THE LEWIS AND CLARK TRAIL HERITAGE FOUNDATION, INC.

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ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The purpose of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc., is to stimulate public interest in matters relating to the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the contributions to American history made by the Expedition members, and events of time and place concerning the expedition which are of historical import to our nation. The Foundation recognizes the value of tourist-oriented programs, and supports activities which enhance the enjoyment and understanding of the Lewis and Clark story. The scope of the activities of the Foundation is broad and diverse, and includes involvement in pursuits which, in the judgment of the directors, are of historical worth or contemporary social value, and commensurate with the heritage of Lewis and Clark. The activities of the National Foundation are intended to complement and supplement those of state and local Lewis and Clark Interest groups. The Foundation may appropriately recognize and honor individuals or groups for art works of distinction, achievement in the broad field of Lewis and Clark historical research, writing, or deeds which promote the general purpose and scope of activities of the Foundation. Membership in the organization comprises a broad spectrum of Lewis and Clark enthusiasts including Federal, State, and local government officials, historians, scholars and others of wide-ranging Lewis and Clark interests. Officers of the Foundation are elected from the membership. The annual meeting of the Foundation is traditionally held during August, the birth month of both Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. The meeting place is rotated among the states, and tours generally are arranged to visit sites in the area of the annual meeting which have historic association with the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT DOERK

The Lewis and Clark Expedition provides a focus for a wide range of interests. That remains one of our strengths as a foundation. This perception was reinforced recently when I had the pleasure of introducing Ginger Renner and her seminar “The Lewis and Clark Expedition in Western Art.” She had given this seminar in the form of a banquet address at our Annual Meeting in 1987. Whether it be western art, political history, an examination of the scientific apparatus used by the Corps of Discovery, ethnology, flora, fauna, the geography of the high plains and mountains and the “rain forest,” or taking a vacation trip to part or all of the Trail, there is something for every interest . . . yet with a focus on a small group of individuals engaged at a specific time in a wondrous adventure. We are fortunate in our theme—“the Expedition”!

Foundation members, new and old, may not be aware of all the information available throughout the various organizations affiliated with the parent organization. Maps, brochures, and videos are examples as are the field trips and programs sponsored by these entities. We have two chapters in Virginia, one each in Missouri and North Dakota, three in Montana, two in Idaho and also have associations and/or Governor’s advisory councils in Illinois and all the way over to Washington and Oregon. If you want to know what is available in a specific area, drop a line to P. O. Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403.

Ginger Renner’s seminar is being produced as

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. is open to the general public. Information and an application are available by sending a request to: Membership Secretary; Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.; P.O. Box 3434; Great Falls, MT 59403.

We Proceeded On, the quarterly magazine of the Foundation is mailed to current members during the months of February, May, August, and November.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES*

General: $15.00 (3 years: $42.50)
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* For foreign memberships add: $5/year in Canada; $10/year in Europe; and $12/year in Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

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WEIPPE PRAIRIE:
LEWIS AND CLARK MEETING THE NEZ PERCE

BY RALPH SPACE

While camped at Travelers Rest on Lolo Creek in present Montana, Lewis and Clark met three Indians who were pursuing some horse thieves. Lewis and Clark called them Flatheads. But the Indians stated that they were from a tribe five sleeps to the west. They were Nez Perce.

The next meeting Lewis and Clark had with the Nez Perce was when Clark ran onto three boys on the Weippe Prairie who tried to hide in the grass. Clark found two of them, gave them some presents and induced them to take him to the Indian camp.

Just where was this camp? On the trip west, little is written about the camp’s location but Clark drew a map that clearly shows its location. It was shown at the junction of a small creek and Fords Creek (which he called Village Creek).

On the eastward journey the Lewis and Clark party arrived at the Weippe Prairie on June 10, 1806. Clark wrote “we encamped near the place where we first met the Chopunnish last fall.” Then on June 12, he wrote “our camp is agreeably situated in a point of timbered land on the eastern borders of an extensive level and beautiful prairie which is intersected by several small branches near the bank of one of which our camp is placed.” This description and the map of 1805 agree.

I once visited the Weippe Prairie with Harry Wheeler, an old Indian who was considered an authority on Nez Perce history. We went there for him to show me where the Chief Joseph band ambushed a scouting party sent out by General Howard. While there he also pointed out in a general way where the Indians were camped when Clark arrived.

A few years later I visited the Weippe Prairie with Marcus Ware, an attorney from Lewiston, and Corbett Lawyer, a very old Indian from Lapwai. Mr. Lawyer had camped on the prairie many times when he was a boy, the first time when he was about five or six years old, and almost yearly until he was in his teens.

At that time Weippe Prairie was outside the Indian Reservation but since there was only one settler on the Prairie the Indians used the meadow as had been their custom for generations. It was here that they dug camas, raced horses, and played games. They camped at the same place each year and Lawyer’s grandfather told him that when Lewis and Clark arrived he was a boy about six years old and his sister took him to the woods to hide.

Lawyer placed their camp at or very close to where John Opresick’s house stands today. This location agrees with the one given by Harry Wheeler but is much more specific.

Mr. Lawyer drew us a sketch of the Weippe Prairie showing how it was divided in such a way that each local group of Nez Perce had an area reserved for their camas digging. Then there was an area open for non-Nez Perce to dig. He also showed the playground where the Indians raced horses and played games. He also pointed this area out to us on the ground.

WEIPPE PRAIRIE AND THE ANNUAL MEETING

BY JAMES R. FAZIO
1990 ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

Foundation members who attend this year’s meeting will have the opportunity to see the sites associated with the Lewis and Clark party’s meeting of the Nez Perce on Weippe Prairie. We will enter the prairie from the western edge of the forested Bitterroot Mountains in much the same way the Lewis and Clark party entered. We will discuss camas ecology and its role in Nez Perce culture and may even have the chance to dedicate a new piece of donated land that will protect one of the now-unmarked sites that was important to both the Nez Perce and to the history of the Expedition.

One footnote to this story is the artwork shown in the registration material received by all members with the last issue of WPO. That will not be the art that appears on T-shirts and other meeting materials. Responding to objections by some members of the Nez Perce Tribe, we are in the process of developing a scene that shows the representatives of both nations in a more equal status. A possibility we are working with is a modified version of the accompanying art (see page 31). This picture was commissioned by the National Park Service and has some technical problems that our more astute members will quickly point out. Our version will most likely show Clark and two members of the party meeting.

(Continued on page 31)

THE COVER PHOTO

During September, 1805, the Lewis and Clark Expedition crossed the Bitterroot Mountains and met the Nez Perce Indians on the Weippe Prairie. They left their horses to the care of these friendly people, and at the Clearwater River near the site of present Orofino, Idaho, they built five dug-out canoes. On October 7 the 33-member Expedition headed down the Clearwater. The following day, the small flotilla traveled through the section of the river near present Lenore seen in our cover photo by Steven G. Lee of Boise, Idaho. Two days later they reached the Snake River, on October 16th the Columbia, and on November 7, Clark wrote: "Ocian in View! O! The Joy."
HISTORY'S TWO NICHOLAS BIDDELS

BY ARLEN J. LARGE

"This is our national epic of exploration, conceived by Thomas Jefferson, wrought out by Lewis and Clark, and given to the world by Nicholas Biddle."

—Elliott Coues

"Is Andrew Jackson to bow the knee to the golden calf? I tell you if you want relief go to Nicholas Biddle!"

—Andrew Jackson

Everyone in the Cathedral of Notre Dame on December 2, 1804, remembered the sheer audacity of it. The pope had come to Paris to crown the new Emperor of France, but at the last instant Napoleon took the crown from Pius VII and majestically placed it on his own head.

In the glittering audience was 18-year-old Nicholas Biddle of Philadelphia, who later brought his coronation ticket home to put in the family souvenir album. He was then a secretary to the American ambassador in Paris, a rather undemanding job that allowed him time for social calls on General Lafayette and Madame de Stael. He also toured France, Switzerland, Italy, and Greece in the style befitting a young man of means. Heading home through London, he was asked by Ambassador James Monroe to pause as a temporary secretary in the U.S. embassy there. Not until 1807 did the worldly-wise youth return to Philadelphia.

All his life Nicholas Biddle moved comfortably among men of great affairs, soon becoming one of them himself. His wealthy father was a friend of Vice President Aaron Burr, who hid out in the Biddle home after his fatal duel with Alexander Hamilton. Nicholas likewise cultivated big-time politicians—his honeymoon trip included a visit to President Madison in Washington—and aspired to his own stardom in elective politics. He got only as far as the Pennsylvania legislature, failing three times for a seat in Congress. Instead Biddle made his mark as a titan of high finance; politicians became flunkies to put on his payroll. Consenting at one point to be considered for President, he boasted the White House would be a step down from the power he had wielded as head of the Second Bank of the United States.

This is the Nicholas Biddle known to Presidential historians, an aristocratic foil pitted against the muscular Presidency of Andrew Jackson. The saga of Czar Nicholas v. King Andrew I, as drawn by political cartoonists of the time, became a landmark in studies of Presidential power.
Yet there's a seemingly quite different Nicholas Biddle known to historians of the American West, the self-effacing narrator of the Lewis and Clark Expedition to the Pacific. This Biddle was a young writer who mastered a tough task with admirable accuracy and obvious respect for the story's wilderness heroes. So rigidly does specialization rule their craft that Presidential historians and Western historians rarely make the two Biddies match in the same person. Yet a single Nicholas Biddle uniquely played both roles, and his performance in one inevitably was reflected in the other.

Biddle did everything early. At age 15 he graduated from Princeton, where he discovered a knack for writing. He then started reading law, a tedious relieved when his father’s influence got him that glorious boy-diplomat interlude in Europe. Nicholas returned hooked on politics as his life’s goal, but willing for the moment to start practicing law with his brother William. On the side, he wrote articles for a literary magazine called the Port Folio, winning a local reputation as a pretty good wordsmith.

In January, 1810, that reputation led to a meeting with General William Clark, a militia commander from St. Louis. Clark was in Philadelphia to arrange for publication of an official account of the expedition that he and Meriwether Lewis had led to the Pacific and back in 1804-1806. Lewis was supposed to write it, but he had died just three months before in Tennessee, and Clark needed a ghostwriter to take over. He apparently mentioned the job to Biddle, but also said it was being offered first to William Wirt, a Richmond lawyer whom Clark regarded as “one of the first writers in this Country.” The general left Philadelphia at the end of January believing Wirt would be his author. Back in Washington, however, a letter from Richmond told him that Wirt didn’t have time for it. So from his father-in-law’s home in Fincastle, Virginia, Clark on February 20 wrote back to Biddle asking him to take the job after all.2

Now William Clark was a famous man who had seen exotic sights that would be the envy of any world traveler. On the same day Biddle watched Napoleon crown himself in European splendor, Clark was ceremoniously entertaining a delegation of feathered Mandan and Cheyenne tribesmen at the Expedition’s winter fort in North Dakota. But Biddle wasn’t awed by celebrities, and perhaps resented being Clark’s second choice. He replied he had “neither health nor leisure” to do the narrative, later confessing to a friend that “my usual indolence” was the real reason.3 But Clark’s
Philadelphia publisher, John Conrad, got him to change his mind, and Biddle quickly left for Virginia to get the project started.

Luckily we have a good idea of what both men looked like as they began their collaboration at Fincastle in late March, 1810. During his January visit to Philadelphia the 39-year-old Clark sat for a portrait by Charles Wilson Peale, to be forever twinned with a Peale picture of Lewis done in 1807. Clark was starting to show the dual chins of middle age, but his gaze was direct and confident. Also in 1810, Biddle, still only 24, commissioned an oil-on-ivory miniature by the Philadelphia artist Benjamin Trott. The freshly handsome features wore the expectant look of someone who’s already learned a lot and is ready to learn more. The tousled hair was a Trott trademark, but “the artist went awry on my ancestor’s chin” by drawing a cleft shown on no other Biddle likeness, observes great-great-grandson Nicholas Biddle, Jr., who today owns the picture.4

Young Biddle stayed with his Fincastle host for nearly three weeks. First he read through the manuscript journals kept by Lewis, Clark, and Sergeant John Ordway, jotting down points wanting clarification. Then Clark patiently submitted to question after question, with Biddle writing down the answers on blank pages of a Lewis journal, and between some lines of the manuscripts themselves. Promising a finished text within a year, Biddle in mid-April took all the papers back to Philadelphia to start writing.

Two key threshold decisions were made. Clark, Biddle, and publisher Conrad agreed first that the massive manuscript pile should be condensed into just two printed volumes telling the story of the trip. This meant Biddle wouldn’t merely edit the manuscripts for the press, marking paragraphs and sprucing up the language. Rather, he had to write an entirely new work of original composition. He mostly retained, how-
ever, the manuscript's basic diary format, with a separate entry for each day's events.

Second, Biddle chose the narrative's "point of view," deciding who would be talking to the reader. In effect he created an extra member of the party who would use the first-person "we" for the whole group, as in "we set out early." When the story required it, individuals like Lewis or Clark would be named, but the narrator never identified himself. "They" would be used for a party detached from the main group, or for the enlisted men. Biddle's plan required consistency, but this sometimes proved awkward. In describing a Lewis-led detachment's approach to the Great Falls of the Missouri in June, 1805, the narrator found himself mixing they-we in the same sentence: "At the extremity of this course they overlooked a most beautiful plain, where were infinitely more buffaloe than we had ever before seen at a single view." Nevertheless, the diary format and first-person narration created the successful illusion of being an on-the-scene account written by the explorers themselves.

Though called a "literary dilettante," Biddle resisted, the amateur's urge to paint layers of lurid word color atop the original descriptions of the journalists. His added shadings were minimal, and they usually helped. "Every object here wears a dark and gloomy aspect," originally wrote Lewis at the Gates of the Mountains, where projecting rocks "seem ready to tumble on us." Biddle's paraphrase was smoother, but conveyed the same foreboding tone: "Nothing can be imagined more tremendous than the frowning darkness of these rocks, which project over the river and menace us with destruction."

Biddle was supposed to shrink his material, not add to it, but some passages seemed to require lengthening for clarity's sake (see box on page 11). He also fattened the text here and there with editorial comment having no other apparent purpose than to display his knowledge of Europe and his Princeton education. At the Expedition's outset Biddle described the French-Canadian inhabitants of St. Charles as showing "all the careless gayety and amiable hospitality of the best of times in France." No explorer put it that way, but Biddle had been to France, and they hadn't. Later, near the Arikara villages in present South Dakota, Clark heard a legend of how two Indian lovers were turned to stone figures seen near the river. The story reminded Biddle of a classical Latin poem; this legend, he interjected, "would adorn the Metamorphoses of Ovid."

Biddle assumed that the books' readers would share his own fascination with the West's two great novelties—wild Indians and animals. The explorers filled page after page about them, but Biddle kept pumping Clark for more. "In our towns, and in Europe too where we know nothing of Indians every little matter is a subject that excites curiosity," he told Clark in a July 7 follow-up letter asking about Indian sign language. Clark's journal for April 29, 1805, told how the innate curiosity of antelope
caused them to “approach any thing which appears in motion near them &c.” Closer quiz- zing of Clark on this point during the Fincastle interview allowed Biddle to describe how a savvy hunter could lie on the ground waving hat, arms, and feet until an antelope came “within reach of the rifle.”

Biddle’s job of boiling the travel story down to two volumes was supposed to let him skip the Expedition’s scientific findings. The publisher planned to segregate this data into a third volume to be written by Philadelphia botanist Benjamin Smith Barton. Even so, Biddle couldn’t resist putting a surprising amount of botany into his travelog. In mid-July, 1805, Lewis minutely described the flax, currants, and serviceberries found growing above the Great Falls of the Missouri, most of which found its way into Biddle’s narrative (“The perianth of the fruit is one leaved, five cleft, abbriviated, and tubular.”) That was just as well, because the ailing Dr. Barton never produced his assigned volume.

What, then, did Biddle leave out to save space? Routine camp occurrences and little mishaps on the trail—a hunter out overnight, a gun dropped in the water—were often ignored. The worrisome illnesses of Sacagawea at the Great Falls and of her son at Camp Chopunnish rated bare mentions. And possibly at Clark’s urging, his ghostwriter suppressed almost every manuscript account of friction within the exploring party. Lewis had reported a May 6, 1806, horse-handling quarrel between two of his best men, George Drouillard and John Colter, but Biddle left it out. And as far as his readers knew, it was an Army command where nobody ever got punished, or even chewed out. The officers’ August 7, 1804, order to bring back deserter Moses Reed dead or alive was excised in Biddle’s text. So was Lewis’s April 19, 1806, admission of his own testiness in “severely” belaboring poor Alexander Willard for letting a horse get away; the horse, wrote Biddle blandly, was lost due to “negligence.”

Where Biddle really cut down on bulk was in combining or discarding most of the duplicate accounts of his sources. As mentioned, he worked from manuscript diaries kept by Lewis, Clark, and Ordway, plus notes from his Fincastle interview. Also at hand was the Expedition journal of Sergeant Patrick Gass, who had scooped everybody by getting it published in 1807. On occasion, Biddle wove unattributed details from several diarists into a rich multisourse tapestry, as in this paragraph describing Christmas at Fort Mandan:

Tuesday, 25th, we were awaked before day by a discharge of three platoons from the party [reported by Clark]. We had told the Indians not to visit us as it was one of our great medicine days [Ordway], so that the men remained at home and amused themselves in various ways, particularly with dancing [Clark, Ordway, Gass], in which they take great pleasure. The American flag was hoisted for the first time in the fort [Gass]; the best provisions we had were brought out [Ordway], and this, with a little brandy [Gass], enabled them to pass the day in great festivity.”

But this was rare. Usually, Biddle just based his text on material in the more literate Lewis’s journal, when available, or from Clark’s when Lewis was silent. He mostly ignored Gass, believing Ordway’s account was “much better” for fleshing out details overlooked by the captains. On July 14, 1804, as the Expedition approached the plains country, Clark reported trying to shoot some elk near the river; it was a comment by Ordway that allowed Biddle to write that the explorers were seeing these animals “for the first time.” Beyond Fort Mandan, however, even Ordway was little used.

By far the most valuable non-journal source for Biddle was his own Fincastle interview with Clark. From it came the particulars of Sacagawea’s dramatic reunion with her brother Cameahwait, the story of York’s black skin being rubbed by a skeptical Hidatsa chief and
As Biddle edited the Lewis and Clark Journals he occasionally added other nuggets of Expedition lore recorded nowhere else.

Biddle had yet another source: George Shannon, sent by Clark to Philadelphia to answer questions on the spot. Private Shannon had kept no journal on the trip, but he was smart and relatively well educated. His specific contributions to the narrative are hard to detect, however. At least two months into the project Shannon still hadn’t arrived at the Biddle family home on Chestnut Street, where Nicholas was rising at 5 o’clock each morning to move the Expedition another notch up the Missouri. When Shannon finally appeared (he was there, at least, by October), Biddle doubtless had him read over what had already been written, including the account of his own harrowing separation from the party for 16 days in the summer of 1804. The lost soldier added a detail or two to Clark’s account of the incident, but his fingerprints elsewhere in the text aren’t obvious. Shannon probably served mainly as a verifier of facts and impressions.

But he would thus share credit for the remarkable accuracy of Biddle’s narrative, measured against the manuscript sources and later scholarship. Page after page of the text is a carefully condensed reflection of what Lewis and Clark originally wrote about the look and feel of the West. Mistakes tended to be trivial. Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor at one point was misspelled “John.” The herd of elk Lewis reported seeing on August 1, 1805, became a “flock.” Curiously, Clark’s name throughout the text was spelled “Clarke,” though Biddle should have known better. Elliott Coues corrected the misspelling in his 1893 edition of the Biddle narrative.

Biddle did cut a corner, apparently on purpose. On August 20, 1805, Clark conferred with Cameahwait’s band of Shoshones on the west side of Lemhi Pass. At that meeting, according to Biddle, the Indians gave Clark a detailed description of the wild country leading further west to the “stinking lake, as they called the ocean.” In fact, this was the geography lesson
Lewis reported hearing from the Indians when he initially crossed the pass a week earlier. Clark's journal for August 20 didn't mention a long geography briefing. Biddle evidently decided to streamline the complex comings and goings of various detachments across Lemhi by switching the Indian geography material from Lewis to Clark. As a story teller Biddle may have felt the switch made little difference, but it nevertheless distorted the manuscript record.

On July 8, 1811, Biddle reported to Clark that "by diligence I have got through the work ..." When the Conrad publishing house folded, however, his attention turned to other matters, and it wasn't until the spring of 1813 that a new publisher was lined up. Biddle then turned final preparation of the text over to Paul Allen, a fellow writer for the Port Folio. Allen's contribution, like Shannon's, is hard to isolate. With modesty Biddle later said his own work produced only "a rude outline" of the Expedition, which Allen was hired to complete. Donald Jackson, a later editor of Expedition documents, thought Allen's handsome $500 fee was a clue that "Biddle left a considerable amount of work to be done." On the other hand, journal editor Reuben Gold Thwaites believed Allen merely added "typographical and clerical" touches, and Elliott Coues rather savagely dismissed Allen as a "mere dummy" in the project. Coues was particularly outraged by Allen's remark that he needed an eye-catching biography of Lewis—written by Thomas Jefferson—to "enliven the dullness of the Narrative."

It's remarkable that Biddle—then still politically ambitious—passed up the chance to use the Lewis and Clark story for self-promotion. His name appeared nowhere in the work; a preface signed by Allen said only that a "gentleman" had sketched the narrative "nearly in its present form." By Biddle's apparent code of conduct, gentlemen were not publicity hounds, and of course he took no money for his effort.

The two-volume final product didn't appear until early 1814, seven and a half years after the Expedition's return. Late though it was, Biddle's coherent account of the trip has earned an enduringly high reputation. "The story of this adventure stands easily first and alone," said Coues in prefacing his 1893 edition of the Biddle work, heavily footnoted with the first public excerpts from the manuscript journals. The Biddle narrative "will always remain one of the best digested and most interesting books of American travel," wrote Thwaites in his 1904-1905 edition of the journals themselves. Ironically this prediction was somewhat undercut by Thwaites's own work, and by Gary Moulton's new edition of Expedition manuscripts being published at the University of Nebraska. Students today tend to turn first to the explorers' own words, despite the smoothness of Biddle's story and its exclusive gems from the Clark interview.

Biddle began his march into political history right in the midst of his vicarious fling at Western adventure. In October, 1810, while still busy with the Lewis and Clark project, Biddle was elected to the lower house of the Pennsylvania legislature and left for Lancaster in December. Somehow he also found time just then to fall in love. At the session's end the following year he came home to conclude his part of the Expedition narrative and to marry Jane Craig, a teenage heiress whose pet name for him was "Edwin." Now he was really rich, for the Craigs had even more money than the Biddies. Coming with the marriage was "Andalusia," the Craig mansion northeast of town. Biddle once tried his hand at a novel, where he wrote: "Distinctions in society you must have, because wealth, beauty, notoriety, family connexions create them ..." Biddle was an aristocrat of both talent and wealth who believed the world's management should be left to a tight circle of people like himself. His elitism even surfaced in the Lewis and Clark story. At Fort Mandan, the explorers saw an Indian buffalo dance involving old men and young women. Biddle coded the ceremony's erotic climax in Latin, giving only high-minded schol-
Nicholas Biddle's paraphrase of the raw Lewis and Clark journals often clarified clumsy wording by the original writers. At Fort Mandan on the night of November 5, 1804, Captain Clark observed a modest display of the aurora borealis, produced by an active sun then nearing the peak of its 11-year sunspot cycle. His stream-of-consciousness description was rewritten by Biddle, who had asked Clark during the Fincastle interview to estimate how much of the sky was illuminated.

**CLARK:** "Last night late we were awaked by the Sergeant of the Guard to see a nothem light, which was light, not red, and appeared to darken and some times nearly obscured; and open, many times a great space light & containing floating columns which appeared opposite each other & retreat leaving the lighter space at no time of the same appearance."

**BIDDLE:** "Late at night we were awaked by the sergeant on guard to see the beautiful phenomenon called the northern light; along the northern sky was a large space occupied by a light of a pale but brilliant white colour; which rising from the horizon extended itself to nearly twenty degrees above it. After glittering for some time its colours would be overcast and almost obscured, but again it would burst out with renewed beauty; the uniform color was pale light, but its shapes were various and fantastic; at times the sky was lined with light coloured streaks rising perpendicularly from the horizon, and gradually expanding into a body of light in which we could trace the floating columns, sometimes advancing, sometimes retreating, and shaping into infinite forms, the space in which they move. It all faded away before the morning."

This graph, taken from page 216 of Fred Hoyle’s book *Astronomy* (Doubleday, 1962), shows sunspot activity from 1750 to 1950. Numbers in the vertical scale are Wolf numbers, in which each sunspot visible through a particular telescope, used as a standard, reckons as one and each group of spots as ten. The graph shows the peak of one of the sun’s 11-year sun spot cycles occurring in 1804, at the time Captain Clark reported his observation of a display of the aurora borealis.

All he ever got from President Monroe was an 1819 appointment as one of the government’s five part-time directors on the 25-member board of the Second Bank of the United States. The bank was chartered by Congress as a depository for government funds, and it could issue paper money backed by its own reserve of gold and silver coin. As the only good source of a nationally circulating currency the bank was a powerful institution indeed, and Biddle’s entry into its orbit changed the direction of his life.

Three years after he joined the board it elected him president of the bank. Biddle was

ars access to juicy details that wouldn’t be appropriate for the prurient mob.\(^{11}\)

He hoped to follow the example of Virginia’s aristocrats, like his friend James Monroe, by serving mankind in public office. He returned to the legislature but resigned in frustration in 1817. Then he lost an election for the U.S. House of Representatives in 1818, and again two years later. He was nominated in 1821 for the U.S. Senate in both houses of the Pennsylvania legislature, but lost there too. He was “mentioned” for governor, but nothing came of it, and he could not wangle from the White House a European ambassador’s job.
just 36 years old—early again. As with the Lewis and Clark chronicle, he did a careful, meticulous job of managing currency and credit in ways he thought would promote national economic growth. During the 1820s Nicholas Biddle became Philadelphia's most prominent citizen, a stylish dresser tending toward plumpness. But the times were running against aristocrats. More and more white males qualified to vote, and with Andrew Jackson's defeat of President John Quincy Adams in 1828, the Virginia-Massachusetts lineage of patrician national founders ran out.

Jackson came to the White House distrusting all banks, but the U.S. Bank's charter didn't expire until 1836 and Biddle initially felt safe. In 1832, however, he and Henry Clay decided Congress should pass an early re-charter bill; the Kentucky Senator needed an issue in his campaign for President against Jackson, and Biddle wanted to help Clay. An election-year fight over the bank was fine with Jackson. He thought too much money power had passed to private tycoons unaccountable to the people, and that the bank was buying up Congressmen and newspaper editors with easy loans.

Congress passed a bank re-charter bill in July, 1832, and Jackson vetoed it in a famous message complaining that "the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes." In a Senate speech Daniel Webster of Massachusetts thundered that the veto message "manifestly seeks to inflame the poor against the rich." Yet Webster's role turned out to reinforce the President's belief that Biddle's bank was a "hydra of corruption" that bought and sold politicians. The Senator in fact was retained as a paid attorney for the bank. He once wrote Biddle a personal note reminding him that "my retainer has not been renewed or refreshed as usual," with Webster supplying the underscored emphasis. Biddle's friendly 20th-century biographer, Thomas Paine Govan, claiming other historians have "misinterpreted" Webster's relationship, insisted the fees were paid only for legitimate legal services. But Robert Byrd of West Virginia, a sitting member of today's Senate who has a better understanding of such matters, has concluded the retainer "surely was one of the most egregious breaches of ethics in the history of the Senate . . ." The arrangement demonstrated that Biddle was still a man who could cut a corner when necessary.

In 1833 Jackson escalated his war against the bank, which still lived under the old charter. King Andrew ordered all Federal money out of the bank. Czar Nicholas ordered the bank's branches to tighten up on new loans, hoping the White House would buckle under a national credit squeeze. As economic suffering spread, pressure mounted on both sides to relent. But to delegations of businessmen and mechanics Old Hickory had just one reply: "If you want relief go to Nicholas Biddle!"

So the pressures in early 1834 grew lopsidedly worse at the bank's Greek-revival temple in Philadelphia. Among those urging Biddle to ease credit was venerable Albert Gallatin, Treasury Secretary during the Jefferson administration and an active planner of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Biddle may have remembered writing that name 24 years before: "We then left the mouth of the southeast fork, which, in honour of the secretary of the treasury we called Gallatin's river . . ." With respected men of affairs abandoning him, Biddle agreed to let up.

His power now declining, Biddle watched his bank's cherished Federal charter expire on time in 1836. A compliant Pennsylvania legislature quickly issued a new state charter to Biddle's Philadelphia bank, but it did not prosper. Nevertheless, the following year a booster in South Carolina urged Biddle to run for President in 1840. Biddle's reply wasn't bashful. First saying the office "has not the slightest attraction," he continued:

"Its dignity has been degraded by the elevation to it of unworthy men, and as to mere power, I have been for years in the daily exercise of more personal authority than any president habitually enjoys. But I stand ready for the country's service. If therefore you think that my name can be productive of good, I am content to place it, as I now do, at your disposal." But nothing came of that, of course, and
Biddle’s decline just continued. In 1841 the state-chartered bank failed, and he barely escaped jail for fraud. He still had some personal land interests to tend and he spent more time at Andalusia, where periods of illness came more frequently. On February 27, 1844, he died at the age of just 58—early for the last time.

**NOTES**

1 Biddle Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. “N. Biddle Esq” is written on the back of the ticket, which assigned its bearer to the cathedral’s choir section.


3 Jackson, 2:495, 555.

4 Nicholas Biddle, Jr., personal communication, January 25, 1990.


7 See Paul Allen, ed., *History of the Expedition Under the Command of Captains Lewis and Clark*. (Bradford and Inskeep, Philadelphia, 1814). 2 vols. Clark’s name is spelled correctly on the title page and in Allen’s preface, but the extra “e” appears uniformly in the text in both volumes. The blame thus seems to rest with Biddle, despite his receipt of many signed letters from Clark.


13 Webster to Biddle, December 21, 1833, Papers of Nicholas Biddle, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

14 Govan, p. 263, n. 5.


17 Govan, p. 354.

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**About the author . . . .**

Arlen J. Large of Washington, D.C. is a former Foundation president (1983-84); a frequent contributor to *WPO*; a retired science correspondent of the *Wall Street Journal*; and continues to travel the world pursuing his many scientific interests. He certainly ranks among the top Lewis and Clark authorities in the nation; and he serves on the editorial board of *WPO*. Other articles by Large that have appeared in *WPO* may be found in Vol. VI, Nos. 1 and 3; Vol. X, No. 4; Vol. XI, No. 3; Vol. XII, No. 2; Vol. XIII, Nos. 1 and 4; Vol. XIV, No. 3; Vol. XV, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4; and Vol. XVI, No. 1.

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MERIWETHER LEWIS: DEVOTED SON

BY MARY NEWTON LEWIS

On August 18, 1774, at Locust Hill, Ivy, Albemarle County, Virginia, Lucy Meriwether and William Lewis became the parents of their first son who was given the name Meriwether, his mother's maiden name. His older sister, Jane Meriwether, was born in 1770, and his brother, Reuben, was born in 1777.

William Lewis served as a Lieutenant in the Continental line in the American Revolution, from 1775 until his death on November 17, 1781, bearing his own expenses as his patriotic contribution to his country. Just before his death he had taken part in the siege of Yorktown. Meriwether was just seven years old when he lost his father. He was very proud of him and his army career, and even as a small lad, patterned his life in the image of his father, dreaming of following in his footsteps.

In the year following William's death, Lucy, a young widow of twenty-nine with three small children, married William's friend, Captain John Marks, also a Virginian, who had resigned from the military because of ill health. He migrated with his new family to Georgia, settling in Oglethorpe County in a colony on the Broad River. Of this marriage there were two children, John Hastings, born in 1785, and Mary Garland, born in 1788.

Even as a small child in Albemarle, Meriwether showed a great love of the outdoors, but it was here in this wild, untamed area of Georgia that he became a seasoned hunter and fisherman. Here he established his life-long interest in natural history.

His sister Jane, at the age of fifteen, married Edmund Anderson. They made their home at Locust Hill where they became the parents of nine children. Edmund died in 1810, leaving Jane, who, according to an old record of the Locust Hill Cemetery, was "a widow for thirty-five years" when she died in 1845. They are both buried in the family cemetery at Locust Hill.

When Meriwether was about fourteen, he returned to Virginia to continue his education under private tutors, as was the custom in the Piedmont. Here he was also to learn the intricacies of managing his inheritance, Locust Hill, which embraced about one thousand acres. The estate had been under the management of two of his Meriwether uncles, William and Nicholas, since his Father's death. They continued to supervise the estate (and their nephew) helping him to learn his new responsibilities.

Lucy and John Marks had been married about ten years when John died. At the age of
eighteen Meriwether became head of the family, responsible for his mother, brothers and sisters. Within a year from John's death, Meriwether went to Broad River in a carriage, reputed to have been built by Negro artisans at Monticello, and brought his mother and family back to Locust Hill. Reuben had returned to Virginia prior to this to continue his education.

There are a number of delightful stories in the Lewis family about Lucy, who was called "Aunt Marks" by her friends, neighbors and family. She had a great interest and skill in using herbal medicine, was an excellent cook, and had a thorough knowledge in the care and use of firearms.

ARMY LIFE

When President Washington issued the call for troops to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794, Meriwether was among the first to volunteer his services. He felt secure in the thought that his mother was capable of attending the affairs of Locust Hill, thus relieving him of the estate management he found so irksome.

After a year in the army and finding that life more than suitable, he decided to join the regular army in 1795. He was still a little troubled by his desire to "ramble" (as he called it) and because he was leaving so much responsibility to his mother.

Although Meriwether had not been assigned to General Mad Anthony Wayne's command at the time of his victory over the Indians at Fallen Timbers, he was present when the nine or more Indian chiefs signed the Treaty of Greenville on August 3, 1795. These men and this event so impressed him that he made a great effort to know and understand the red man.

His army record suffered a small tremor during his first year in the regular service. After an evening of a little too much conviviality, he was charged by a fellow officer with what could be called "conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman." He was ordered to stand a general court-martial. When he was apprised of the charges and asked to plead, he declared: "Not Guilty!" After the officers carefully studied all the testimony, the court ruled he be "acquitted with honor." General Wayne confirmed the verdict of the court and expressed the hope that this would be the last such trial in his encampment. He considered Meriwether one of his most promising and outstanding young officers.

Meriwether was reassigned to the Chosen Rifle Company of elite riflemen-sharpshooters commanded by William Clark, and the two became fast friends. Most of his army duty was served in the "western settlements" and army life not only made him a first-class soldier but a first-rate woodsman as well.

Defending army life in one of his letters to his mother, he wrote:

"The general idea is that the Army is the school of debauchery but, believe me, it has ever proven the school of experience and prudence to your affectionate son."

When he could find time away from the army, he carried out his responsibilities as guardian of Mary Garland and John Hastings.
He found it necessary to travel to Georgia, Ohio, and Kentucky to protect and secure from forfeiture as vacant and abandoned, the lands left them through old land grants of their father.

In 1796, Meriwether applied for admission to the Masonic Order. He was advanced through the various degrees in record time, probably because he was on leave from the army and his time was limited. The record shows that he was not active in Masonic affairs for the next few years. Nevertheless, an original Mason Certificate, which is in safe keeping in the Rare Book Library at the University of Virginia, states that he had attained "the degree of a Royal Arch, Superexcellent Mason in the Staunton Lodge No. 13 on the 31st day of October, 1799."

Interestingly, the Scribe of this chapter and the document itself was Vincent Tapp whose granddaughter married John Marks Lewis, Meriwether's great nephew, in 1851.

"SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT"

Meriwether was promoted to the rank of Captain on December 5, 1800. On February 23, 1801, he received an invitation from the newly elected President, Thomas Jefferson, to become his private secretary. It read in part: "In selecting [a secretary] I have thought it important to respect not only his capacity to aid me in the private concerns of the household, but also to contribute to the mass of information which it is interesting to the Administration to acquire. Your knowledge of the Western Country, of the Army, and of all its interests and relations has rendered it desirable for public as well as private purposes that you should be engaged in that office..."

Meriwether responded: "You have thought proper so far to honour me with your confidence as to express a wish that I should accept the place of your private secretary. I most cordially acquiesce, and with pleasure accept the office, nor were further motives necessary to induce my compliance than that you, Sir, should conceive that in the discharge of the duties of that office I could be serviceable to my Country, or useful to yourself..."

As he assumed his duties as private secretary at the White House and in close association with President Jefferson, Meriwether continued his education in the social graces, in science..."
entific interests, and also in diplomatic affairs of state. Often he accompanied the President to Monticello where he was quartered on the estate in the "Franklin House" which was the home of Ben Franklin's grandson, William Bache. Here he was conveniently accessible to Monticello and his own home and family at Locust Hill.

**EXpedition Leader**

Sometimes during 1802, President Jefferson started laying the foundation for an expedition into the West which had long been his cherished dream. From the outset he made it clear that should such an expedition become reality, he would choose Meriwether as its head. To this end, Meriwether spent much time in late 1802 and early 1803, in the company of some of the most eminent scholars, all friends of Jefferson, in Philadelphia and Lancaster, Pennsylvania, taking special courses in anatomy, medicine, natural history, botany, zoology, Indian history, and astronomy.

As plans for the expedition progressed and the time arrived to obtain the necessary supplies, Meriwether was given access to the Schuykill Arsenal in Philadelphia and the help of Israel Whelen, Purveyor of Public Supplies; however, he depended on the Arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, for most of his arms. Here Meriwether had rifles made of his own design. They were designated the "Harper's Ferry Rifle." Later this design, with minor changes, was used as the model for the first "mass produced" army rifle in the U.S. Four thousand were manufactured by an order of the Secretary of War dated May 25, 1803.

To further emphasize the confidence he felt in Meriwether, President Jefferson, on July 4, 1803, sent him a most singular letter of credit to be used should Meriwether find the return trip from the Pacific Ocean by way of land, too dangerous. It read, in part:

"I hereby authorize you to draw
on the Secretaries of the Treasury, of War, and of the Navy of the United States, according as you may find your draughts will be most negotiable for the purpose of obtaining money or necessaries for yourself and your men . . . And to give more entire satisfaction and confidence to those who may be disposed to aid you, I, Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States of America, have written this letter of general credit for you with my own hands and signed it with my own name.

This letter, in fact, gave Meriwether a blank check, written on the credit of the United States.

Concerned about any anxiety his mother may have for his welfare in venturing into the unknown, he wrote her a reassuring letter on Independence Day, 1803—before he had even started his trip west to St. Louis:

"My absence will probably be 15 or 18 months. The nature of this expedition is by no means dangerous. My route will be altogether through tribes of Indians who are perfectly friendly to the United States. Therefore, consider the chances of life just as much in my favor on this trip as I should conceive them were I to remain at home for the same length of time. The charge of this Expedition is as honourable to myself as it is important to my Country. For its fatigues I find myself perfectly prepared nor do I doubt my health and strength of constitution to bear me through it. I go with the most pre-conviction in my own mind of returning safe and hope, therefore, that you will not suffer yourself to indulge any anxiety for my safety."

The adventures of Meriwether Lewis during the years of his famous expedition, as laid down in the Journals are well known. However, one of the letters written at Fort Mandan, "1609 miles above the entrance of the Missouri," was to his mother. It tells about building their winter camp and naming it in honor of their friendly neighbors—the Mandans; it tells about the rivers and the surrounding country; and about his life and that of his men. In addition, he writes again to assure her of his safety and to express his concern for his family back home:

"... I assure you that I feel myself as perfectly safe as I should do in Albemarle, and the only difference between three and four thousand miles and 130 miles is that I cannot have the pleasure of seeing you as often as I did while at Washington.

"I must request of you before I conclude this letter, to send John Marks to the college at Williamsburg as soon as it shall be thought that his education has been sufficiently advanced to fit him for that seminary, for you may rest assured that as you regard his future prosperity you had better make a sacrifice of his property than suffer his education to be neglected or remain incomplete.

"Give my love to my brothers and sisters and all my neighbors and friends and rest assured yourself of the most devoted filial affection of Yours, Meriwether Lewis"

Young John Marks continued his education in Medicine. After he became Dr. John Hastings Marks, he returned to Georgia, where he was born, and spent an active and rewarding life. He never married.

The life of Mary Garland Marks, Meriwether's beloved little sister and pet, is briefly described in the following romantic extract from a letter written by her granddaughter, Effie Moore Calhoun, in June, 1934, tells us:

"My grandmother was married at Locust Hill and went directly to her plantation in Georgia, which she inherited from her father, and be-
gan housekeeping in the house in which she was born. When her father died she was five years old and her father and his friend, Mr. John Moore, the Father of William Moore, betrothed the two little children, boy and girl—Mary Garland Marks and William Moore—in the old English fashion because their plantations adjoined. My grandmother said she never thought of marrying any one else, and when my grandfather was twenty-one he came to Virginia to see her and they were married the next spring. They lived happily together for sixty years. They had twelve children, raised seven sons and two daughters; and I can say with pardonable pride that in whatever community they lived, these seven sons were loved and respected by all, both rich and poor.”

**THE RETURN**

When the joyous explorers arrived in St. Louis on September 23, 1806, two years, four months and ten days after their departure, they were warmly welcomed—many had long thought them lost.

In his formal report, in the form of a letter to President Jefferson, Meriwether wrote:

“It is with pleasure that I announce to you the safe arrival of myself and my party at 12 o’clock today at this place with our papers and baggage.

“In obedience to your orders we have penetrated the Continent of North America to the Pacific Ocean and sufficiently explored the interior of the Country to affirm with confidence that we have discovered the most practicable route which does exist across the Continent, by means of the navigable branches of the Missouri and Columbia Rivers.

“...I am very anxious to learn the state of my friends in Albemarle, particularly whether my Mother is yet living.”

Meriwether’s triumphal return to the nation’s capital in early 1807 had been delayed by the honors bestowed upon him along his way east. Upon his arrival, the President honored him further by appointing him Governor of the Upper Louisiana Territory. He was further honored by the appointment as Commander in Chief of Militia, and Superintendent, ex officio, of Indian Affairs. He resigned his commission in the army. President Jefferson also appointed Frederick Bates as Secretary for Louisiana and William Clark, Agent for Indian Affairs.

Many reasons have been advanced for the delay of almost a year before Meriwether returned to St. Louis to assume his governorship. It is known, however, that during this time he served as personal reporter to President Jefferson at Aaron Burr’s treason trial; he was involved in scientific activities at the American Philosophical Society; he worked on editing his journals; and he even had romantic interests, hoping to return with a wife.

He was accompanied west in late 1808 by his brother, Reuben, who had become an Indian Agent for the Mandans and the Cherokees. Reuben remained in the West until 1820, when he returned to Albemarle, married his cousin, Mildred Dabney in 1822, and lived at Valley Point until his death in 1844. Reuben and Mildred had no children.

It is interesting that upon assuming his governorship, one of Meriwether’s first actions was confirming the appointment of Daniel Boone as Justice of the Peace of Femme Osage.

Thomas Jefferson, in 1814, reflected on this period of Meriwether’s life:

“A considerable time intervened before the Governor’s arrival at St. Louis. He found the Territory distracted by feuds and contentions among the officers of the Government, and the people themselves divided by these into factions and
parties. He determined, at once, to take no side with either but to use every endeavor to conciliate and harmonize them. The even-handed justice he administered to all soon established a respect for his person and authority and perseverance, and time wore down animosities and reunited the citizens again into one family."

While many of the problems were brought under control by his administration, Meriwether continued to have serious differences in almost all things with the Secretary of Louisiana, particularly in how to handle the Indian situation.

While in St. Louis he continued his deep interest in the Masonic Order. He established and served as Master of the first Masonic Lodge in the West.

A MYSTERIOUS DEATH

By the Fall of 1809, finally acknowledging that the difficulties, at such a great distance from the seat of government, made it almost impossible to obtain the support he needed to bring stability to the Louisiana Territory, Meriwether planned a business trip to Washington. He decided to travel over the treacherous Natchez Trail. While stopping overnight at an isolated and dismal inn along the way, under very mysterious circumstances, he met his death on October 11, 1809, in his thirty-sixth year. He is buried in a lonely spot on the Natchez Trail in what is now Lewis County, Tennessee. The Legislature of Tennessee erected a monument over his grave in 1848.

His heart-broken mother and his family believed he was murdered. Unfortunately there was no government inquiry of any kind into his death. Circumstances and events, some at the time of his death and others uncovered over the years, seem (at least to me) to substantiate that it was murder; however, the issue has never been irrevocably resolved.

Meriwether's mother continued to live at Locust Hill, surrounded by her family. On February 4, 1819, her granddaughter, Ann Eliza Anderson (one of Jane's daughters) married a cousin, Thomas Fielding Lewis, who lived at Rose Hill, the adjoining property to Locust Hill. The couple showed their devotion to Grandmother Marks, by naming one of their sons, John Marks Lewis, in honor of her second husband. He was eleven years old when his great-grandmother, Lucy Meriwether (Lewis) Marks, died on September 8, 1837, in her eighty-sixth year. She is buried in the family cemetery at Locust Hill.

In 1851, John Marks Lewis (1826-1898) married Margaret Elizabeth Reid Tapp (1831-1903). They established their home at Clay Hill, several miles from Locust Hill. They were the parents of eight children, of whom Howell Carr Lewis, my husband's father, was the youngest. Clay Hill is still in the family, now owned by my husband's sister Elizabeth and her husband deKoven Bowen. It is considered the center of the Lewis family.

The courageous and patriotic spirit of Meriwether Lewis continues to live among the descendants of "Aunt Marks," the woman to whom he showed such deep concern and filial devotion. Even when camped over two thousand miles away, among a strange people and about to lead an army corps on an adventure into a strange wilderness never before entered by any white men, the young officer's thoughts turned to his mother's concerns. He wrote a letter to comfort her anxieties. Within his short life, he proved to be a devoted son, both to his mother and to his country.

REFERENCES

1 In this connection, see the interesting article, written by E. G. Chuinard in the February, 1989, issue of WPO, titled "The Masonic Apron of Meriwether Lewis," pp. 16-17.
3 See "The Lost is Found! A Postscript to Only One Man Died," by E. G. Chuinard, WPO, August 1983. pp. 4-5. Included are pictures of two 1807 admission tickets or receipts for the courses of lectures at the University of Pennsylvania on Materia Medica and Chemistry in the name of, and attended by John Marks.
A POSTSCRIPT TO
IN SEARCH OF YORK
BY MARY NEWTON LEWIS

In my article “Meriwether Lewis, Devoted Son” in this issue of WPO (see pages 14-20) I introduced Clay Hill, the center of the Lewis family. It is at that setting that a mysterious story about a certain “Uncle York” takes place. Could this have been the body servant of William Clark who was a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition?

Howell Carr Lewis, my husband’s father, during some of his wonderful trips into the nostalgia of the old days, often told us the following story. (Except for a few bracketed comments of my own, it’s told here as I remember hearing it):

As a very young child, I was aware of the activities of my large and busy family on the farm. I was also aware that living among our colored friends near Clay Hill was a man called “Uncle York,” who was very black and very, very old. I was aware too that Uncle York “worked” with my Mother in the gardens; and I was aware of having heard her say that York was a very proud old man and would not accept help unless he could “work” for it. (When John Marks Lewis (Howell’s father) freed his “folks” he built each family a cabin and gave them five acres of land from Clay Hill.)

I can remember only one occasion when I, myself, had any personal contact with York: “Son,” said Mother, “Uncle York has gone to sleep in the sun” will you please go out and awaken him and tell him to move under the shade?”

I remember touching Uncle York on the shoulder and saying “Wake up, Uncle York.” The old man opened his eyes, and reaching for my hand, replied: “Lors, little Masser, ole York ain’t sleeping, he’s jus soliloquizing.”

Because York looked asleep to me and I did not know that word, I asked my mother about it. And so the incident is well fixed in my mind. (The word “soliloquizing” became very much a part of Howell’s vocabulary, and whenever he used it, there was a remembering twinkle in his eye.)

I was also aware that Uncle York died soon after this and is buried in the colored cemetery near the garden at Clay Hill. [There are no identified markers left there.]

After I read the review of In Search of York by Irving W. Anderson in the November 1985 issue of WPO, and later bought the book, so carefully researched and written by Robert B. Betts, I often wondered how we could present this story and to whom. There is no documentation, only the memory of a very young child.

In trying to reconcile the dates to give credit to this story, my research has not established the date of York’s birth. Howell was born in October, 1873, so his earliest memories could be at 4 or 5 years, i.e., 1877 or 1878. William Clark was born on August 1, 1770, and in his reminiscences of York is quoted as saying “his little negro boy, York.” This “little” must have meant little in age as well as size. Even as a young adult, York was described as “powerful,” “a giant,” etc. He could well have lived into his late nineties.

It is certainly possible that if and when York returned to Virginia, he would seek out the Lewis family. My family has always accepted this story of York’s final days. It’s nice to think of his having spent them with friends, both black and white, people who cared about him.
A RETURN VISIT TO HISTORIC VIRGINIA

BY ELDON G. CHUINARD, M.D.

FINCASTLE AND THE SANTILLANE CHAPTER

On September 9, 1989, my plane put down at Roanoke, Virginia, where I was met by Harry and Dottie Kessler. Mrs. Kessler is the archivist-historian of Historic Fincastle and the Botecourt Country Historical Society. It was an 18-mile drive from Roanoke to Fincastle.

First off, and probably most important, was my speaking engagement with the Santillane Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, which had been actively forming during the past year. About thirty people attended. I made an effort to tell the group of the importance of the Foundation in relating the Lewis and Clark story, and of the Santillane Chapter in bringing Virginia history into its proper place in that story.

Jim Connell, a Lewis and Clark buff with widespread interest in history, was president of the chapter. He volunteered to spend time my last day in Fincastle showing me local historical sites and then driving me to Charlottesville.

Outside of Fincastle, we stopped at Santillane, the home of William Clark's in-laws, where Clark had spent time going over the Expedition journals with Nicholas Biddle, helping prepare them for publication. The house still has the furniture of by-gone days. We stopped at several other historic places, the most important of which was the home of William Clark's older brother, George Rogers Clark, the man whom Jefferson first tried to interest in the western exploration.

CHARLOTTESVILLE AND ENVIRONS

Jim Connell had phoned ahead for directions to Clay Hill, the home of Betty and John deKoven "Deke" Bowen. Betty is a descendant of Meriwether Lewis's sister, Jane. We followed along a road that gently sloped and curved as it led up to an impressive white colonial home. We were pleasantly greeted by Betty. Although we had talked on the phone several times, this was our first meeting. She instantly made me feel at home. Jim and I said good-bye to each other, and he was on his way back to Fincastle.

After several years I had again come to Charlottesville. It indeed seemed like a homecoming to me. It had been several years since my wife Fritzi and I had visited such places as Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson. On those occasions we had sa
Dr. Chuinard at 1947 sign erected by the Virginia Conservation Commission near Locust Hill.

The aura of this and other historic shrines. Charlottesville has so many places of interest for the person who wants to see the birth sites of our national heroes, to contemplate what they gave to the building of our nation, and what they endured in the effort.

Near Charlottesville, at Ivy, is Locust Hill, the birthplace of Meriwether Lewis, one of our nation's great builders. When I last visited Locust Hill, the farmer resident of the home which was sitting on the site of the house in which Lewis was born, was trying to hold this historic land from condominium development. Since then, however, the farmer's house has been replaced by a nice, modern building, with homes all around it. The lost appearance of a rural birthplace is simply identified by the faded, long-standing marker of the Daughters of the American Revolution, which denotes that this is the birthplace of Meriwether Lewis.

Fritzi and I had walked across a pasture accompanied by the farmer who then owned Locust Hill, to see the grave of Lucy Marks. We came to a wire fence and gazed through a maze of brambles. We could not see the grave clearly. I thought it a shame to see the grave of the mother of Meriwether Lewis so disregarded.

Shortly after my arrival at Clay Hill, Betty showed me to the room that was to be my home for four pleasant days. Later, "Deke" appeared and greeted me as warmly as had his wife. The three of us had dinner together, during which I was told something of the family history. Two married sons and a daughter live nearby on the extent of the 1200 acres that comprise Clay Hill. Later, when I was drifting off to sleep I thought of how my interest in Meriwether Lewis had brought me to this delightful home.

Betty had arranged for a luncheon the next afternoon to which she had invited about thirty Lewis descendants from such places as Richmond, Arlington, and Charlottesville. I told the group about the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and that I hoped they would join us in our efforts to have the Trail extend "from sea to shining sea."

I also told them that when researching my book Only One Man Died, I had interviewed the mayor of Richmond, whose name is Meriwether Lewis Anderson. He told me of a collection of mementoes of Meriwether Lewis of which his children seemed to have no interest. Not wanting these items dispersed and neglected, he gave everything to the Missouri Historical Society.

Several interesting questions and thoughts were expressed by the members of the group that afternoon. Mrs. Elizabeth Langhorne, who is writing a book on "Meriwether Lewis and His Friend Thomas Jefferson," told her assembled kinsmen of having attended the Foundation's annual meeting in Bozeman, Montana, last August. She was impressed with the number and enthusiasm of the attendees.

A paper was passed around for the signatures of those interested in forming a Charlottesville chapter. Everyone signed. Mrs. Howell
Lewis Bowen, a daughter of Betty and Deke, was elected president.

For my sake, Betty had planned for the group to visit the family graveyard, where Meriwether's mother is buried, along with many other members of the family. We entered the cemetery through an iron gate, and Betty led us to the grave of Lucy Marks. I approached the grave with respect and reverence, thinking of how Meriwether had made the trip to Georgia to bring his widowed mother back to Locust Hill, where she resided the rest of her life.

In the years since Fritzi and I visited the cemetery there has been a great improvement because of the devoted efforts of Betty. The brambles have been cleared away, thus showing the stone fence surrounding the small graveyard of the Lewis family, and the inscription of the concrete slab which covers the grave of Lucy Marks.

The following day Betty and I returned to the cemetery for more contemplation. This time I brought flowers to the grave of Mrs. Marks, with a card inscribed on behalf of the Foundation to the respectful memory of the mother of Meriwether Lewis.

I asked how the cemetery was maintained, and Betty told me that it was by contributions, with the hope there would continue to be enough for the future maintenance. Betty also told me that a permanent easement will be sought for visitors to reach the cemetery.

During my days at Clay Hill, I was shown several things of interest. We went to Monticello, where a visitor center has been built since I was last there. Monticello has an enduring, eternal quality about it. One feels that Mr. Jefferson still lives there. Nearby is Jefferson's grave with the famous tombstone inscription directed by his will: "Author of the Declaration of Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia."

I visited with the lady who guided me on a tour of the mansion, and told her about the Foundation, its purpose, its members, and its growth. The next day I received a phone call from the head guide at Monticello, who assured me of their interest in the Foundation. It appears there is potential for developing the mutual interests between the Foundation and the stewardship of Monticello in the story of Jefferson and the Corps of Discovery.

I spent some hours one afternoon with Deke as he was cleaning around the slaves' graveyard, and he told me a story about Captain Clark's servant, York, who Deke said returned east to his old masters and friends, and now lies beneath one of the nameless stones. (See related story on page 21.)

The days at Clay Hill went by quickly—all too soon it was time for me to leave. On the plane I dozed off with the thought of the gracious hospitality of Betty and Deke, who had taken in a stranger whose only claim to their hospitality was an intense interest in the story of Betty's ancestral uncle, Meriwether Lewis.
ANOTHER MERIWETHER LEWIS MASONIC APRON

In the February, 1989, issue of WPO, Dr. E.G. Chuinard presented an article titled "The Masonic Apron of Meriwether Lewis." The article was about Lewis's Masonic apron that is on display in the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Montana, Helena. Recently Dr. Chuinard sent the picture of the Royal Arch Superexcellent apron shown here. (See Mary Newton Lewis's Article "Meriwether Lewis, Devoted Son" on pages 14-20 of this issue of WPO.)

Chuinard explains that the Royal Arch Superexcellent Mason is differentiated from the Scottish Rite; however, "a Mason may go either Rite or both to the # 32nd degree." He points out further that the significant difference between this apron, owned by members of the Lewis family in Virginia, and the one in the Grand Lodge in Helena is that the Helena apron has the initials of Meriwether Lewis stitched on it.

KATY TRAIL GETS GREEN LIGHT AND SURPRISE FUNDING

Two big news items came out of St. Louis early this spring: A U.S. Supreme Court decision removed a potential legal wall from the Development of the KATY Trail, and a generous benefactor pledged $2 million for the trail's development.

On February 23, the Supreme Court rejected the claim from Vermont landowners that the "Rails-to-Trails" Act was unconstitutional taking of their land. The Court decision has resolved the same legal question raised by the landowners along the KATY Trail.

On the heels of the Court decision (March 15), it was learned that stockbroker Edward D. (Ted) Jones, Jr. has pledged $2 million to pay for the development of the KATY Trail, which the State plans to turn into a hiking-biking trail. This Missouri River Trail is an important segment of the national Lewis and Clark Trail, and will soon receive certification from the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, National Park Service, to officially designate 160 miles of the abandoned railroad as part of the Lewis and Clark Trail.

As WPO went to press, we learned that Missouri Governor John D. Ashcroft, members of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, and Darwin Hindman of the KATY-Missouri River Trail Commission along with many enthusiasts and supporters of the hiking-biking trail including a delegation to the Metro St. Louis Chapter of the Foundation planned to gather at Rocheport on April 28, 1990, to officially open the trail.

L & C JOURNEY AVAILABLE AS SLIDE PRESENTATION

The Headwaters Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation has available for sale two versions of the audio/visual presentation The Story of the Lewis and Clark Journey, which was produced last year by the Foundation in conjunction with Washington State Parks.

The Chapter has already distributed 158 video versions of the presentation at $11 each, which includes postage. Now available is the same presentation prepared as a 111-slide program with an audio cassette for $65, which includes postage. There is an additional charge of $5 for an audio cassette with a "built in beeper."

Send orders to: Headwaters Chapter, Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc., Box 577, Bozeman, MT 59715.
FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF LEWIS AND CLARK

EDITOR’S NOTE: In the August 1989 issue of WPO we ran an article titled “Girl Scouts Taste Life on the Lewis and Clark Trail.” This outing was sponsored by the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and the Sakakawea Girl Scout Council of North Dakota. In the December 1989 issue of Pine To Prairie Post, the newsletter of the North Dakota Council, there appeared an article by Virginia “Ginny” Goertel of Fargo. Ginny was one of ten Girl Scouts who were accompanied by five guides, and two leaders participating in the two-week outing. (Foundation director, Patti Thomsen of Brookfield, Wisconsin, was one of the two leaders.) The illustrated article “Girl Scouts Re-discover Prairie Days and Yesterdays” is written in the style of the Lewis and Clark Journals, i.e., daily entries. Ginny describes the event as “…one of the most memorable experiences of our lives.” In a letter to Patti Thomsen, which accompanied a copy of the article, Ginny wrote; “I’m also a member of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation! I just love the information in We Proceeded On’ magazine.” Patti also received the following account of the “Prairie Days and Yesterdays” event from Nicole Stevenson, one of the Girl Scouts from Regina, Saskatchewan. Since Nicole’s story adds information to the article we ran earlier in WPO, we’ve decided to share her account of the excursion with the readers of WPO.

BY NICOLE STEVENSON

Our camp called “Prairie Days and Yesterdays” began June 21, 1989. Our leaders were Sandi Talkington and Patti Thomsen. Sandi is from the Sakakawea Girl Scout Council and Patti is a director of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. We also had two assistant leaders, Heather Stevenson and Tracy Thomson, both from Canada.

This trip helped me understand what Lewis, Clark, and Sakakawea went through, even though we weren’t on the Trail all that long. As part of the trip we let our thoughts drift back to the explorers and the difficulties they must have had. Like certain members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, we were given notebooks and pens to keep daily journals of our adventures.

Our expedition started at Camp Sakakawea, beside Lake Sakakawea. Here we set up our tents for the next two days. At Camp Sakakawea we learned about native American spirits from Tim McLaughlin, edible plants such as prairie turnips from Patti, and watched two films, one about Indian pottery and the other about quillwork.

While we were at Camp Sakakawea, we spent a lot of time at Knife River Indian Village, a National Historic Site near Hazen, North Dakota. Here we completed requirements for our Native Lore Badge. This badge included making moccasins, putting up a tepee, native American dancing and playing native games. While in the village we were taken on archaeological tours of the area and learned about earth-lodges. We also enjoyed a meal of venison stew, fry bread and a chance to try dried buffalo. During the time we were at Camp Sakakawea we took showers at a state park, which was an extravagance in terms of “following Lewis and Clark.”

The next place we were off to was the Missouri River. We began our 26-mile canoeing expedition just down from Garrison Dam. One of the difficulties we didn’t have to deal with, unlike Lewis and Clark, was the current. We went downstream all the way, which was much easier. Patti explained that the boats used by the Lewis and Clark Expedition often had to be pulled with tow lines.

We stopped for lunch and enjoyed a rest before we set off again. We traveled 10 miles before we were at our campsites, where we set up our tents and had supper. Patti brought out her Atlas of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and showed us maps, and the locations of Lewis and Clark events, which she told us about. She also showed us different kinds of native American jewelry.

The next day we packed, ate, and were off again. The wind picked up and it was against us. When we got to the lunch stop everyone was tired. We ate, rested, and left. After traveling 16 miles we were finally at our destination. We were early so we unloaded the canoes and went for a swim.

Our destination was the replica of Lewis and Clark’s Fort Mandan near Washburn. Here we set up our tents and took it easy. We were interviewed by the Bismarck Tribune, and spent some time looking around Fort Mandan.

The next day Patti was in her leather dress. We were visited by Daises and Brownies (junior Girl Scouts). Patti told the group about Lewis and Clark and their Expedition. From Fort Mandan we headed to Carson to join a wagon train for two days. I really enjoyed the wagon train, except for the fact that the bugle sounded at 4:30 a.m. From the wagon train we went back to Bismarck and participated in the 4th of July and North Dakota Centennial activities.
JOHN FORD CLYMER  
1907-1989

The historical paintings of John Clymer, complemented by the research of Doris Clymer, represent one of the most significant artistic achievements of the present generation of American Art.

Those were the words of Bill Sherman of Portland, Oregon in nominating the Clymers for the Foundation's Award of Meritorious Achievement in 1980. Of special interest to the Foundation, and to all Lewis and Clark enthusiasts, are the nine oil paintings by John Clymer which faithfully depict incidents of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

On November 2, 1989, the West lost one of its best supporters and artist friends with the death of John Ford Clymer. He was born in Ellensburg, Washington, January 29, 1907, the son of John P. and Elmina Ford Clymer. While still in high school he sold his first commercial art work to the Colt Firearms Company, thus launching an art career that lasted for 64 years.

In 1925, he moved to Vancouver British Columbia to attend art school and to find work as an artist. During his eleven years in Canada he illustrated for the leading Canadian magazines and painted and exhibited in Canadian Art shows. He was made a member of the Ontario Society of Artists and an associate member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Art.

In 1932, he married Doris Schnebel of Ellensburg. Washington. John had grown up with Doris and would see her on his visits to Ellensburg. Thus began a partnership that lasted for 57 years.

In 1936, the Clymers moved back to the United States. John began illustrating and doing commercial work for American magazines and publications. During World War II John served in the U.S. Marine Corps and worked on the staff of Leatherneck magazine and the Marine Corps Gazette. An important part of John's commercial work after the war was the 80 covers of the American scene which he painted for the Saturday Evening Post. The Clymers traveled extensively in search of scenic areas and ideas for human interest subjects. Doris carried paper and pencil and jotted down locations, what was growing in the areas, and any other information that would be helpful to John in planning the pictures or in giving information to the writer who wrote the copy about the cover illustration.

In 1964, John Clymer decided to spend his entire time in painting his favorite subjects of Western history and North American wildlife. The same year, he had his first one-man show at the Grand Central Art Galleries in New York City. The history paintings were a success and from then on in constant demand.

In the course of their travels John and Doris followed the Oregon Trail, the Lewis and Clark Trail, the route of the Nez Perce journey towards Canada, the Bozeman Trail, the Cattle Trails. They visited the Nez Perce Country and the Rendezvous sites of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade. They floated the Missouri River from Fort Benton to the Fred Robinson Bridge.

In 1970, the Clymers moved permanently to a home and studio they had built in Teton Village in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.


In addition to the Foundation's award, Clymer won many prizes and medals for his western paintings, including the prestigious Prix de West Award at the 1973 National Academy of Western Art Show at the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City.

He was elected to the New York Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame in 1982. He appeared on several national television shows including Profiles in American Art on P.B.S., the NBC Today Show and "West of the Imagination."

In 1976 the book John Clymer, an Artist's Rendezvous with the Frontier West, by Walt Reed, was published, with a second edition in 1988 by Stan Klassen.


When Doris was asked for information about John for this issue of WPO, she responded: "John loved his native northwest country and his many friends. He would have been very pleased with so much thoughtfulness on the part of everyone."

NEW L & C VIDEO BY GINGER RENNER  
THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION IN WESTERN ART

Ginger K. Renner, nationally acclaimed author, lecturer, and western art critic, has donated her time, research, and expertise in creating a captivating video titled "The Lewis and Clark Expedition in Western Art." In doing so, Renner expressed her interest and support for the national Lewis and Clark Trail Interpretive Center to be established at Great Falls, Montana. The 40-minute production is a representation of the seminar given by Renner during the C.M. Russell Art Auction in Great Falls March 22, 1990.

Those who attended the Foundation's Annual Meeting in Billings, Montana in 1987, will recall Renner's fascinating presentation of the same title.

The new video, comprised of 61 art pieces (from Catlin and Bodmer to Bierstadt and Russell), and narrated by Renner, was produced by North Country Media Group of Great Falls, recognized for its quality video productions.

Sales of the video will directly assist the establishment of the Historical Association being created to support the future interpretive center.

The video will soon be available for sale. The special pre-production price is $29.95 plus $3 p & h.

To order your "Ginger Renner Video" send check or money order; or if using MasterCard, or VISA send the card name, number, expiration date, and your signature to Portage Route Chapter, Box 2424, Great Falls, MT 59403.
COMMITTEE WORKS TO PRESERVE POMPEYS PILLAR

Proposal would place historic Lewis and Clark landmark under federal ownership.

BY JOHN WILLARD

Pompeys Pillar, for 184 years a living symbol of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, could pass from a concerned private custody to federal ownership under the U.S. Department of Interior.

John and Stella Foote of Billings, Montana, have offered the National Historic Landmark, an adjacent 375.35 acres of Yellowstone River bottomland and one mile of Yellowstone River frontage for $1 million. The Foote family has owned the site since 1955, and has developed and preserved it for public access during summer months since that time. The Landmark designation was made in 1965, and in 1985, at the Foundation’s annual meeting in St. Louis, John Foote was presented with the National Park Service’s identification logo and documents citing Pompeys Pillar as a Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail certified site.

Formed to support the site purchase by Congress through appropriation to the Interior Department is the Committee for the Preservation of Pompeys Pillar (CPPP), headed by James Van Arsdale, former mayor of Billings. A number of organizations and governmental units in the area are actively supporting CPPP, whose goals are acquisition of Pompeys Pillar for public ownership and development of a major visitor center to interpret the Lewis and Clark Expedition, a goal in which the owners concur.

Although the Footes capably operated the site for 35 years as a public convenience and attraction, a combination of liability and insurance costs caused them to opt for public ownership and operation. Their offer, of course, now is subject to concurrence by Congress through its financial committees and floor votes.

Paramount significance of the site in American exploration and settlement is unquestioned. Thousands have viewed it and read Clark’s signature and date on the sandstone. Thousands more know of it through studying the history of that epic Expedition.

Clark had marked his name before crossing the divide between the Missouri and Yellowstone River, and again when he reached the Yellowstone. Those were logical places that marked his route overland from one river to another. Just why, on his journey through the Yellowstone valley, he chose this particular rock to record his passage for posterity remains a mystery. He had left Captain Meriwether Lewis at Travellers Rest in present western Montana. Lewis was to go north to identify the northern boundary of the Louisiana Territory, and to seek a possible land connection between the Missouri and Saskatchewan River drainages. Clark was to explore the Yellowstone and determine whether connection would be practical with that drainage and the rivers to the south.

The Clark party, on July 15, 1805, entered the Yellowstone drainage near what is today Bozeman Pass and descended to the Yellowstone River near present Livingston, Montana. On July 20 the party found cottonwood trees large enough to build dug-out canoes to continue their journey down river to rendezvous with Captain Lewis and his party near the junction of the Yellowstone and Missouri rivers.

July 25, 1806, the Clark party reached Pompeys...
Pillar and Captain Clark described in his journal this historic scene. “arrived at a remarkable rock situated in an extensive bottom on the south side of the river and 250 paces from it. This rock I ascended and from its top had a most extensive view in every direction. This rock which I shall call Pompy’s Tower is 200 feet high and 400 paces in circumference and accessible on one side which is from the N. E., other parts of it being a perpendicular cliff of lightish coloured gritty rock. On the top there is tolerable soil of about 5 or 6 feet thick covered with short grass. The Indians have made 2 piles of stone on the top of this Tower. The natives have ingraved on the face of this rock the figures of animals & near which I marked my name and the day of the month and year.”

Clark named the rock after Sacagawea’s baby, Jean Baptiste, whom the captain called “Little Pomp,” an affectionate term for a child of whom he was very fond. Inadvertently, while editing the original Expedition journals, Nicholas Biddle of Philadelphia changed the name to “Pompeys Pillar”—the name generally accepted today.

For 76 years the captain’s carving remained totally exposed to weather and vandalism, but, despite frequent visitors to the rock as an observation point, remained intact. In 1882, as construction of Northern Pacific Railway reached the area, its president ordered a heavy metal screen to be bolted into the rock to protect the carving. This later was replaced with a weatherproof glass cover which now protects the only physical evidence remaining of the Expedition’s passing.

Some students of the Expedition claim evidence such as the rocks of the salt cairn on the Oregon coast and geographical landmarks described in the journals qualify for such designation, but nowhere except at Pompeys Pillar is the presence of the Expedition so clearly defined.

Speculation frequently arises as to why Clark chose this particular spot to engrave his name and date, and what tool was used to accomplish the work in such a short time. His journal for July 25, 1806, shows the party arrived at the rock at 4 p.m. In addition to completing the carving, Clark pursued and shot four bighorn sheep, two of which were not recovered; he found time to remove from the rock a three-inch petrified fish bone; he wrote in his journal; surveyed and recorded the day’s courses and distances; and made camp for the night.

There is no indication as to the motive for leaving his name. Was it simply suggested by the Indian “ingravings,” and did he hope the Absaroka, or Crows, would see his signature and date and be advised of a stranger’s presence—like a canine marking its territory? At the Marias River the previous year Lewis and Clark had branded several trees with Lewis’s branding iron because they thought the markings would be “medicine” to any Indian who saw them and this medicine would keep the natives from bothering the boat cached at that place. Or was the marking on Pompeys Pillar done to advise the intruding English fur companies that Clark had been there? We may never know.

Equally mysterious is Clark’s choice of an engraving tool. It could well have been his large, heavy knife (as indicated in a pen and ink sketch by the late J.K. Ralston), the blade of his ax, or possibly the point of his espontoon. Again, the journal is not revealing.

Pompeys Pillar is highly visible and easily accessible, located only a short distance from an Interstate 94 interchange at a town of the same name, 30 miles east of Billings.

Members of the Foundation should feel free to contact their Congressman or U.S. Senator to explain the desirability of permanent public ownership of Pompeys Pillar as a national historic treasure. For further information about the preservation project, members should contact the Billings Chamber of Commerce, 815 South 27th, Billings, MT 59101, or call (406) 245-4111.

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MAY 1990

WE PROCEEDED ON 29---
RONDON ACCEPTS CHAIR AT UNIVERSITY OF TULSA

Dr. James P. Ronda, professor of History at Youngstown University, Youngstown, Ohio, has accepted the Barnard Chair in Western American History at the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma.

Ronda, the author of Lewis and Clark Among the Indians, is a former Foundation director, member of the WPO editorial board, research consultant and advisor for the planning of the national Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center at Great Falls, and is currently working on a biography of William Clark. His book Astoria and Empire is at the printers and will be out from the University of Nebraska Press in late summer or early fall.

The new position provides substantial funds and a light teaching load which will allow Ronda to continue his research interests.

The Ronda family will be moving to Tulsa in late July. Unfortunately they will be unable to attend the Foundation's annual meeting in Idaho.

SPONSORS SOUGHT FOR PLAQUES HONORING EXPEDITION MEMBERS

Bronze name plaques for each member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition are going to be embedded in the walkway around the base of the statue "Explorers at the Portage" which was created by Bob Scriver of Browning, Montana and dedicated July 4, 1989. The heroic size statue located at Overlook Park, Great Falls, Montana, depicts Lewis, Clark, York, and Seaman looking across the Missouri River toward the mouth of the Sun River. At the time of construction niches were made in the concrete walkway to receive the 4 X 12" plaques.

The Portage Route Chapter is now soliciting a sponsor for each name plaque. The wording on the plaques will include the Expedition member’s name, rank, and specialty, as well as the name of the sponsor. The cost to sponsor a plaque is $500. The Chapter has IRS non-profit status, allowing a tax deduction according to IRS rules.

The money raised from this project will be used by the Chapter to complete the site work at the statue and other Chapter projects. The plan is for the plaques to be sold early enough so that they can be placed by their sponsors during the Lewis and Clark Festival June 29, 1990.

If you are interested in sponsoring a plaque, write:

Expedition Name Plaques
Phil Scriver, Chairman
1104 Ave. C. NW
Great Falls, MT 59404

LETTER

MORE ABOUT PATRICK GASS

The note about Patrick Gass and family in the 1860 Virginia Census furnished by Don Nell (WPO Feb. 1990) was of special interest to me and I would like to add something to the information.

Thanks to the diligent research of my cousin Boyd E. Smith1 (now deceased) and his sister, Julia Ann Wardle, (great-great-grandchildren of Patrick) our several branches of Gass descendants have copies of our genealogy going back to and including Patrick’s grandparents. Among the many sources they consulted was the 1860 Census.

Those mentioned in the household at the time of the 1860 Census, District 2, Brooks County, Virginia were 89-year-old Patrick Gass (my great grandfather), my grandmother, Annie Jane Gass who was 18, her infant son, James Winfield Gass, and Patrick’s 19-year-old son, James Waugh Gass.

Of the other Gass children, Elizabeth died in infancy. According to Patrick’s granddaughter, Maymie Painter,2 Benjamin F., who was unmarried, disappeared and was presumed dead in 1855, at age 30, and William, also single, was drowned in 1865. In 1860 Sarah Ann Gass, 22, was married to Joseph Bowman. Rachel Maria Gass was 12 at the time and was probably living with neighbors when the Census was taken. The younger girls earned their “board and keep” by serving in the homes of more well-to-do neighbors.3

As written by my parents, James S. and Kathryn Smith, in their article about Patrick in Montana magazine (Summer 1955), Patrick’s young wife died of measles in 1849, after nursing the children through the disease. She left Rachel, less than a year old; James Waugh, 6; Annie, 9; Sarah, 11; William; 14; and Benjamin, 16, to be cared for by their seventy-five-year-old father. Small wonder that Patrick, who was living on a meager pension, found it difficult to feed and clothe his brood. However, he managed to keep the family together until the girls married and the boys were able to care for themselves.

When the 1860 Census was being taken, Patrick was living with his grandmother. Her husband, James S. Smith, was away serving in the Union Army. The last sentence of the Note in the WPO should read, "—He walked to Wellsburg once a day..." The distance between Annie’s home and Wellsburg was 4 to 5 miles.

Jeanette D. Taranik
La Habra Heights, CA

4 The WPO article read "He walked to Wellsburg once a...[?]"
WEIPPE PRAIRIE (continued from page 3)

ing with the first Nez Perce elder encountered after meeting the three children. We hope this substitution of art is acceptable to members who may have already ordered a T-shirt, and we will refund your money if it is not.

One other footnote: We realize that the Tuesday field trip to the Weippe Prairie and western end of the Lolo Trail is unusually long. This reflects the nature of Idaho with our great distances and a few choices of routes in reaching points of interest.

We know it is going to be difficult, but we will make it as comfortable as possible. For those who prefer field visits instead of indoor lectures, we are sure it will be a most rewarding day. Let’s let some of the spirit of the original Expedition live on as we explore together the more remote sections of the Trail that remain to be seen during an annual meeting.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE (continued from page 2)

a quality video and will be available this fall. (See related story on page 27.) It is an example of what is available through these affiliated groups.

This is the year of our majority . . . the Foundation is 21 years old. I want to salute the dedicated members of our Foundation, past and present, who have brought us to where we are today. We owe a debt to charter members like Elfre da Woodside of Dillon, Montana, and all the others. Their collective efforts provide the “shoulders” upon which we survey the Lewis and Clark world today. The best way we can honor them is to carry forth their vision and make the Foundation more responsive to our members’ needs as each year passes. Any dynamic organization is always at a crossroads and we are no exception. What direction do we want to take? Do we want to be a scholarly society? Politically active? A fund raising organization geared to financially support all the Lewis and Clark projects under way? Do we want to be active or passive? Do we want an executive secretary and a permanent headquarters? These are questions the board and various committees are “raspin’” with. Your input as a member is always welcome.

Now think Idaho . . . Whether you eat their potatoes or not, the Foundation’s 1990 annual meeting is going to be an experience. What an opportunity to immerse yourself in an Indian culture that perhaps provided the assistance necessary to the Expedition for them to make it to the Pacific Ocean. Coupled with the Nez Perce involvement will be a chance to see some of the most breathtaking country still remaining in the lower forty-eight states. Much of this “scenery” is as it was when the Expedition first encountered it. This is truly an Annual Meeting that will allow you to come to grips with the Lewis and Clark Expedition in a way that will put you back in time. See you in Lewiston!

ROBERT K. DOERK, JR.
President

REMEMBER, REGISTRATION IS LIMITED TO ONLY 350 PEOPLE.

LEWISTON, IDAHO, JULY 29-AUGUST 2, 1990

FOR MORE INFORMATION, WRITE TO:
JUDY SPACE, SEC./TREASURER, 140 112TH ST., OROFINO, ID 83544

--- MAY 1990 ---

WE PROCEEDED ON 31 ---
MEETING THE NEZ PERCE

"...those people treated us well gave us to eate roots dried roots made in bread, roots boiled, one sammon, Berries of red haws some dried...those roots are like onions, sweet when Dried, and tolerably good in bread, I eate much & am sick in the evening, those people have an emence quantities of Roots which is their Principal food..."

—Capt. Clark, Sept. 20, 1805