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, cultural, 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 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.

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: $20.00 (3 years: $55.00)
Sustaining: $60.00
Contributing: $150.00

*For foreign memberships add: $5/year in Canada; $10/year in Europe; and $15/year in Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

Harry Hubbard, President

We Proceeded On

We Proceeded On is the official publication of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. The publication's name is derived from the phrase which appears repeatedly in the collective journals of the famous expedition.

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— AUGUST 1994

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

by Stuart E. Knapp

As I write this final President’s Message I am in the middle of teaching my sixth consecutive Elderhostel on “The Natural History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.” The class has room for 40 students but somehow two additional souls have persuaded the Elderhostel staff to let them in, and I found a third individual this morning sitting on a chair just outside the room, listening in on the lecture. Over and over I have asked myself the question “just what is it about this tiny piece of American history that causes all the interest?” Why do people continue to study the Lewis and Clark Expedition in such detail? What is the attraction to what some have called “The Great American Epic?” What could be so powerful about a story to cause the formation of an organization like the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation? I think part of the answer lies in our fascination with courage and heroism. Certainly Thomas Jefferson had a lot of courage to launch such an expedition and so did the members of the Corps of Discovery. We all seem

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From the Editor's Desk...

Big doings are coming up at the annual meeting in Missoula. I'm writing this column in mid June, and by the time many of you receive the magazine, the board of directors will have met and interviewed candidates for the position of executive director of the foundation.

Resumes have been coming in from all over the country, so there is a lot of interest in this position.

I had a call from a member in New York wanting to know if the foundation would accept applications from women and, of course, they would. The concern of the board is to get the best person possible, male or female, for this position.

The importance of having someone to guide the foundation during the years leading up to the bicentennial celebration of the epic journey of Lewis and Clark cannot be emphasized too much. We are growing, if not by leaps and bounds, certainly person by person.

The two year old Oregon chapter is establishing a solid foundation on the West Coast.

I had a telephone conversation this morning with Jane Henley in Charlottesville, Virginia. Jane is the chair of the 1995 annual meeting. She tells me that not only are they working hard to put together a top-notch annual meeting, but they have also started a new chapter in the Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina area. They already have about 50 dues-paying members.

The funding for the executive director position is coming from the National Park Service. At this writing, the final agreement had not yet been signed, but it is expected it will be signed well before the annual meeting.

The new executive director will have his or her hands full dealing with the many governmental and private agencies along the trail as the Foundation seeks to enhance as well as protect the trail. Historic preservation and enhancement are not always everyone's cup of tea.

A new day is dawning for the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. It is coming of age.

Discovery Corps Participates in General's Retirement Ceremony

On 14 February, 1994, the 2nd Maryland Regiment, augmented by seven members of Discovery Corps, performed a 17 gun salute for General Lee Butler, retiring Commander in Chief, United States Strategic Command. The salute took place at Offutt Air Force Base, Bellevue, Nebraska. Following a chapel service, Gen. Butler, accompanied by General Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, proceeded in a motorcade at slow speed around the historic Fort Crooke parade grounds. Twelve members of the 2nd Maryland Regiment, commanded by Mr. Chuck Emig, augmented by seven members of (Continued on page 31)

ON THE COVER—Monticello, home of Thomas Jefferson, is one of the special sites planned for the 27th Annual Meeting in Charlottesville, Virginia. In 1995 see how "It All Began with Jefferson..." in the Virginia of Jefferson, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

Photo by Bob Gatten

AUGUST 1994

WE PROCEEDED ON 3
The Clothing of the Lewis & Clark Expedition

by Robert J. Moore, Jr.

Editor’s Note: The following is from a presentation given by Bob Moore, historian at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis. He made the presentation at the 25th annual meeting of the foundation in Collinsville, Illinois. The presentation has been modified.

What did the men who went west with Lewis and Clark wear? This seems like a simple question, but in looking at the various works of art created over the years to illustrate the epic journey, a wide variety of clothing is depicted, reflecting the confusion this subject has continued to cause among artists and historians. Most illustrations portray the men dressed in the frontiersman style of buckskin hunting frock and trousers. Some artists, like Frederic Remington, depict the co-captains in full Revolutionary-era military uniforms, even on the West Coast!

The contrasts are enormous, and answers are few. Just as we would not normally, in diaries of today, write in detail about what color shirt we put on in the morning or whether our pants have cuffs, the diarists of the Lewis and Clark Expedition did not often remark on their clothing. The journals kept by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark in conjunction with other expedition documents, however, provide tantalizing clues regarding what they wore. Perhaps in the future, documents will be unearthed which will provide a more complete picture and more specifics on the expedition's clothing. Until then, educated guesses based on the words of the expedition members are our only clues regarding the subject.

Seventeen of the men recruited for the Lewis and Clark Expedition were serving with the U.S. Army in 1803. These men almost assuredly arrived at Camp DuBois, Illinois, in the uniforms of their respective units. The military provided them with a regular “clothing allowance” at the beginning of the expedition. From the outset, Lewis knew that the clothing issued to the men by the military would not be sufficient for the duration of the expedition. The men would have to provide for themselves, eventually shedding European-style garments as they wore out, and fashioning clothing of animal skins and furs to replace them.

The U.S. Army uniform of 1803, brought to the expedition by the 17 soldiers, was described as

...a dark blue coat, reaching to the knee, Revolutionary cut, with scarlet lapels, cuffs and standing collar, single-breasted white vests, having for the infantry white linings, white buttons and white skirt facings, and for the artillery scarlet linings, scarlet facings and yellow buttons. The enlisted men wore round hats, with brim three inches wide, and with a strip of bear skin, seven inches wide and seven inches high, across the crown; black cockade, eagle and white plume. Their pantaloons were of dark blue in winter and white in summer, and they wore black half gaiters, seven inches long, and white cross-belts. The officers of infantry and artillery wore chapeaux bras with cockade, eagle and white plume, white breeches and boots. Artillery officers had gold epaulets, one or two, according to rank; yellow buttons and hat trimmings, and gold sword mountings. Infantry officers had, in like manner, silver epaulets, white hat trimmings, and steel sword mountings. Each wore a white belt, three inches wide, across the shoulder, with an oval breastplate, three inches by two and a half, ornamented with an eagle, and of gold or silver, to correspond with the buttons.

The uniforms worn by the men of the expedition have been the subject of a great deal of speculation, especially since an official change
was made in the uniform coat in 1804. According to excellent research by Detmar H. Finke and H. Charles McBarron, a proposal for these new coats was not finalized until November 14, 1803, and the go-ahead to make the coats not issued until early 1804.\(^5\) In order for the soldiers of the expedition to wear the 1804 pattern coats, Captain Lewis, after he was notified of the official change, would have had to order them and had them shipped to St. Louis in early 1804. It seems nearly impossible that the new 1804 pattern coats could have been sewn and shipped to St. Louis between February and May, 1804, when the journey began.

Pre-1804 uniform coats were of a “plain pattern worn from 1799 through 1803. They had neither edging nor binding, nor buttonholes, turned skirts, or sham pockets,”\(^6\) and it cost 80 cents to have these coats sewn together. The uniform coat worn by the members of the Corps of Discovery, then, was cheaply made, and varied little, other than its standing collar, from those worn by the previous generation in the Revolutionary War.

Under their military coats, the soldiers wore what people of their day called “small clothes.” These included flannel shirts, long garments which reached to the knees and were tucked under the body inside the overalls “diaper style” in an era before “underwear.” Also in the category of small clothes were the overalls, military-style pants which began at the waist, fit the leg tightly and ended in a buttoned cover for the shoes, similar to spats. Knee-high stockings were worn under the overalls. Single-breasted vests, cut straight across the bottom and called “waistcoats,” were worn under the military coat. Around the throat was worn a black “stock” made of cloth or leather, the “necktie” of the 18th and early 19th centuries.

The uniform was accented by a peculiar piece of headgear, a “top hat” 5\(\frac{5}{16}\)” high, with a strip of beasrskin arched over the top of the crown, and a brim 2” wide. Woodcuts used to illustrate the original publication of the Patrick Gass journal in 1810 show the men wearing just such hats, with the beasrskin strip removed.

How much of this clothing was retained during the expedition depended on the individual
soldier. It seems likely that smallclothes were worn until they were useless. Uniform coats were probably kept packed away with the baggage, and brought out on special occasions. In lieu of a uniform coat, the men wore hunting shirts or frocks, linen garments which, more than leather clothing, were the mark of a frontiersman in the late 18th century, and commonly issued to soldiers for fatigue duties.

"[Good] hunters, stout, healthy, unmarried men, accustomed to the woods, and capable of bearing bodily fatigue in a pretty considerable degree..." were also recruited for the expedition, in addition to the 17 soldiers.7 These additional men arrived at Camp Dubois in civilian clothing, perhaps buckskin, but more likely the woolen and linen European-style clothing of the day, especially breeches, boots, and hunting frocks, over a linen shirt.

A hitherto unexplored aspect of the expedition's clothing involves 16 special uniform coats which Meriwether Lewis ordered in 1803. The author's conjecture is that these special uniform coats, or "coatees," were issued to the civilians who joined the Corps of Discovery. Unlike the full-length coats then still being worn by the army, coatees were a shorter, more stylish uniform coat just coming into vogue.8 Lewis's special coatees were very expensive, especially when compared to the 80 cent per item price for sewing together the army's 1796-1803 coats, or even the $1.50 per item cost of sewing the army's 1804 pattern coatees. In contrast, Lewis's coatees cost $2.50 apiece to sew together.9

The expedition was originally authorized as a party of 10 to 12 men.10 Lewis probably ordered the 16 special coatees for this small party, not realizing that the number of the Corps would swell before they set out in 1804. Lewis' coatees were made by Francis Brown, a tailor on Walnut and Eighth Streets in Philadelphia. The cost of making the coatees was broken down in this fashion:

![Sketch of Captain Lewis's special uniform coats](image-url)
Many interesting clues to the appearance of the coatees are provided by this invoice. First, the color is mentioned: drab. Drab is defined in the dictionary as: “dull gray; dull brownish or yellowish gray. Any of several fabrics of this color, especially of thick wool or cotton.” Lewis ordered a fine grade of woolen cloth, expensive at $7 per yard, which was probably stained brown with butternut dye. The coatees were military in cut but not in color or appearance. They were functional and well-made. A second interesting sidelight offered by the invoice is that they carried far fewer than the standard 40 large buttons and 8 small buttons on the uniform coat of the day. Lewis’s coats had only 18 large and 6 small buttons, which would have represented a significant reduction in the weight of each coat (the buttons were made of solid pewter), thus making the coats lighter to wear and transport. The false pockets and unnecessary buttons on the cuffs of ordinary uniform coats are probably the ones which Lewis had the tailor leave off. Unfortunately, until more documents or drawings are discovered, this is all we will know about the special coats Lewis ordered for the Corps of Discovery.

In addition to the coats, Lewis ordered 15 pairs of blue woolen overalls for the men. Perhaps Lewis ordered the special coats and overalls because he wished his men to look like a cohesive unit without actually being dressed in the uniform of the United States Army, thus not offending the representatives of any European power they might encounter on the journey. Whatever his original intention, as the number of men on the expedition grew, those already enlisted in the army continued to wear the uniform they were issued, whether 1st or 2nd Infantry or Artillery, while the new drab coatees and blue overalls were issued to the nine young men from Kentucky and other initially non-military personnel.

Another aspect of the expedition’s clothing involved the health of the men. We know that Meriwether Lewis tried scrupulously to follow the advice given him by Dr. Benjamin Rush. It is reasonable to assume that he also followed Rush’s two points regarding clothing:

“5. Flannel should be worn constantly next to the skin, especially in wet weather.”

“11. Shoes made without heels, by affording equal action to all the muscles of the legs, will enable you to march with less fatigue, than shoes made in the ordinary way.”

Lewis ordered 45 flannel shirts with linen collars and wrist bands, not enough to give every man two shirts, but enough to supply the 18 new men and issue replacements as needed. Lewis ordered 20 pairs of shoes, the common military low quarter shoe of the day. No notation survives to indicate whether the heels were removed as Dr. Rush suggested. Lewis also ordered:

- 15 3 pt. blankets
- 15 Watch Coats with Hoods & belts
- 15 Woolen Overalls
- 15 Rifle Frocks of waterproof Cloth if possible
- 30 Pairs of Socks or half Stockings
- 20 Fatigue Frocks or hunting shirts
- 30 Shirts of Strong linen
- 30 yds. Common flannel

And:

- 15 Powder Horns
- 15 Cartouch boxes
- 15 painted Knapsacks

The expedition set out primarily in European clothing. Some proof that the men wore linen and flannel rather than buckskin is offered by evidence that on several occasions early in the trip the officers and non-coms gave the men the opportunity to wash their clothes. Fatigue uniforms of small clothes and hunting frocks were probably worn most of the time as the expedition made its way up the Missouri. Full-dress uniforms of red, white and blue for the regulars and drab and blue for the new recruits would have been worn during military inspections, ceremonies with and parades for various Indian tribes, and formal occasions such as the court-martial and punishment of Privates Moses Reed and John Newman, and the August 20th burial of Sgt. Charles Floyd.
During the winter at Fort Mandan, the men of the expedition found their European-style clothing to be unsuited to the rigors of 32 degree-below-zero weather. Footwear was also inadequate, and the hats that had been issued were useless. On December 8, Sgt. John Ordway reported that “2 of our men Got their feet frost Bitten & one Got his Ear frost bitten this day”. This was no great surprise considering that the snow lay 6-18” deep and the temperature fell to 10 to 21 degrees below zero on December 8, 10 and 11.

Officers issued the cold weather clothing Lewis had procured in 1803. “Blanket cappoes provided for each man who Stood in need of them & & C.” Sentries were relieved more frequently due to the numbing cold. Captain Clark noted that “I line my Gloves and have a cap made of the Skin of the Louservia (lynx)...” It seems that the party had not yet come to understand the practicality of Indian clothing, particularly winter moccasins lined with fur. During the 1804 journey, the expedition members were amused at the dress of the Indians, noting that “Those people are all naked, Covered only with Breech Clouts Blankits or Buffalo Roabes, the flesh Side Painted of Different Colours & figures.” As the expedition continued, the men began to acquire pieces of Indian apparel such as moccasins and buffalo robes. In fact, on November 11, 1804, Sgt. Ordway recorded his first meeting with an important expedition member, who brought warm clothing to the men. “a frenchmans Squaw came to our camp who belonged to the Snake nation. She came with our interpreters wife & brought with them 4 buffalo Robes and Gave them to our officers. they Gave them out to the party. I Got one fine one myself.”

Some of the men obviously knew the rudiments of skinning and tanning hides the first year out, but it was not until the spring of 1805 that the diaries state that hides were used for making clothing. By early 1805, evidence appears that the men were beginning to adopt Indian-style dress, with Ordway commenting on April 11 that “the day [was] verry warm. Some of the men worked naked, only a breech cloth.”

The men of the expedition, having watched the women of the various Indian nations prepare hides and make clothing during 1804, began to copy the Indian styles of clothing for their westward march in 1805. Moccasins were very easy to make, once the pattern was established in the minds of the men. The same was true of leggings, wherein each leg was made from one deer or elk skin. The journals most often specified the names of Indian clothing when they described the dress the men adopted: shirts, leggings, breechcloths and moccasins. They did not talk about hunting frocks, and rarely mentioned overalls in connection with this clothing. Of course, each man’s clothing wore out at a different rate, but it is safe to assume that the men were clad wholly in leather, with the possible exception of flannel shirts, by the time they reached the West Coast. Certainly Sacagawea would have been very useful in assisting with the construction of Indian-style clothing, guiding the men in learning the patterns, cutting out the pieces and putting them together. For this reason the clothing of the expedition may have been heavily influenced by Shoshoni and Mandan styles.

By early 1805 the men were uniformly clad in moccasins. Unused to soft-soled shoes, reference after reference exists in the journals of this period regarding their feet being hurt by the sharp rocks along the banks of the river. “The banks are so slippery in some places, and the mud is so adhesive, that they are unable to wear their mockcasins; one-fourth of the time they are obliged to be up to their armpits in the cold water, and sometimes they walk for several yards over the sharp fragments of rocks which have fallen from the hills.” Moccasins wore out every two days, and were constantly repaired or replaced, a tedious and time-consuming duty.

One of the most unusual aspects of the appearance of the officers was that they continued to carry spontoons and wear chapeau de bras (bicorn military hats issued to officers), even after they adopted the Indian manner of dress. Enlisted men also continued to use the military knapsacks they had been issued. In short, the group presented the appearance of a strange blend of European and Indian clothing. Several references show that the tall beaver hats issued to enlisted men at the time of the outbound journey were no longer being worn; in fact, the men were not wearing hats at all. The work of making Indian-style clothing proceeded. The conversion from European clothing to
Indian modes of dress was complete by the time of the arrival at the Shoshoni nation. "Cameahwait, with great ceremony and as if for ornament, put tippets or skins around the necks of our party, similar to those worn by themselves. As this was obviously intended to disguise the white men, Captain Lewis, in order to inspire them with more confidence, put his cocked hat and feather on the head of the chief; and as his own over-shirt was in the Indian form, and his skin browned by the sun, he could not have been distinguished from an Indian. The men followed his example..."

During August the men were dressing skins, while the Shoshoni women mended their moccasins. Their feet continued to suffer in footgear to which they were unaccustomed. The Lolo Trail in Idaho, said Capt. Clark, was "So covered with Snow, that in passing thro we are continually covered with Snow. I have been wet and as cold in every part as I ever was in my life, indeed I was at one time fearefull my feet would freeze in the thin mockersons which I wore." This would tend to indicate that the men were still making unlined, summer moccasins for themselves. The men "traded for Some root Bread & Skins to make Shirts," and observed the way the Indians made their clothing, beginning to learn lessons in how to protect themselves from the cold. "Some have dressed Elk and Deer Skins with the hair on," noted Sgt. Ordway.

When the expedition reached the Pacific Coast, the rain rotted the old leather clothing seemingly as fast as the men could make replacements. By now practiced at making Indian clothing, the members of the party knew just what kind of game they were looking for, and what types of skins the game would yield. The Indians "generally agree that tho most Elk is on the opposit Shore, and that the greatest numbers of Deer is up the river at some distance above. The Elk being an animal much larger than Deer, easier to kiled better meat...and Skins better for the Clothes of our party..." That the men were unused to dressing in leather either before the expedition or during the first portion of it is reinforced by a comment made in a journal entry on the Pacific Coast. In noting the scanty dress of the Clatsop Indians, Lewis theorized that the sea coast must remain fairly warm all winter. "[I]f this Should be the Case it will most Certainly be the best Situation of our naked party dressed as they are altogether in leather."

One article of clothing was supplied by the Clatsop Indians, who "sold us several handsome Hats made of some kind of Splits curiously worked & C." "...these hats are of their own manufactory and are Composed of Cedar bark..."
and bear grass interwoven with the fingers and ornamented with various Colors and figures, they are nearly water proof, light, and I am convinced are much more durable than either Chip or Straw [hats]. It is not known whether the men traded for the hats for the practical purposes of wear or merely as curiosities, but because they were suffering so greatly from the constant rain it is possible that they wore them on fatigue duty.

Even the manufacture of Indian-style clothing presented problems on the rain-soaked Pacific Coast. “They find great difficulty for the want of branes [with which to soften the skins],” noted Lewis. “we have not soap to supply the deficiency, nor can we procure ashes to make lye; none of the pines which we use for fuel affords any ashes; extraordinary as it may seem, the green wood is consumed without leaving the residuum of a particle of ashes.” Despite these problems, by February 23, 1806 the captains could report that “the men have provided themselves very amply with moccersons and much more so indeed than they ever have since they have been on this voyage.” By March 12, the party was “furnished with 358 par of moccersons, exclusive of a good portion of Dressed leather, they are also provided with Shirts Overalls Capoes of Dressed Elk Skins for the homeward journey.” Despite these optimistic reports, Lewis was upset by the loss of a boat on May 30, 1806, along with three blankets, a blanket-coat, and a small amount of merchandise. Lewis remarked that “in our bear state of clothing this was a serious loss.”

During the return trip, little time could be expended on the manufacture of new clothing, while the old continued to wear out. Deer skins were dressed on July 20, and Aug. 2, 9, 10 and 28, 1806. “we landed, and began to call and repair the canoes, as well as prepare some skins for clothing, for since we left the Rocky mountains we have had no leisure to make clothes, so that the greater part of the men are almost naked.”

Clothing was important to the men of the Lewis and Clark Expedition to keep them warm, protect their feet and skin, and to impress Indian tribes who saw them dressed in their formal uniforms. Clothing also played an entirely different role, as a very important item of trade. The expedition set out with a large amount of presents for the Indians, including “12 red Silk Hanckerchiefs, 24 hanks sewing silk,” and 48 shirts made by Matilda Chapman of Philadelphia. The Lewis and Clark Expedition also distributed at least 15 military coats, 11 cocked officer’s hats, 5 white shirts, one checked shirt, and five American flags to the Indians. Most of the military coats seem to have been artillery officers coats, which were brought along specifically for the purpose of ceremonial gifts for Indian chiefs, although none of the existing invoices list them.

On the return journey, clothing became a trade item of inestimable value. On March 14, 1806, Capt. Lewis offered his own laced uniform coat for a canoe, but was rejected. Two days later it was noted that “the Indians remain with us all day, but would not dispose of their Canoe at a price which it was in our power to give consis-
tently with the state of our Stock of Merchandize. One handkerchief would contain all the small merchandize we possess, the balance of articles of Stock which Consists of 6 small blue robes or blankets one scarlet. one uniform coat and hat artillery. 5 robes made of our large flag, a few old Clothes trimmed with ribbon. On this Stock we have to depend for the purchase of horses and wholly such portion of our subsistence as it will be in our power to obtain, a scant dependence indeed for the tour of the distance that is before us.”

On March 17, “Drewyer returned with a canoe which he had bought for Capt. Lewis’s Uniform coat and a small piece of tobacco.”

“it seems that nothing except this coat would induce them to dispose of a canoe which in their mode of traffic is an article of the greatest value...I think the U’ States are indebted to me another Uniform coat, for that of which I have disposed on this occasion was but little worn.”

Capt. Clark traded his personal uniform coats on April 18, 1806. When the soldiers bartered with the Indians “they brought with them Several Elk Skins, two of my Coats and 4 robes of the party to add to the Stores I had with me for the purchase of horses.”

Noticing the love the Indians had for brass buttons, and having exhausted their trade supply, the men began to cut the pewter buttons off their own uniform coats as trade goods. Obviously, the military dress coats of the men had been preserved in the Corps’ baggage, or buttons had been salvaged for other uses. On April 21, 1806 “we formed a Camp purchased Some wood & 3 dogs for which we gave pewter buttons.” Two days later, Indians traded some dogs and wood for small articles, which “consisted of pewter buttons, strips of tin iron and brass, twisted wire &c.”

By April 28, in trading for a horse with the Walla Walla Indians, “Capt. C[lark] gave him his sward a hundred balls and powder and some salt [sale?] articles with which he appeared perfectly satisfied.” The group was growing more desperate. By May 20, 1806 Capt. Lewis noted that “the men have taken advantage of their prepossession in favour of buttons and have divested themselves of all they had in possession which they have given in exchange for roots and bread.”

And on June 2, Clark noted that “McNeal and York were Sent on a tradeing voyage over the river this morning, having exhosted all our merchendize we were obliged to have recourse to every Subterfuge in order to prepare in the most ample manner in our power to meet that wretched portion of our journey, the Rocky Mountains...Our traders McNeal and York are furnished with the buttons which Capt. L.–, and my Self Cut off of our Coats, Some eye water and Basilicon which we made for that purpose and Some phials of eye water and Some tin boxes which Capt. L. had brought from Philadelphia. in the evening they returned with about 3 bushels of roots and Some bread having made a Suckcessfull voyage, not much less pleasing to us that the return of a good Cargo to an East India merchant.”

As the men neared civilization, they traded with the fur expeditions coming up the Missouri. On September 6, 1806, SergeantOrdway reported that he “traded [with Chouteau’s party] for a hat and Shirt by giving them beaver Skins.”

So by the time the group reached Fort Bellefontaine, the men of the expedition returned to “civilization” clad in some buckskins but also wearing new linen or flannel shirts. It may have been a sign of how badly they missed the life they had left behind that they were so eager to divest themselves of the clothing of the frontier.

The trading performed with European clothing and buttons on this latter part of the expedition literally saved the lives of the men, providing transportation in the form of canoes and horses, and food for men near the point of starvation. It seems that the clothing of the Lewis and Clark Expedition not only protected them from the elements and provided some cohesion and pride for the unit, but also assured the ultimate success of the expedition through trade with the Indians. Few men have ever had cause to be so grateful for clothes!

—NOTES—


3The letter of June 20, 1803, from President Jefferson to Meriwether Lewis, reflects a certain naivete regarding clothing:

“As you will be without money, clothes or provisions, you must endeavor to use the credit of the U.S. to obtain them, for which purpose open letters of credit shall be furnished you...
“On re-entering the U.S. and reaching a place of safety, discharge any of your attendants who may desire & deserve it, procuring for them immediate payment of all arrears of pay & clothing which may have incurred since their departure...” Jackson pp. 65-66. Apparently, Jefferson thought that the letters of credit could be used on the west coast if Lewis encountered any European traders there. It is also apparent that Jefferson anticipated a debt to the soldiers of their normal clothing allowance would accrue by the end of the journey. For more on contacting ships on the west coast pay any of your attendants who may desire it, procuring for them immediate payment of all arrears of uniforms.

John Ordway Kept of the Expedition of Western Exploration, 1803-1806, edited with an introduction and notes by Milo M. Quaife; Madison: Publications of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Volume XXII, 1916. Sept. 8, 1803: “I concluded it would be better to give them a day’s rest and let them wash their clothes...” wrote Captain Lewis; Quaife, p. 39, p. 95, and The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, edited by Gary E. Moulton, Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska, 1986, Volume II p. 75. On July 12, 1804, Sgt. John Ordway also mentioned this.


Ordway, ibid, p. 173. Entry for December 18, 1804.

Ordway, ibid, p. 170.

Ordway, ibid, p. 171. Entry for Dec. 10, 1804. By “cappoes” Ordway refers to a capote, a blanket orwatchcoat.

Ordway, ibid, p. 171. Dec. 12, 1804.


Perhaps the men were impressed with the practicality and functional nature of the Indian clothing.

Ordway, ibid, pp. 164 and 192. This of course was Sacagawea.

Ordway, ibid, p. 129. Compare the Sept. 9, 1804 entry describing saving skins of deer kills to cover the penguins with May 20, 1805: “the hunters killed Several Elk and Several Deer, nearly for the Skins to make Legins &C.” Ordway, ibid, p. 215; also June 5, 1805, p. 225.

Ordway, ibid, p. 193.

It is likely that the men of the Corps of Discovery dressed in the Indian manner, as opposed to the “Daniel Boone” or “Davy Crockett” hunter garb we see in illustrations and in movies. Most of the “Davy Crockett” clothing is sewn in the European style, that is, a shirt is a piece of leather cut in the same pattern as a European-style cloth shirt (with plenty of fringing thrown on), which would take an incredible amount of time to sew together. Although it is possible that some of the men dressed in European-influenced buckskins, particularly Drouillard and Charbonneau, the journals most often speak of leggings and not overalls, shirts and not frocks. The Indian-style clothing would be much easier to make in terms of time and materials, especially when noting that European clothing requires more complicated patterns, including buttons and buttonholes.

Moulton, ibid, Vol. IV, pp. 224-2254 and 228; May 31, 1805. See also Ordway, ibid, June 3, 1805, p. 225; June 14, 1805, Moulton IV, p. 294; June 22, 1805, Moulton IV, p. 325; June 24, 1805, Ordway, p. 236. These are but a few of many entries made regarding moccasins at this time. For more on the condition of the men’s feet and the use of moccasins during the expedition, see Robert R. Hunt “Mockersons An Unspoken Tongue,” We Proceeded On, Vol. No. 3, August, 1990.

Ordway, ibid, p. 242. July 3, 1805: “the men not other ways directed are dressing Skins to make themselves mockinsons as they have worn them all out in the plains.
one pair of good mockin cons will not last more than about 2
days, will ware holes in them for the first day and patch
them for the next.”

Orway, ibid, p. 221. May 29, 1805 and June 7, 1805, in
Moulton, ibid, Vol. IV, pp. 289-293, and Robert R. Hunt,
“The Expedition: Captain Lewis’s Magic Stick” in We Proceeded On, Vol. 16 No. 1, February 1990 for an excellent
article on the use of these esaptones, symbols of rank, on
the expedition.

Orway, ibid, pp. 239 and 241. June 29, 1805. On ac-
count of the heat they “were all nearly naked, and [no]
covering on the head.” Moulton, ibid, Vol. IV, p. 342.

Moulton, ibid, Volume IV, p. 355. July 6, 1805. Orway,
ibid, p. 254, July 28, 1805. Moulton, ibid, Volume V, p. 8,
July 29, 1805.

Orway, ibid, p. 280, Aug. 16, 1805.

Orway, ibid, p. 272. August 23, 1805.

Orway, ibid, Volume V, p. 209.

Orway, ibid, Volume V, p. 231. September 23, 1805.

Orway, ibid, pp. 300 and 302. Indians observed by
Orway, Oct. 17, 1805. On August 20, 1805, Captain Lewis
described the clothing of the Shoshoni, with which he was
by now probably familiar from personal use. Moulton, ibid,
Volume V, pp. 126-127.

Moulton, ibid, Volume VI, p. 93. Nov. 28, 1805 and Dec.
1, 1805, p. 103.

Moulton, ibid, Volume VI, p. 85. Nov. 24, 1805.

Moulton, ibid, Volume VI, p. 86. November 24, 1805.
The operative word here is “naked,” which in the 18th cen-
tury was often used in the context of “poorly dressed” rather
than “nude.”

Orway, ibid, p. 322. For illustrations of similar hats see
We Proceeded On, Volume 8 No. 2, May 1982, p. 9; Vol. 12
No. 3, August 1986, p. 18; and Vol. 16 No. 1, February
1990.

Clark in Moulton, ibid, Volume VI, p. 222.


Moulton, ibid, Volume VI, p. 339.

Moulton, ibid, Volume VI, P. 222; the expedition mem-
bers killed 131 elk during the winter, 20 deer, primarily to
make clothing and for food; Moulton, Volume VI, p. 407; A
Journal of the Voyages and Travels of a Corps of Discovery
by Patrick Gass, Minneapolis, Minnesota: reprint by Ross
and Haynes, Inc., 1958, p. 229, “Each man has also a suf-
ficient quantity of patch-leather” noted Gass, p. 227. The
overall mentioned may have been European-styled, since
there was far more time for the men to spend on making
clothing while on the west coast.

Lewis in Moulton, ibid, Volume VII, p. 308.

Orway, ibid, p. 394.

Jackson, ibid, pp. 72-73.

Jackson, ibid, p. 78.

Orway, ibid, p. 138. August 30, 1804: “We acknowled-
ged their chiefs, by giving to the grand chief a flag, a
medal, a certificate, and a string of wampum—to which we
added a chief’s coat—that is, a richly laced uniform of the
United States artillery corps, with a cocked hat and red
feather.” Orway, ibid, p. 92. On August 31, 1804, in con-
tacting the Brule Sioux, “they gave the Grand Chief which
they call in Indian weucha, La liberator in French a red
laced coat & a fine cocked hat & red feather & an American
flag & a white shirt...” Orway, p. 120. And on September
25, 1804, to the Teton Sioux they “Gave the head chief the
Black Buffalo a red coat & a cocked hat & feather” Orway,
ibid, p. 138.

Moulton, ibid, Volume VI, pp. 414 and 416. March 14,
1806.

Moulton, ibid, p. 423, March 15, 1805.

Orway, ibid, p. 329.

Moulton, ibid, Volume VI, p. 426.

Clark in Moulton, ibid, Volume VII, p. 141.

Clark in Moulton, ibid, Volume VII, p. 153.

Lewis in Moulton, ibid, Volume VII, p. 160.

Orway, ibid, p. 348; Moulton, ibid, Volume VII, pp. 177
and 179.

Lewis in Moulton, ibid, Volume VII, p. 274.

Clark in Moulton, ibid, Volume VII, p. 328.

Orway, ibid, p. 397. Sept. 12, 1806: “Some of our party
exchanged robes & C. for Shirts.” with the white traders;
see Orway, p. 399.

Built in 1805 during the expedition's absence, Fort
Bellefontaine was located 12 miles north of St. Louis on the
Missouri River.

Youth Activities Committee
by Steve Lee, Chair
In 1992 the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage
Foundation, Inc. presented its “Youth Achievement
Award” to Brian Horn and Ian Walsh for their
History Day exhibit entitled “Lewis and Clark: Corps of
Discovery.” Horn and Walsh were then eighth grade students at Santa Lucia Middle
School in California and placed first in both the
California and National competitions.

This past May in the 11th Annual State His-
tory Day competition in Sacramento, California,
Brian and Ian again placed first in the competi-
tion (this time in the senior division as students
of Coast Union High School). Their group project
was entitled “The Lolo Trail—Land Bridge Across
Time.” The project details the importance this
trail has played as a historic travel corridor across
the rugged Bitterroot Range.

Clearwater National Forest officials in Orofino,
Idaho were a resource for Brian and Ian and,
as a result of this, the exhibit will be displayed in
the lobby of the Clearwater National Forest Vis-
itors Center on Highway 12 in Orofino.

Congratulations to Brian Horn and Ian Walsh
for once again winning the California State
Competition. It is great to see young people excited
about the study of history and excelling in their
efforts.

I would encourage all persons interested in
Lewis and Clark to stop and visit this display if
their travels take them to Orofino. The exhibit
will be in place this summer.
Main floor of the President's House drawn in 1803 by architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe. Temporary partitions in the south, or bottom, end of the cavernous "Public Audience Chamber" (today's East Room) created an office and a bedroom for Meriwether Lewis, the President's secretary.

Courtesy Library of Congress
Thomas Jefferson arose in the crowded Senate chamber of the unfinished Capitol in Washington to speak eloquently of his country. America is a "rising nation," he said, "advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of the mortal eye."

It was March 4, 1801, Inauguration Day for the third president. Nine days previously Jefferson had asked Meriwether Lewis to serve as his private secretary in the raw new mansion called the President's House.

Jefferson's letter caught up with Lewis in Pittsburgh, where the recently promoted Army captain had just arrived on his circuit as regimental paymaster. The 26-year-old soldier gladly accepted. Pushing against the slow-motion travel constraints of the day, he arrived on horseback in Washington on April 1.

Lewis was to spend just over two years working with Jefferson at the pinnacle of the "adolescent Federal government. Their association quickened dramatically America's march toward the distant destinies of Jefferson's inaugural rhetoric. At some unknown point an ambitious Lewis nailed down the assignment of leading a government exploring party across the fabled Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean.

And as they planned the mission month after month, elbow to elbow, Lewis had time to absorb every nuance of what the President expected from the project. The expedition leader who left Washington for the West on July 5, 1803, would know intimately the reasoning behind each line of his written instructions. That helped Lewis and his co-commander, William Clark, direct the enterprise with great assurance in the field, after an odd wobble at the very outset.

But for Lewis in the wonderful spring of 1801, all that was in the unknown, unplanned future. The new Washington job changed everything for this son of the backwoods gentry of Virginia, who had just five years' formal schooling in his head. Lewis's adult experience so far had been limited mostly to the muddy-booted grind of frontier army life. Now he dwelt in the President's House on Pennsylvania Avenue, where he and Jefferson welcomed James and Dolley Madison as temporary residents until the new Secretary of State could get his own local digs. Joining these celebrities at dinner Lewis could be excused for pinching himself: here he was, a freshly scrubbed infantryman, sipping Madeira at the same table with the author of the Declaration of Independence and the mastermind of the Constitution!

"I feel my situation in the President's family an extremely pleasant one," boasted Lewis at the time.

The Madisons moved out at the end of May, leaving the servants with only the President and his secretary to take care of. "Capt. Lewis and myself are like two mice in a church," said Jefferson in a letter to his daughter. A newspaper joshed that the 23-room mansion was "big enough for two emperors, one pope and the grand lama in the bargain." The exterior sandstone walls were already whitewashed, but the rather severe structure hadn't yet been balanced by the present north and south porticoes.

Today the glittering East Room is used for concerts and an occasional presidential press conference, but in 1801 it was just an empty cavern where Abigail Adams had hung out her wash. At the south end of that vast space workmen erected wood-framed sailcloth partitions to carve out an office and a bedroom for Lewis.

Jefferson had assured the captain he would retain his Army rank while on detached duty, but he told Lewis remarkably little about what those duties would be. Maybe the president-elect, himself a newcomer to big-time executive management, wasn't exactly sure how he would make use of a staff assistant. It was only after Lewis's two-year shakedown run that Jefferson could be
more specific about how the secretary’s job was working out in practice. Describing it in early 1804, the President said:

“The office itself is more in the nature of that of an Aid de camp, than a mere Secretary. The writing is not considerable, because I write my own letters & copy them in a press. The care of our company, execution of some commissions in the town occasionally, messages to Congress, occasional conferences & explanations with particular members, with the offices, & inhabitants of the place where it cannot so well be done in writing, constitute the chief business...”

Not listed specifically was the function of being simply a traveling companion to the widowed President, and if it came to that, a bodyguard. A Presidential entourage through the streets of Washington usually consisted entirely of Jefferson and a uniformed Lewis, each on horseback. Every Sunday the President rode up to Capitol Hill for church services in “The Oven,” a temporary structure used by the House of Representatives. The seating arrangement was described by Margaret Smith, wife of the publisher of the National Intelligencer, the city’s loyalist Republican newspaper: “The seat he chose the first Sabbath, and the adjoining one, which his private secretary occupied, were ever afterwards by the courtesy of the congregation, left for him and his secretary.”

Lewis was Jefferson’s first choice for the secretary’s position. “It has been solicited by several, who will have no answer till I hear from you,” the president-elect said in his February 23 letter of invitation. Jefferson was well enough acquainted with the young officer to know he was a good Republican. Also, pedigree counted for a lot in those days, and Jefferson regarded the Lewis clan—his own neighbors in Albemarle County, Virginia—as “one of the distinguished families of that state.” Aside from favoring a family friend, did Jefferson have other reasons for passing over his politically sophisticated civil-ian cronies for a frontier soldier?

From this particular assistant Jefferson wanted an important bonus: information.

“In selecting a private secretary, I have thought it would be advantageous to take one who possessing a knowledge of the Western country, of the army & its situation, might sometimes aid us with information of interest, which we may not otherwise possess,” the president-elect explained in a separate letter to General James Wilkinson, the Army commander.

Many historians have been tempted to conclude that in seeking someone with “knowledge of the Western country,” Jefferson already had a Pacific expedition in mind when he entered office in 1801. Thanks to more recent research by expedition specialist Donald Jackson and others, it now seems clear that Jefferson wanted Lewis’s help with a more immediate matter of political delicacy involving the Army.

Disagreement on the size of the Federal military establishment had been one of the first factional wedges splitting Alexander Hamilton’s Federalists and the Jefferson-Madison Republicans in the 1790s. In 1798 the Federalist majority in Congress responded to a war scare with France by expanding the Army over Republican objections that a smaller force of regulars would be enough. The partisan makeup of the Army’s enlarged officer corps quickly became a political football.

In late 1798 Secretary of War James McHenry said in a private letter—which got into the newspapers—that he would be glad to consider officers’ commissions for “that description of persons whom you denominate old Tories...” That indiscreet letter embarrassed President John Adams, who later cited it as one of his reasons for firing McHenry.

With Jefferson’s arrival in office it was the Republicans’ turn to kick the football. The new Secretary of War, Henry Dearborn, drafted proposals to downsize the Army and its Federalist-packed officer corps, while concentrating the remaining force on the Mississippi River and other Western points. Given Lewis’s knowledge of “the Western country” and the Army’s “situation,” it’s quite possible his advice was sought in shaping this new deployment. Dearborn sent his plan to Congress in December, 1801; the “Military Peace Establishment Act” was passed a
with little change in March, 1802. The new law authorized an Army strength of 3,289 regulars, down 25 percent from enrollment at the start of Jefferson’s term.

At some point, perhaps in early 1802, Lewis gave added advice on how many Federalist officers could be got rid of. Even with the previous Hamiltonian expansion the Army still had just 269 officers, and Lewis knew a great many of them personally or by reputation. In Jefferson’s papers at the Library of Congress is a War Department roster of these officers with a curious set of dots, crosses and other markings added to their names. The code could only be read with the help of a one-page key to the symbols in Lewis’s handwriting.

The coded roster of names graded each officer’s professional military qualities, plus his political attitude toward the Jefferson administration. For example, a small open circle stood for “such officers as are of the 1st Class, so esteemed from a superiority of genius & Military proficiency.” If the circle was followed by a series of crosses, however, it also meant that officer was “opposed most violently to the administration and still active in its vilification.” Most vulnerable to the Republican ax were names tarred both with those Federalist crosses and a symbol for incompetence (“unworthy of the commissions they bear.”)

Lewis’s evaluations were advisory only; after enactment of the 1802 Army cutback law it was up to Jefferson and Dearborn to decide whether
a Federalist officer’s political taint could be overlooked because of his professional skill. Dearborn made pious claims of being guided by “merit alone,” but most of the officers removed by June 1, 1802, were Federalists.9

Lewis at times was called upon to run sensitive political errands on the President’s behalf. One such case dealt with pamphleteer James Thomson Callender, which got into the historical record because it turned so ugly; doubtless there were other examples not written down. Callender had been convicted under the Sedition Act for criticizing the Adams administration. While out of power the Republicans had made martyrs of Callender and other victims of Federalist prosecution. Shortly after his inauguration Jefferson pardoned Callender, who had already served a nine-month jail term and paid a $200 fine. Jefferson wanted the government to refund the fine, but there were delays, and then an impatient Callender showed up in Washington demanding redress.

Jefferson recorded what happened next: “Understanding he was in distress I sent Captain Lewis to him with $50 to inform him we were making some inquiries as to his fine which would take a little time...” The $50 was intended to tide Callender over, but Lewis reported back to Jefferson that the down-and-out victim didn’t seem grateful. “His language to Captain Lewis was very high-toned,” Jefferson wrote. “He intimated that he was in possession of things which he could and would make use of in a certain case: that he received the $50 not as a charity but a due, in fact as hush money.” Callender, in short, was trying to blackmail the President into giving him a Federal job. When Jefferson cut off further dealings, Callender took revenge by spreading the famous story that Jefferson had a slave mistress, Sally Hemings.10

Not all of Lewis’s duties involved such high-tension intrigue. More pleasantly he helped arrange the President’s almost nonstop series of dinner parties for politicians, diplomats and scientists, and Lewis usually had a place at the oval table himself. Jefferson preferred that shape because it allowed him to draw everyone into the conversation. Dinner prepared by a French chef was most often served in the “Common Dining Room” (today’s Green Room) marked on Benjamin Latrobe’s floor plan. Only toward the dinner’s end were the guests invited to dive into Jefferson’s renowned stock of fine wines, up to eight varieties of them.

“At his usual dinner parties the company seldom or ever exceeded fourteen, including himself and his secretary,” reported Margaret Smith, the publisher’s wife.11 When Congress was in town the guest list was dominated by lawmakers invited for a pleasant social evening. To avert any disruptive partisan arguments Jefferson’s custom was to invite only Republicans one evening, only Federalists the next.

Twice a year Jefferson escaped Washington for Monticello, a three or four day trip southward into Virginia. Lewis went along, bunking according to local legend at the nearby estate of William Bache. It was during a Monticello sojourn in the summer of 1802 that the President read Alexander Mackenzie’s account of his 1793 trip from Canada’s interior to the Pacific Coast. Mackenzie’s book apparently prompted Jefferson to think anew about an American reconnaissance across the continent. The expedition would require a leader. Ten years before, he had been importuned by a teenage Meriwether Lewis to go on a western expedition planned unsuccessfully by the American Philosophical Society. If Jefferson had forgotten that, Lewis surely reminded him of it now.

There’s no contemporary record showing whether Jefferson actively considered specific candidates other than his secretary to command the Pacific expedition. Several months after picking Lewis for the job, the President explained how his selection was a compromise between getting a solid man of action and a formally trained scientist. In a letter to Philadelphia naturalist Benjamin Smith Barton, Jefferson wrote:

“It was impossible to find a character who to a compleat science in botany, natural history, mineralogy & astronomy, joined the firmness of constitution & character, prudence, habits adapted to the woods, & a familiarity with the Indian manners & character, requisite for this undertaking. All the latter qualifications Capt. Lewis has. Altho’ no regular botanist &c. he possesses a remarkable store of accurate observation on
all the subjects of the three kingdoms, & will therefore readily single out whatever presents itself new to him in either."  

Lewis's corrective crash courses in scientific formality may have begun that very summer at Monticello. Jefferson for many years had kept a rigidly systematic record of weather conditions at Monticello, or whatever his location at the time. A 1790 letter described how he took two thermometer readings to obtain each day's high and low temperatures: "I have found 4 aclock the hottest and daylight the coldest point of the 24 hours." Jefferson also entered abbreviations for the state of the weather, "c" meaning cloudy, "f" meaning fair, "r" meaning rain, and so on. The letter "a" stood for "after." Thus, wrote the precision weatherman, "c f r h S means cloudy after rain, hail and snow."  

At some point after picking Lewis to head the Pacific expedition Jefferson drilled him on how to keep weather records the Monteicello way. When Lewis and Clark were waiting in January, 1804, to embark up the Missouri River from Illinois they began their first table of weather observations with a note decoding the old Monticello abbreviations for "fair after rain," "cloudy after snow," and all the rest.  

Thereafter the expedition's monthly weather tables obediently followed Jefferson's own tabular format of 1790, except that the explorers added daily dawn-and-afternoon notations of wind direction.  

Jefferson and his secretary returned from their Monticello summer in October, 1802. Expedition planning quite likely had become active by then, but Lewis had to take time out for a different Presidential assignment. Jefferson's two daughters, Martha and Maria, were traveling by carriage from Virginia to the President's House for an extended visit. Their horses would be tiring, so Jefferson dispatched Lewis to meet them at an inn 83 miles from Washington with a fresh team and another carriage. The party arrived in the capital on November 21.  

In December the President asked Lewis to make a roughly itemized estimate of the Pacific expedition's cost. Adding up Indian presents, camp equipment, weapons and whatnot the secretary arrived at a nice round guess of $2,500. Jefferson was ready to ask for this down-payment appropriation in his December 15 annual message to Congress, but Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin urged him to submit the request separately.  

So it was that Captain Meriwether Lewis stood at the door of the Senate on January 18, 1803, bearing a Presidential message marked "Confidential." Lewis had been Jefferson's courier to Congress often before, but this time he had a strong personal stake in the contents of his package. The President was asking the House and Senate to approve a trip "to the Western Ocean" by "an intelligent officer with ten or twelve chosen men," and Lewis knew he would be that officer.  

With his mind fixed on the big adventure Lewis may have thought he had time for little else. He had to learn, for example, how to use a cipher that Jefferson had devised for secret communication from the wilderness to Washington. He had to plan a preliminary trip to Harpers Ferry and Philadelphia to acquire equipment and get special coaching in celestial navigation.  

Then in mid-February he was brought to earth by orders to help with a pet Presidential project involving scientific agriculture. With Jefferson's encouragement several government bigwigs were forming an ostensibly private "American Board of Agriculture" to act as a central clearing house for good farming practices. The Board met at the Capitol on February 22 to elect James Madison president and appoint a "committee of correspondence" to receive farming ideas from the public. The committee's members included one Senator and one Representative from each state, plus the territorial governors of Mississippi and Indiana.  

When the National Intelligencer published the committee list three days later, there was one more eye-catching name: Meriwether Lewis, correspondent for the "Territory of Columbia." That was the original designation of the 10-mile-square tract—now the shrunken District of Columbia—set aside for the national capital. Lewis certainly lived there, but he had long since lost any passion for farming. Rather, his brief link with the Board of Agriculture was intended as a public signal that the project had the blessing of his boss, the President. With the appearance of his name in the newspaper list Lewis's role essentially ended.  

Just then Congress gave final approval to the appropriation for his Western trip. When he left for Harpers Ferry three weeks later, he also ended for all practical purposes his regular duties as Jefferson's secretary.
Lewis returned to Washington for a last round of expedition planning in late June. When he at last rode away from the President’s House on July 5, 1803, he was in effect trading the Madeira glass of a Washington insider for the rifle and compass of a sunburned explorer.

It took him a while to shift mental gears. His two-year immersion in Washington’s political hothouse colored the thinking behind a surprise announcement sent to Jefferson from the Ohio River in early October. Lewis already was running behind schedule, which he thought might draw flak from the administration’s critics in Congress. “Feeling as I do in the most anxious manner a wish to keep them in a good humour on the subject of the expedition in which I am engaged,” Lewis proposed to spend the coming winter on a splashy southern jaunt toward Santa Fe. The former East Room political operative assured the President that his findings “will at least procure the further toleration of the expedition.” Jefferson’s response to this wobble was a brisk order to stick to the programmed ascent of the Missouri River and avoid “any episodes whatever.”

On December 28, 1806, Lewis returned to Washington acclaimed as the conqueror of the Rockies. Though Jefferson now had a replacement secretary named Isaac Coles, Lewis moved back into the President’s House as something of an honored guest. He and the President spent many hours rehearsing the Western adventure, and Lewis must have told his story well. “On the whole,” wrote Jefferson at that time, “the result confirms me in my first opinion that he was the fittest person in the world for such an expedition.”

In mid-March, 1807, the President complained to his daughter of having a bad cold, adding: “Mr. Coles and Capt. Lewis are also indisposed, so that we are but a collection of invalids.” Shortly afterward a recovered Lewis went to Philadelphia to arrange for his (never written) narrative account of the expedition. It wasn’t until mid-July that he returned to Washington for the last time in his life, and bade his final goodbye to the President at Monticello in September. Lewis continued westward at a comfortable pace to St. Louis, where he took up his new duties as governor of Upper Louisiana in March, 1808.
Then began a time of troubles for the returned hero. Feeling harassed by local politicians and the new Madison administration, Lewis set out for Washington in the fall of 1809. When he died of gunshot wounds in Tennessee, Clark and others on the frontier assumed he killed himself. So did Jefferson, who in hindsight said Lewis’s “hypochondriac affections” were evident prior to the expedition. “While he lived with me in Washington I observed at times sensible depressions of mind,” the ex-president wrote in 1813.  

So it would seem that Lewis in Washington oscillated between his self-described “extremely pleasant” feelings and the black moods noted by his powerful patron. Whether happy or sad, his Washington experience was the springboard that sent Meriwether Lewis into the foremost rank of history’s explorers.

—NOTES—


2“The President’s House” was the mansion’s official name at the time, but informally it had been called the White House “almost from the beginning because its white sandstone stood out from the brick and frame of Washington houses,” according to Amy La Follette Jensen, The White House and its Thirty-Four Families. (McGraw-Hill, New York, 1965) p. 21.


11Smith, First Forty Years, p. 388.


15Malone, Jefferson the President: First Term, p. 170.


20Jefferson to Lewis, July 17, 1808, in Jackson, Letters, Vol. 2, p. 444. Without offering evidence John Bakeless, in his respected Lewis & Clark: Partners in Discovery (William Morrow & Co., New York, 1947), asserts on pp. 388-90 that at an unspecified time in 1807 Lewis served as “Mr. Jefferson’s personal representative” at Aaron Burr’s treason trial in Richmond. This claim is echoed by Richard Dillon in Meriwether Lewis (Coward-McCann, Inc., New York, 1965) p. 296. The trial started Aug. 3 and lasted until Burr’s acquittal on Sept. 1, a period when Lewis’s whereabouts are undocumented. Jefferson was at Monticello, where he relied on special couriers to bring progress reports from chief prosecutor George Hay in Richmond. Lewis by then was a celebrity in his own right, but there’s an absence of contemporary references to his presence at the trial, even by pro-Burr writers alert for signs of Presidential pressure for a conviction. Bakeless’s claim remains questionable.


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.
Doctor Backtracks on History to Settle Mystery of Explorer’s Demise

by Bill Dietrich, Seattle Times
As reprinted in the Washington Post—May 30, 1994

The death of explorer Meriwether Lewis from gunshot wounds at the height of his fame always has been a historical mystery: Was he murdered, or did he commit suicide?

Now a Seattle epidemiologist has come up with an intriguing new explanation: Lewis killed himself in despair because he was dying of syphilis contracted from a Shoshone Indian woman on the night of Aug. 13, 1805, shortly after crossing the Continental Divide.

“Lewis’s celebration that night triggered several years of darkening despair,” Reimert Ravenholt writes in May’s issue of the journal Epidemiology.

A suicide long has puzzled historians. After serving as Thomas Jefferson’s personal secretary and then making an epic journey with William Clark to the mouth of the Columbia River, Lewis came back to national acclaim and was appointed governor of the Louisiana Territory.

“He could likely have gained the presidency like Andrew Jackson did after winning the Battle of New Orleans,” Ravenholt speculates.

Instead, Lewis died on Oct. 11, 1809, in a lonely log cabin on the Natchez Trace Road in Tennessee. Lewis’s biographer, Richard Dillon, concluded that Lewis had such strength of character and bright prospects that he must have been murdered, possibly as a result of political intrigues and bad business debts in St. Louis.

Other historians such as Howard Kushner, author of a book on suicide in the West, contend that Lewis was chronically depressed and as a result finally committed suicide, a conclusion accepted by Clark and Jefferson.

Ravenholt has used his skill as a disease detective and his interest in western history to argue the progression of syphilis can best explain Lewis’s puzzling decline, depression and periods of insanity.

This is not the first time Ravenholt, former epidemiologist for the Seattle-King County Health Department and a veteran of key government jobs in Washington and Paris, has waded into controversy.

He called attention to the death rate from tobacco before the surgeon general’s famed 1964 warning, headed federal birth-control campaigns in the 1970s and is working on a paper arguing that the greatest U.S. health threat is the rapid upsurge in births in single-parent households, particularly among the poor and minorities.

“How could it be that nobody has put this [the syphilis theory] together?” Ravenholt asked.

Sanitized accounts of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, efforts to protect Lewis’s reputation and unfamiliarity by historians with the symptoms of syphilis have led scholars to overlook obvious clues, he said. “Clearly Thomas Jefferson and William Clark did their best to put this under the rug.”

“The biggest [health] trouble Lewis and Clark experienced was venereal disease,” Ravenholt noted, a point backed up by the explorers’s own journals. These mention treating the illness in their men at Fort Clatsop on the West Coast with doses of mercury, but do not explain the source of Lewis’s illness in late 1805.

Venereal disease is a possible cause of Lewis’s problems, said John Findlay, a professor of Pacific Northwest history at the University of Washington. Sexual relations between Indians and fur trappers were common before Lewis and Clark arrived.

Sexual relations between the “Corps of Discovery” and Native Americans were routine. Indians regarded it as a gesture of hospitality and a way to acquire some of the visitors’ power, while Lewis and Clark knew it helped cement relations with tribes and kept up the morale of their men, historians have written.
The leaders apparently largely abstained, however: Clark had fallen in love shortly before leaving St. Louis; and Lewis also tried to set a celibate example for the three dozen other expedition members.

In August 1805, however, Lewis struggled on ahead of Clark over the Continental Divide, encountered friendly Shoshone in Idaho, and on Aug. 13, found himself with just three men at an all-night celebration with the Indians.

Lewis, a captain, was offered his own private tepee. For four months, the men had not seen women except for Sacajawea, a married woman who accompanied the expedition with her husband and child for part of their journey. They were eager to confirm friendships in order to trade for food and horses, and were in a good mood from having crossed the divide.

Lewis carefully recorded that he went to bed at midnight that evening while the others parted, "the only such description of all-night activities included in his trip diaries," Ravenholt notes. What followed caught the physician's eye:

- Five days later on his 31st birthday, Lewis wrote he "viewed with regret the many hours I have spent in idleness."
- The next day, he noted that he could not prevent relations between the Indian women and his "young men whom some months [of] abstinence have made very polite to these tawny damsels." Lewis inquired whether the Shoshone had venereal disease, and was told they did. By that time syphilis sores could have appeared.
- By Sept. 19, many expedition members were suffering from skin lesions, a secondary symptom of syphilis. During the last week in September, Lewis was seriously ill—either from venereal disease, an upset stomach from eating bad food, or both. He could barely ride a horse.
- Lewis subsequently appears to have recovered that winter, but was seriously ill again in 1807 after his return East, defeating the efforts of doctors. He quarreled with his mentor, Jefferson.
- In 1809 he suffered bouts of mental illness consistent with progressive syphilis. He wrote his former girlfriend, Theodosia Burr Alston, that, "I am going to die. Theodosia, I cannot tell you how I know it but I do..."
- He made his will on Sept. 11, 1809.
- He was ill and mentally deranged for five days in mid-September and for briefer periods on his journey through Tennessee en route to Washington. Stopping at the cabin of Robert Grinder to eat and sleep on his journey, he talked to himself, paced incessantly, frightened Grinder's wife, and finally retired to his cabin.
- Shots rang out, and Lewis called for help, but a farm woman who heard was too frightened to respond.
- Servants found him that morning with a pistol wound to his forehead and side, and Lewis reportedly saying, "I have done the business, my good servant. Give me some water." The explorer's last words were, "I am no coward, but I am so strong. It is so hard to die."

Ravenholt said his historical detective work comes naturally. In the 1950s, he made a systematic search of Seattle's death records dating to 1881 with his then-student William Foeg, who went on to direct the federal Centers for Disease Control. One of their findings was that encephalitis lethargica peaked shortly after flu epidemics, linking the disease to the neurotoxic effects of a flu.

As early as 1959, Ravenholt was trying to get $30,000 from the Seattle City Council to start an anti-smoking campaign in the city's schools, an idea the council rejected. He coined the word "tobaccosis" to describe what he saw as an epidemic of related disease, but, "For many years it was like butting my head against a brick wall."

His interest carried over to general history, and biographies of Lewis's problems caused a flash of recognition. "When I read the description of what happened to him, I realized the poor fellow suffered from paresis," or an advanced stage of syphilis," Ravenholt said.

**LEWIS & CLARK MONUMENT REDEDICATED**

The Lewis and Clark monument at Council Bluffs, Iowa was completed in November, 1935. The monument is located in the Loess Hills, in a city park, on the north edge of Council Bluffs. Initial construction and dedication was by The Colonial Dames of America organization.

Exposure and harsh Iowa winters had caused erosion and breakdown of the vertical concrete panels. In 1991, the Lewis and Clark Monument Restoration Committee was formed to restore the monument and the adjacent area to its original design and form. The generosity of local business, industry, citizens and foundations succeeded in raising approximately $270,000 to replace and restore the concrete panels and the site. The project was completed and dedicated May 21, 1993 with the assistance of local and state officials. The site had been previously listed as a landmark on the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.
MONTANA MIDDLE SCHOOL GOES NATIONAL!

by Frank Muhly
Pennsylvania Chairman National Lewis & Clark Trail Coordination Committee and
Rosemary De Coste
English Department Tredyffrin/Easttown Middle School, Berwyn, Pennsylvania

In the May 1993 issue of We Proceeded On, an innocuous item on page 31 caused a nationwide furor. It was just a reprinted letter from Charles M. Topley, principal of Shelby Middle School in Montana. In it he expresses the students’ and the staff’s appreciation for the knowledge, insights and enthusiasm about the Lewis and Clark Expedition which eight Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation experts shared with them in January 1993.

Less than 12 months later, Shelby Middle School’s cooperation, its “knowledge, insights and enthusiasm about the Lewis and Clark Expedition” were very much in evidence all the way across the country in Berwyn, Pennsylvania, just 15 crow miles northwest of Philadelphia. How that came about is a testimonial to the staff skills of both the Shelby school and Tredyffrin/Easttown Middle School.

In mid-September, Philadelphia teacher RoseMarie DeCoste wrote to Don Nell, past president of Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation (LCTHF) and now chairman of the Audio-Visual Education Committee, in Bozeman, Montana. Spearheading the effort of six teachers in developing a three week interdisciplinary unit for 150 eighth graders, she had come across the LCTHF name in the small amount of reference material available to her.

Early in October, Nell sent the author a copy of Mrs. DeCoste’s letter acknowledging the “wonderful packet of information” he had sent in reply. The material fascinated her enough to impel the purchase of the Foundation’s video tape, back copies of all We Proceeded On issues and, eventually, 30 copies of Albert and Jane Salisbury’s book “Two Captains West” (reprinted recently as “Lewis and Clark—The Journey West.”) Don also put her in touch with Shelby Middle School, whose teachers provided ideas and other experiences so Tredyffrin/Easttown could design its three week unit.

The author and his wife, meanwhile, contacted Mrs. DeCoste, offering their services. The result was a pair of 45 minute presentations at the school; 30 minutes of color slides from their camping trip on the trail from St. Louis to Fort Clatsop and 15 minutes of questioning by the students; those exhilarating sessions occurred December 9.

Just before Christmas an open house for parents culminated the course of studies. It was there that Shelby Middle School’s influence on Tredyffrin/Easttown became apparent. And it was there that the true value and impact of the students’ participation became obvious. Their display data covered 60-80 feet of hallway space.

The exhibit’s centerpiece was portraits of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark done in the 1807 style of Charles Willson Peale. Nearby hung numerous Indian portraits ala George Catlin and Karl Bodmer, as well as landscape reproductions, all obviously executed in art classes.

In math classes students calculated how math must have been used by the explorers as they proceeded on; classes studied scales, compass directions and distances, ratios and proportions in a unit on mapmaking.

In science, classes on canoe construction, botanical classification and leather tanning technology fascinated the students; the deerskin was as soft and pliable as any processed by an Indian in 1805!

American studies students researched expedition topics of their choice and presented oral reports to their classmates. The librarian and her staff assisted in locating appropriate materials for these projects. The eighth graders also played a computer simulation game titled “Lewis and Clark Stayed Home” in which the players made critical decisions about the trip as if they, rather than the captains, were in command.

Students read a biography of Sacagawea in their English classes. After consulting several conflicting biographical sources, they then evaluated her true role on the expedition. Posters il-
Jefferson and the Changing West:
from Conquest to Conservation

This conference aims to reassess Thomas Jefferson's contributions to the development of the American West in light of current environmental and human concerns. As a multifaceted philosopher-statesman, Jefferson left a rich legacy of writings on the natural environment and its contribution to the advancement of freedom and the happiness of mankind. His conception of the West was an essential element of that legacy.

The conference is intended to stimulate a dialogue across time between eighteenth-century and contemporary conceptions of man and nature in America. Each paper session brings together scholars from diverse fields to address a common topic in both its historical and contemporary aspects.

Speakers: John Logan Allen, Robert Archibald, Mary Clearman Blew, Susan Flader, Robert Gottlieb, Helen Ingram, Patricia Limerick, Gerald Nash, Peter Onuf, Merrill D. Peterson, James Ronda, Anthony F.C. Wallace, Elliott West and Robert A. Williams, Jr.

For information or registration, call the Missouri Historical Society, (314) 361-9265, or write: Jefferson Conference Missouri Historical Society P.O. Box 11940 St. Louis, MO 63112-0040

MONTANA MIDDLE SCHOOL
illustrating her experiences hung on display frames. Two 8½" x 11" magazines compiled from reports completed in American studies, disassembled into their respective 22 and 28 illustrated pages, provided absorbing reading for the parents; 141 authors collaborated on 57 articles describing at least 50 different topics!

Perhaps the highlight of the Lewis and Clark study unit came when the 150 youngsters and their adult instructors partook of bison meatballs and buckwheat biscuits at a meal prepared by the home economics class, the ground bison originating from a buffalo ranch in Pennsylvania.

This collaboration between two middle schools almost a continent apart produced a spectacular achievement in December 1993. As the author wrote in the introduction of his book, "Historical Signboards on the Lewis and Clark Trail" (two copies of which he happily presented to the librarian, Ms. Carolyn Ginther), "We hope it will be useful to everyone interested in either a small or large sampling of the trail's attractions, particularly young people with an awareness of Lewis and Clark's experiences. Unless adults pass the emotions of discovery and wonderment on to them, the legacy left to America by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark can surely and inexorably fade away." There can be no doubt that Tredyffrin/Easttown Middle School's staff has passed on and the students in its eighth grade have absorbed those essential emotions.
GROUP TO DISCUSS DEATH OF IVY'S MERIWETHER LEWIS
by Sherri Nee
Staff Writer, The Daily Progress
Charlottesville, Virginia—November 22, 1993

The national Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation Inc. will be coming to Charlottesville for its annual meeting.

But family and fans of the explorers, commissioned by Thomas Jefferson in 1804, have some time to start up a local chapter of the foundation before the foundation's board arrives in 1995.

The chapter's first meeting will be held tonight at 7:30 at the Charlottesville Omni Hotel. Guest speaker James Starrs, professor of forensic science and law at George Washington University, will talk of Meriwether Lewis's last and fatal journey. Starrs would like to exhume the remains of Lewis in Tennessee and try to solve the mystery of his death.

It has never been determined whether Lewis committed suicide or was killed, said Jane S. Henley, chairwoman of the 1995 meeting. Henley said the mystery of Lewis's death has clouded his place in history.

Henley, a descendant of Lewis's sister, said few people in central Virginia realize that Lewis was born in Ivy, where his family cemetery still exists. William Clark was born in Caroline County.

"In the West, they don't have a lot of heroes," Henley said. "Lewis and Clark are highly celebrated."

Based in Great Falls, Montana, the nonprofit foundation was started in 1969 and has 1,500 members. The group is dedicated to stimulating public interest in the historical expedition and its participants.

Henley said she is seeking information about Lewis and Clark, especially regarding the location of their belongings which could contribute to an exhibit at the Albemarle County Historical Society Museum and Library planned for the historic McIntire Library building.

"It did start here," Henley said. "It was commissioned by Jefferson and the two main leaders were born in Virginia."

CONSTRUCTION CONTINUING ON LCSC CENTENNIAL MALL
Lewiston, Idaho Morning Tribune—February 25, 1994

Work began March 23 on a project that will forever change the heart of the Lewis-Clark State College campus.

Construction crews from Leone & Keeble Inc. of Spokane, Wash., began excavation at the site of the LCSC Centennial Mall's featured statue, a depiction of Nez Perce Tribal Chief Twisted Hair and his son Lawyer meeting with Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

The life-size bronze statue will be installed sometime this fall in a specially prepared site directly west of James W. Reid Centennial Hall.

Limestone rock, donated by the Nez Perce Tribe from its quarry, will be used to create a large base for the statue. The site will also be landscaped this spring with trees, bushes and other vegetation that has historical significance for the Nez Perce.

Construction crews removed sidewalks and topsoil from the statue site and carved a path in the lawn for a brick-lined walkway that will connect the site with an existing east-west corridor near the library and Meriwether Lewis Hall.

In the weeks ahead, work will continue on the base of the mall's Wall of History that will extend from the statue site west toward what will become the mall's principal pedestrian corridor, now part of Fifth Street.

The history wall will contain artistic depictions of events and eras that define or influenced the region. The wall will contain individual panels with relief art related to the area's geography, economy, development and peoples.

As crews began excavation of the statue area, site preparation was under way directly east of the College Union Building where an amphitheatre will be built for formal and informal outdoor programs.

We goofed!
In the February 1994 issue on page 19 a picture of a house in the upper left hand corner is Daniel Boone's house, not William Clark's. A thousand humble pardons for the error.
Book Reviews


A Review by James J. Holmberg

Whether you subscribe to the suicide theory or the murder theory regarding the tragic end of Meriwether Lewis’s life; and if you do not let disregard for facts bother you, then you may enjoy a nice little read in Ron Burns’s “The Mysterious Death of Meriwether Lewis.”

Starting with the known fact of Meriwether Lewis’s death, Burns spins a tale of intrigue, betrayal, greed and murder with the prize being the millions of dollars to be made in the Louisiana Territory fur trade. Fictitious army officer and Lewis friend Harrison Hull is the prime investigator of his friend’s death. From Grinder’s Stand to St. Louis to the Great Lakes theater of the War of 1812, Hull, initially accompanied by his friend, ornithologist Alexander Wilson, also a Lewis friend, investigates the latter’s mysterious death. Hull and Wilson experience several close calls, and those who know too much meet untimely ends.

Hull eventually determines who killed Lewis and why and brings the guilty parties to justice. The villains reach to the upper levels of the Louisiana and federal government, including a future president, and all save one are brought down.

Anyone reading this book is cautioned to know their history. Burns writes in an engaging manner and places the characters in the context of events of the time, but he indiscriminately changes facts to suit his story. For example, the nefarious James Wilkinson, not surprisingly one of the villains, did not die by his or anyone else’s hand in April 1814. Other factual characters similarly did not meet the ends that Burns assigns to them. William Clark thankfully escapes being one of the criminals, and actually assumes a rather minor role in the novel. If one keeps in mind that this is a novel, and Burns makes no claim that it is anything other than that, his liberties with history and those who inhabit it can be forgiven. He does betray his lack of research and ignorance of the facts in his “Author’s Note” when he states that some of the authentic characters are accurately portrayed, that fur trade plotting might have been behind Lewis’s death, and that “modern historians...agree that suicide is virtually out of the question.” The exact opposite is true regarding the latter. All in all “The Mysterious Death of Meriwether Lewis” makes for an interesting and enjoyable way to spend some time.

James J. Holmberg is curator of the Filson Club in Louisville, Kentucky.

THE TRAVELER’S GUIDE TO THE LEWIS & CLARK TRAIL, Julie Fanselow, Falcon Press, Helena, Montana, 1994 ($11.95, paperback)

A Review by Bob Doerk

The Lewis and Clark Trails Heritage Foundation, Inc. receives many requests from individuals, families, and groups wishing to travel the Lewis & Clark Trail and needing information as to what to see and do, what portions are accessible by boat, horse, bike, or RV, and what suggestions we may have. This book will supply that information, supplemented by many local brochures available all along the trail. It will provide a welcome supplement to the National Park Service map/brochure covering the trail in the 11 westernmost states. The guide is priced right, is a handy size, and is of sufficient quality to stand up to repeated usage.

I liked this guide for any number of reasons, certainly not limited to the following:

1. The maps are simplified but provide useful information, segment by segment. The photos and artwork, some in color, are an added plus.

2. I thought the chapter covering a brief history and overview of the expedition was just right in length—short but including all necessary detail. It hits the high points, including Clark’s “backup” if he would have declined Lewis’ invitation, how much meat it took to feed the party over a 24 hour period, what the cost was, etc.

3. An entire chapter explains how this guide can be used and other very practical information. Any guidebook can quickly become outdated but both the author and publisher make a
concerted effort to receive corrections, suggestions, and other information for future updated editions. This encourages readers to submit information on favorite restaurants, for example, that Julie Fanselow may have missed but which can be included in future editions. This can be invaluable.

4. I framed questions in my mind before reading the text and was pleased to find those questions answered. From further reading suggestions to “will she comment on where the expedition actually began” were both included. There were many more.

5. I liked the structure of the book, the conversational tone, and the continual emphasis on what the author liked or what she may have found disappointing. This is all helpful information when choices by the traveler must be made.

6. Finally, I liked the expansion of the visitations to include other activities or sites to be visited while in specific areas. Comments on specific events relating to Lewis and Clark, the time of the year they are held, and museum impressions were all useful. Linked to this approach are thought-provoking comments such as that made on page 67 when she refers to the Missouri River Corridor Project (which aims to renovate oxbow lakes and other floodplain wetland sites along the Missouri River) and says it is “to provide breeding, rearing, and feeding areas for fish, migratory waterfowl, and native species. Proponents also hope to restore and interpret sites important to the region’s early history and culture, as well as provide increased recreational access.” This type of information not only assists the “armchair traveler” (one of the stated purposes of this guide), but demonstrates how dynamic interest and involvement in our heritage by many groups and individuals can be today, and not just by those of us interested in what happened in 1804.

What didn’t I like about this book? Virtually nothing. It is not intended for the scholar, though they will profit by reading it.

The scholar is interested in why Jefferson selected Lewis as his private secretary but the traveler of the trail most likely is not. Whether Jefferson made his selection because of Lewis’ knowledge of the western army and the political leanings of the officers in that army or because he had the expedition in mind and wanted Lewis to lead it is the type of question that can be argued either way. But this I know, the casual traveler, using this guide, may well get hooked on Lewis and Clark and it could become a lifetime adventure, as it has for many of us, with plenty of time to get into the finer points of the expedition. This guide is an excellent beginning.

Bob Doerk is a past president of the foundation and chairman of the National Lewis and Clark Trail Coordination Committee.

LEWIS AND CLARK IN MISSOURI by Ann Rogers, Meredco, P.O. Box 410887, St. Louis, MO 63141, 1993, photos and maps, notes, index, 157 pages, soft cover $14.95 + $2.05 mailing

A review by Martin Erickson

When Ann Rogers first wrote “Lewis and Clark in Missouri” in 1981, the review in the February 1982 issue of WPO was done by E.G. “Frenchy” Chuinard, second president of the Foundation and founder of WPO. Frenchy thought it was a good book. He ended his review with the recommendation that “no Lewis and Clark historian or enthusiast should be without this delightful volume in their library, and every Missouri school and college should have a copy in its library.” Whether that happened or not, I don’t know. I do know that the updated second edition of Foundation member Ann Rogers’ coverage of the expedition in Missouri is worthy of the same recommendation. It is a beautifully composed, expanded version of the original work illustrated with maps, paintings and both black and white and color photographs.

As in the first edition, Rogers covers the preparations for the journey, the outbound trip across Missouri, the months between to the West Coast and back and the return through Missouri. The “Missouri Sequels” chapter covers the expedition members who settled in Missouri and became a part of Missouri history. Each chapter has been expanded with additional information and photographs.

A new chapter, “The Trail Today,” details what can be found along the trail in Missouri from St. Louis in the east to Lewis and Clark State Park between Kansas City and St. Joseph in the west.

As Frenchy pointed out in his 1982 review and Rogers reiterates in her preface to the new edition,
Missouri beyond St. Louis and St. Charles is often overlooked or given short shrift in writings about the expedition. She (and her husband) have traveled the trail and have an extensive knowledge of the journals. Her knowledge and experience are evident in the pages of her well written book.

"Lewis and Clark in Missouri" is a fast-paced, easy to read book for both newcomers to the expedition and those who are well-versed on the historic journey. It makes a person want to take a leisurely journey west from St. Louis and visit or revisit what expedition member Charles Floyd said was "...a butiful country of Land"—the Missouri of Lewis and Clark.


A review by Sally Freeman

Alfred Seton's journal is a delightful and insightful personal account of his voyage to the newly established Fort Astoria, his time in the Pacific Northwest, and portions of his roundabout trip home to the United States. Robert Jones has greatly contributed to the written history of the Pacific Northwest by presenting this work with little alteration. The introduction to the book, though, is long and dry while Seton's journal is quite the opposite.

This reviewer disagrees with the editor's statement (p. 4) that Seton was something of a snob. He did think himself superior to most Native Americans (p. 189-199) (as did most whites of his day). Yet he was not a "snob" to others as he wrote (p. 158), "in this remote and uncivilised corner, we hail with cordiality any stranger, without considering whether he be an Englishman, Frenchman, German, Russian,...In short we meet as citizens of the world without minutely enquiring the past...of each." Throughout the book Seton seemed to be a stalwart and likable man.

The ferocious bears mentioned by Seton in the Willamette Valley are identified on page 121 note 3 as grizzlies which would have been much less common than black bears.

Throughout the footnotes the editor had the annoying habit of using "above" for "earlier" and "below" for "later." Use of "above" and "below" should be limited to words on a single page, not those found pages away.

Many of the footnotes are superfluous, but the text did bring up some questions that should have been addressed in notes: Where was Fort Calipuyaw? Is it the same as Willamette Post southeast of Newberg? How did John Halsey and Wilson P. Hunt return to the United States? What happened to Seton's sea journal (p. 163)?

Overall this book was enjoyable to read and should be appreciated by anyone interested in Pacific Northwest life in the early 1800s.

Sally Freeman is a park ranger at Fort Clatsop National Memorial near Astoria, Oregon.
Idaho Chapter Auctions
Quilt at Annual Meeting

The Idaho Chapter’s main project for 1994 is an education-oriented one. The Chapter plans to place the Foundation’s videotape of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in every school district in Idaho—a total of 113 school districts. All Idaho students study Idaho history in the fourth and seventh grades and the Lewis and Clark Expedition is one of the important events which they study. The well written and documented Foundation videotape would be an asset for teachers and students in the study of both Idaho and U.S. history.

To fund this project, the Chapter is holding a raffle. The special item to be raffled is a handmade quilt. Bev Davie of Orofino, Idaho was commissioned to make the quilt around the Lewis and Clark theme. It was completed last summer and chapter members have been busy since then selling raffle tickets. It will be auctioned off at the foundation’s annual meeting in Missoula, Montana.

The quilt contains many important expedition sites including North Dakota’s Mandan Village, Fort Clatsop in Oregon and Idaho’s “Canoe Camp.” It also contains depictions of the wildlife Lewis and Clark identified including buffalo, salmon and a grizzly bear. Expedition members Lewis, Clark, York and Sacagawea are included on it along with a map of the route. Quilted into several panels are plants identified by the expedition such as bitterroot, Oregon grape holly and camas.

The Chapter encourages all Lewis and Clark enthusiasts to support this project. Tickets will be on sale at the annual meeting in Missoula or can be purchased from any Chapter member. And, remember, proceeds from this project help further the education of our youth with regards to the importance of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Chapter President Steve Lee says: “This is an important project for us. With the Lewis and Clark Expedition’s bicentennial approaching, we want our school children to be more aware of the role they played in contributing to this state’s and our country’s history. We feel the videotape will help further an interest in Lewis and Clark.”

Sacagawea Stamp Available

The U.S. Postal Service has limited sales of the Legends of the West, 29¢, twenty stamp pane, which includes the Sacagawea stamp, to 150,000 sheets, on a first come, first served basis. Orders should be placed to:

Recall Legends of the West Stamps
Box 41929
Kansas City, MO 64179-0998

The cost is: $5.80 20 stamps @ 29¢ each
$2.90 shipping, Priority Mail
$8.70 total

Sales are limited to one order for one sheet only, per customer. Remittance is to be by check or money order, postmarked October 1, 1994, to October 31, 1994, inclusive. Orders dated prior to October 1, or later than October 31, will not be honored.

Members may wish to check with their local postmasters for more information.

RETIREMENT CEREMONY
(Continued from page 3)

Discovery Corps, proceeded to fire a 17 gun salute for Gen. Butler as his motorcade traveled around the grounds. The salute began with a cannon blast followed by single rifle/musket shots, ending with a final cannon shot. The combined group consisted of two cannon personnel, 12 riflemen, including Woods, Flowers, W. Davis, Watson, Allen and Barton, two colorguard and two musicians, including Moore and Mr. Emig. The event was a resounding success! Two colonels confided in Moore after the ceremony that Gen. Butler was moved to tears by the salute.

Scott Davis, Discovery Corps secretary, also noted: I received a letter from Corps member Jim Barton the other day that leads me to add the following about the retirement ceremony at Offutt. “As a highlight, all our flintlocks fired in the 17 gun salute! The Continentals, who bragged that their pieces were tuned by professional gunsmiths, suffered three misfires, including their cannon. We were given a hearty welcome by them and their thanks for attending.”
Mother's Day Letter

Borrowed from the May 1994 “Editor’s Page” of Virginia, A monthly newsletter on popular history—Michael Gleason, publisher/editor.

...we are working with the Virginia State Library and Archives to sponsor the restoration of a portrait of Lucy Meriwether Lewis Marks, who was the mother of explorer Meriwether Lewis. The library has lent us a copy of the portrait and we will feature it again after its restoration.

On that subject, subscriber Jane Henley, who lives in Charlottesville and lists a number of Meriwethers and Lewises among her ancestors, has passed along to us the text of several letters written by a young Meriwether Lewis to his mother, Lucy Marks.

One of Meriwether’s letters was written in 1789 when he was a young teen. He was staying with Albemarle County relatives when he wrote his mother, who was still living in George at the time. The letter is quite thoughtful.

The text contains misspellings and all in the letter young Meriwether wrote his mom 205 years ago last Mother’s Day.

May 12, 1789
Moste Loving Mother

I flattered myself with the hopes of receiving a letter from you. What language can express the anxiety I feel to be with you when I sit down to write but as it is now a thing impossible I shall quit the subject and say nothing more about it. Pray excuse me to the rest of my good friends and correspondents for not writing as the gentleman who is to contrive this letter is waiting on me for it. Mrs. Murray left for Harisburge the last of April on her way to Cauntuc. It is with the greatest pleasure that I inform you with the helth of all your relations. We have reason to think Cousin Thomas Meriwether is married; and I should be extremly glad to hear for certain whether he is or not. I live in hopes of receiving a letter from you by which as the only means I may be informed of your health and welfare. I enjoy my health which I hope is your situation.

I am your ever loving son
Merkwether

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
(continued from page 2)

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...we are working with the Virginia State Library and Archives to sponsor the restoration of a portrait of Lucy Meriwether Lewis Marks, who was the mother of explorer Meriwether Lewis. The library has lent us a copy of the portrait and we will feature it again after its restoration.

On that subject, subscriber Jane Henley, who lives in Charlottesville and lists a number of Meriwethers and Lewises among her ancestors, has passed along to us the text of several letters written by a young Meriwether Lewis to his mother, Lucy Marks.

One of Meriwether’s letters was written in 1789 when he was a young teen. He was staying with Albemarle County relatives when he wrote his mother, who was still living in George at the time. The letter is quite thoughtful.

The text contains misspellings and all in the letter young Meriwether wrote his mom 205 years ago last Mother’s Day.

May 12, 1789
Moste Loving Mother

I flattered myself with the hopes of receiving a letter from you. What language can express the anxiety I feel to be with you when I sit down to write but as it is now a thing impossible I shall quit the subject and say nothing more about it. Pray excuse me to the rest of my good friends and correspondents for not writing as the gentleman who is to contrive this letter is waiting on me for it. Mrs. Murray left for Harisburge the last of April on her way to Cauntuc. It is with the greatest pleasure that I inform you with the helth of all your relations. We have reason to think Cousin Thomas Meriwether is married; and I should be extremly glad to hear for certain whether he is or not. I live in hopes of receiving a letter from you by which as the only means I may be informed of your health and welfare. I enjoy my health which I hope is your situation.

I am your ever loving son
Merkwether

THE ARCHIVES COMMITTEE of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation is looking for donations of needed Lewis and Clark books for the foundation archives. Needed books are an edition of Thwaites and Moulton Volumes 3, 4, 5, 6. Any other Lewis and Clark donations would also be appreciated. Please contact Ella Mae Howard, chairman, 1904, 4th St. N.W., Great Falls, MT 59404 or any member of the Archives Committee.
THOMAS JEFFERSON TO
MERIWETHER LEWIS
WASHINGTON, APRIL 27, 1803.

...I enclose you a copy of the rough draft of the instructions I have prepared for you, that you may have time to consider them and to propose any modifications which may occur to yourself as useful...the idea that you are going to explore the Missisipi has been generally given out; it satisfies public curiosity and masks sufficiently the real destination.