



The Corps Live!

“at this place of Encampment”

Welcome to Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. The living history program being conducted today is a unique way to experience the past. Based on the type of programs Colonial Williamsburg, Plimoth Plantation and Conner Prairie offer, First-Person historical interpretation allows you to interact with people from the past and use your imagination to experience a different time and culture. Be sure to turn off the ringers of your cell phones and pagers and enjoy your visit!

How to Interact with the Expedition Members

Forget about the modern things like the parking lot. Imagine yourself visiting this site in December 1805 shortly after the expedition members arrived and have just started setting up their winter camp. Imagine yourself entering a different culture.



In your interactions, remember the characters don't recognize any of our modern "conveniences"--to them it is December 1805. The soldiers speak English even though it is a second language to some of them, but not all of the civilians use English. Feel free to take pictures. But, don't ask the members to pose for you--they won't understand what you are talking about. Direct any questions you have about the expedition after December 1805, what happened as a result of the expedition or any travel questions about the area, to the uniformed guide.

The best way to interact with the people you meet during your visit is to carry on a conversation just like you would with anyone else you've just met. Think about what you would ask a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Good questions to ask them are:

- "What are you doing?"
- "What has your journey been like so far?"
- "Is this part of the country a lot different from where you are from?"
- "What was the most memorable part of your journey?"
- "Are you looking forward to going home?"
- "Do you keep a journal?"
- "How do you like the weather?"
- "Do you have family back home?"
- "What do you think will be the hardest part of your trip back home?"
- "How do you keep things dry?"
- "How do you keep your food from spoiling?"
- "What do you do for fun?"
- "Are you being paid for being on the expedition?"
- "How many people are camped here with you?"
- "Why did you want to come on this expedition?"
- "What is the first thing you'll do when you get home?"
- "What do you miss about home?"
- "Have you had a safe journey so far?"
- "Have you seen the ocean yet?"
- "Who is your sergeant, or what squad are you in?"

What's Happening Today

Although there were 33 members of the expedition at this winter camp, not everyone was there at the same time. Some may have been hunting, trading at different villages, gathering plant and animal specimens and busy with other aspects of daily life at the fort.

Christmas 2005 at the Fort Clatsop site: If you enjoy this program, please come back for our next first person living history event, **December 25-27, 2005, *Wintering Over***: join the members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition for Christmas 1805 as they settle into their winter stay on the coast.

During your visit to the camp, you may meet the following people:

Captain Meriwether Lewis (1774-1809)

Before: From Virginia of Welsh parentage. He was well-educated, particular, serious and reserved. He joined the U.S. Army in 1794 and in 1801 was appointed President Jefferson's private secretary.

During: Co-leader of the expedition. He doctored injuries and illness among the Corps members. He kept an extensive journal with an emphasis on natural history.

Sergeant Patrick Gass (1771-1870)

Before: Born in Falling Springs, Pennsylvania, of Irish descent. "His talk unconventional - better suited for the camp than the parlor." Recruited from the 1st Infantry.

During: An experienced carpenter who brought his own tools and used them to everyone's benefit during the journey. Was elected to Sergeant after the death of Sergeant Floyd. He and the other sergeants were responsible for organizing the daily routine of housekeeping and logistics. Infrequently he was a hunter and messenger. He kept a journal.

Sergeant John Ordway (ca. 1775- by 1817)

Before: Born in New Hampshire, he joined the expedition from Captain Bissell's company of the First Infantry.

During: Ordway was the first sergeant and thus in charge of the boats, the camp, and the orderly book. He made a journal entry for every day of the entire journey.

Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor (1772-1831)

Before: He was born in Virginia and moved to Kentucky with his parents in 1783. He was a cousin of Sergeant Charles Floyd who died on the expedition in August 1804. He joined the expedition on October 20, 1803 at Clarksville, Indiana as one of the nine young men from Kentucky.

During: Pryor was a hunter and frequently a messenger along with being a sergeant.

Private Reuben Field (ca. 1771 -1823)

Before: Born in Virginia. Reuben and his brother Joseph (also on the expedition) were both employed as saltmakers by their uncle. Enlisted on August 1, 1803 (one of the very earliest). Both Sergeant Floyd and Captain Clark knew the Field brothers prior to the expedition.

During: The two Field brothers were dependable hunters and used on special reconnaissance missions.

Private George Gibson (ca. 1770-1809)

Before: Born in Pennsylvania, recruited by Clark in Kentucky.

During: A hunter, saltmaker, boatman, and fiddle player.

Private Hugh Hall (ca. 1772-unknown)

Before: Hall was born in Massachusetts and joined the army in 1798.

During: Early in the expedition he was disciplined twice.

Private Francois Labiche (ca. 1770-after 1828)

Before: Probably half French and half Omaha. He was likely recruited at Kaskaskia

During: Labiche was an excellent hunter and interpreter (English - French)

Private George Shannon (1785-1836)

Before: Born in Pennsylvania and joined Captain Lewis at Maysville, Kentucky. Listed as one of the "Nine young men from Kentucky." He was a good singer, hunter and horseman.

During: The youngest military member. Although he got lost a couple of times, Shannon developed into one of the best hunters.

Private Peter Weiser (1781- before 1828)

Before: Born in Pennsylvania, of German descent. Enlisted as of January 1, 1804; probably from Captain Russell Bissell's company of the First Infantry Regiment stationed at Kaskaskia.

During: Often a quartermaster, cook and hunter on the expedition.

Private William Werner (unknown)

Before: Probably born in Kentucky.

During: One of the saltmakers and cooks of the party.

Private Joseph Whitehouse (ca. 1775-after 1817)

Before: Probably born in Virginia. His family moved to Kentucky about 1784.

During: Whitehouse tanned hides and was a tailor.

Private Alexander Willard.(1778-1865)

Before: Born at Charlestown, New Hampshire. He was living in Kentucky.

During: Joined the expedition on January 1, 1804. He was a good blacksmith, gunsmith and fine hunter. He may have kept a journal.

Private Richard Windsor (ca.1770-after 1825)

Before: In Captain Russell Bissell's company of the First Infantry Regiment stationed at Kaskaskia.

During: Often assigned as a hunter.

Civilian George Drouillard (ca. 1776-1810)

Before: Probably born at Sandwich, Canada. The son of a French-Canadian father and Shawnee mother, Drouillard was an expert hunter with a good knowledge of the plains people and sign language.

During: Became indispensable as the captains' right-hand man and remained so throughout the journey. He and York were the only non-military personnel to go the entire distance to the Pacific and back.

Civilian Toussaint Charbonneau (1769-about 1843)

Before: Born near Montreal; was a fur trader living among the Hidatsa and Mandan Indians when the expedition wintered at Fort Mandan in 1804-05. He was married to Sacagawea and the father of their son, Jean Baptiste Charbonneau.

During: He translated Hidatsa to French for the captains. He was a good cook.

Civilian Sacagawea Charbonneau (ca. 1788-1812)

Before: Born near today's Idaho/Montana border, this Shoshone girl had been captured by the Hidatsa about 1799 and taken to live among them. By the time the expedition arrived in 1804, she was married to Toussaint and soon gave birth to their son.

During: Sacagawea was an interpreter (Shoshone-Hidatsa), food gatherer, and a symbol of the corps' peaceful intentions.

Seaman (unknown)

Before: Purchased by Meriwether Lewis before the expedition.

During: Seaman helped with hunting and by being a watch dog and companion.