marina. Interpretive sign.

69. Lewis and Clark Trail

State Park - Interpretive

70. Lyons Ferry State

Expedition and its contacts

62. Lolo Trail - Historic Nez

Lewis and Clark in 1805 and

Perce Indian trail used by

Mountains. Forest Service

unsurfaced road known as

the Lolo Motorway, closely

Portions of the actual trail in

Forest are marked and oper

follows the historic route

the Clearwater National

to hiking and horseback

riding. Interpretive signs.

Road 500, a primitive

75. Bonneville Dam -

both Oregon and

Expedition.

Visitor centers at the dam in

Washington interpret the

76. Columbia Gorge

Interpretive Center -

Interpretive displays on

Lewis and Clark, Excellent

77. Beacon Rock State

Park - Beacon Rock was

named by Clark in his

view of the Columbia Gorge

83. Les Shirley Park -Near mouth of Ecola Creek where a whale washed ashore and blubber was purchased from Indians by Clark. Interpretive sign.