Stephen Ambrose on Meriwether Lewis

The 10 “Essential Events” of the L&C Expedition

The “Odyssey” of Lewis & Clark

Deer Hunt on Corvus Creek

Julia Clark’s Favorite Recipes
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On the cover
Michael Haynes’s portrait of Meriwether Lewis shows the captain holding his trusty espontoon, a symbol of rank that also appears in Charles Fritz’s painting on pages 22-23 of Lewis at the Great Falls. We also used Haynes’s portrait to help illustrate Robert R. Hunt’s article, beginning on page 14, about parallels between the L&C Expedition and Homer’s Odyssey.
York’s big medicine among the Hidatsas

On page 78 of the late Stephen Ambrose’s book *Lewis & Clark: Voyage of Discovery*, which he wrote in collaboration with the National Geographic Society, the author tells the story of hearing the Hidatsa version of attempts to rub the color off York. The casual telling of the story illustrates one of the great attractions of the Lewis and Clark adventure—that it can be told today from other cultural perspectives.

The scene was the reconstructed ceremonial lodge at On-a- Slant, once a Mandan village south of present-day Bismarck, North Dakota. The occasion was the publicity tour for the 1997 PBS premiere of the Lewis and Clark documentary by Ken Burns, Dayton Duncan, and Ambrose. North Dakota native Gerard Baker, of Hidatsa lineage and now the Lewis and Clark bicentennial coordinator for the National Park Service, was standing around a fire in the earth lodge with Ken, Dayton, and Stephen. Gerard said his grandfather had told him of a Hidatsa chief who had heard tales of a black white man but wouldn’t believe there could be a black white man and had said that the only worthwhile Americans were the blacksmiths, who could work magic with metal. The journal entry notes that Le Borgne was received by Lewis and given some medals and ribbons. Later, when Nicholas Biddle was preparing the journals for publication, Clark and George Shannon recounted the story to him, which Biddle included as a footnote. So, this interesting encounter very nearly didn’t see print.

Le Borgne’s visit eventually became the source of a famous Charles M. Russell painting, but Russell got some of it wrong. He painted the encounter in an earth lodge, although it actually occurred at Fort Mandan, and only Lewis was present, even though both captains are shown in the painting.

I was standing next to Ambrose when Baker told his story and snapped several
pictures of the group gathered around that warm fire on a cool October afternoon. It is now my personal favorite of all the Lewis and Clark stories.

**STEPHENIE AMBROSE TUBBS**

Helena, Mont.

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** The writer is the daughter of Stephen Ambrose. A book she has coauthored with Clay Jenkinson, *The Lewis and Clark Companion*, will be published by Henry Holt in the spring.

**TRUE SOURCE OF THE MISSOURI**

As Donald Nell and Anthony Demetriades point out in “The Utopian Reaches of the Missouri” (WPO, November 2002), Jacob Brower correctly identified the headwaters of Hell Roaring Creek as the source of the Mississippi-Missouri Basin.

While the spring the writers refer to as Brower’s Spring may have been the highest water at the time of their visit, there is another source higher up that flows seasonally if not year-round. This is described as follows on page 190 of my

**GUIDE TO THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TRAIL, VOL. 2: SOUTHERN MONTANA AND IDAHO** (1979): “Angle right to reach Hell Roaring Creek, a mere trickle when observed, and follow it upstream past a series of ledges of slick red and black rock, reaching a large clean spring at the base of a ten foot wall. This might fittingly be named ‘Mississippi Spring,’ for it is said to be the remotest tributary in the entire Mississippi River Basin.”

The coordinates as well as the different physical description show quite clearly that Brower’s Spring and Mississippi Spring are not the same. Brower’s Spring is at an elevation of 8,500 feet, at 44°32’43.92” N, 111°28’58.37” W. Mississippi Spring, half a mile farther northeast, lies at an elevation of 8,800 feet, at 44°33’2.02” N, 111°28’19.18” W. (A table in my guide gives the elevation as 8,800 feet and places the spring 0.3 mile west of the Montana-Idaho border.)

I hope other researchers will visit the area to review the discrepancy and put to rest the question of just where the “utmost source” may be. The easiest access point is the Sawtell Peak Road on the Idaho side.

**James R. Wolf**

**Director, Continental Divide Trail Society**

Baltimore, Md.

Thank you for the article “The Utopian Reaches of the Missouri,” by Donald F. Nell and Anthony Demetriades. It gives justifiable attention to an important but heretofore slighted feature of the Missouri River.

In my opinion, however, the article is misleading in one crucial respect: I don’t think Jacob Brower ever made it to the site of the rock cairn, described by the authors, that today marks the Missouri’s utmost source.

Brower’s description in his book *The Missouri and Its Ultimate Source* was not completely clear to me on first reading, thus prompting me to follow his path on a trip to the most distant source in 1997. With a local guide, a friend and I went on horseback and followed the flow of Hell Roaring Creek up through Hell Roaring Canyon. It was a difficult journey.

When we reached a small, flat, marshy area just east of Lillian Lake (shown on the map printed on page 33 of the WPO
Nowhere does Brower indicate he went farther up the canyon. Thus I believe it was at the Hole in the Mountains that Brower marked a rock and left a copper plate. But this spot is still some two or three miles west (downstream) of the utmost source. The only description in Brower’s book of the cairn site mentioned by Dell and Demetriades comes from Lillian Culver, the wife of William Culver, who was with Brower at the Hole in the Mountains.

Here is Brower’s text: “On the 26th of September Mrs. Lillian E. Culver and Mr. Allen made a visit to the Hole in the Mountains, at the utmost limit of the Missouri Basin, crossing over Hanson Mountain and to the left of Horse Picket Hole, by which route they were able to ride mounted to the farthest limit of the basin where they marked the utmost spring of the Missouri up the side of the mountain very near the Idaho state boundary.”

Brower then quotes directly from an account by Mrs. Culver: “We decided to see just where the creek headed, so kept going for about three miles, and almost to the top of the divide. Suddenly the creek turned quite abruptly and headed in the northeast at quite a pretty spring, which came from under a large black rock on the side of the mountain near some balsams. It is a lonesome, wild place, and a dozen or more tiny springs higher up run into this one. Marking the spot with my name and the date on a tin plate, and depositing a shoe that my horse had cast upon the largest rock, we commenced to retrace our steps hurriedly. The rock is marked ‘L.C., Sep., 1895.’

Brower deserves credit for identifying Hell Roaring Creek as the utmost feeder stream of the Missouri. But Lillian Culver deserves credit for finding and marking the spring at the head of the creek.

On our trip to the source in 1997 we followed Brower’s route, then Lillian’s; that is to say, once past The Hole in the Mountains, we went along the north slope of the canyon, finally to arrive at the cairn. Once there, I realized that it would be easier to hike in from some point on the Continental Divide.

In September 1998 I did just that. Five of us—Mike Mansur, a reporter for the Kansas City Star; Dave Pulliam, a photographer for the Star; writer William Least Heat-Moon; Robin Jenkins, a U.S. Forest Service ranger; and I—left from the Idaho side of Sawtell Peak, followed the Continental Divide Trail, then dropped down into Hell Roaring Canyon. We easily found the source under Lillian Culver’s “large black rock,” with a large Engelmann spruce (probably Mrs. Culver’s “balsam”) near the cairn. Jenkins took a core sample and declared the tree at least 250 years old. Lillian Culver’s description of the site remains remarkably accurate. Heat-Moon called it “America’s most important unknown spot.”

I had copied in full all the notes in the jar at the cairn site, the earliest from 1972, during my previous visit. We were amazed to find a dozen new names added in the summer of 1998. We left our own messages in the jar, rebuilt the cairn, and enjoyed a clear, starry night around a campfire.

In August 2000, another friend hiked in from Sawtell Peak and found the jar empty. Gone were the traces of two dozen pilgrims dating back 30 years.

Nell and Demetriades have proposed calling the utmost source Brower’s Spring. I believe it would be more fitting to call it Lillian’s Spring, or even Missouri Spring, but it doesn’t much matter. What does matter is the fact that this important spot is still unmarked on any USGS map that I know of and that there is no USGS marker in the area. This exceptional site on relatively accessible public land deserves official recognition.

JAMES WALLACE
Fayette, Missouri

Genealogy project

In August 1999, the Clatsop County Genealogical Society, of Astoria, Oregon, began a project to identify descendants of the permanent members of the Corps of Discovery (those who completed the trip to the Pacific). The society is offering a Corps of Discovery Descendant Certificate to anyone who can document his or her direct or collateral descent. We will also be hosting a reunion of documented descendants, to be held August 12-15, 2004, at Fort Clatsop.

Genealogical data accepted by the society will be kept on permanent file in the genealogy archives of the library of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, in Great Falls, Montana. We will publish a Lewis and Clark genealogy that will be available for purchase after May 22, 2004, the 200th anniversary of the explorers’ departure from St. Charles, Missouri. Our society is nonprofit, and any proceeds will be returned to the community to further the advancement of genealogy in our area.

Questions should be directed to the Lewis & Clark Descendant Project, POB 372, Warrenton, OR 97146 (shargrov@pacifier.com). More information and downloadable forms are available on our Web site, www.pacifier.com/karenl.

SANDRA HARGROVE
Ocean Park, Wash.

The caption accompanying the John Clymer painting Up the Jefferson on page 22 of the November WPO identifies Clark, York, Charbonneau, and Sacagawea but not the bearded fellow cradling a rifle. I believe he is Lewis. The same painting appears on page 24 of Seven Trails West, by Arthur King Peters, and it identifies the man as Lewis.

RENE BERGERON
Laval, Quebec

Editor’s note: You are right. We compared this figure (above left) with one of Lewis (above right) in another Clymer painting, The Lewis Crossing, which we used on the cover of the August issue. They are obviously the same person.

Who welcomes letters. We may edit them for length, accuracy, clarity, and civility. Send them to us/c/o Editor, WPO, 51 N. Main St., Pennington, NJ 08534 (e-mail: wpo@lewisandclark.org).
New endowment program; educating the public

On the Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation enjoyed a splendid holiday season and an auspicious beginning to the bicentennial of the greatest exploration in American history.

Just prior to the holiday season we rolled out our endowment program, which establishes a much-needed long-term giving option for our members. All donated money or property (think appreciated stocks or business properties) will be placed into a trust fund. Income derived from the trust will support future LCTHF activities and programs, including trail stewardship, education, and annual meetings.

Since the Foundation’s establishment more than 30 years ago, its members and officers have dreamed of creating an endowed fund that would ensure the continuation of its many good works on behalf of the L&C Trail and story. We want to ensure that 100 years hence our grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be able to observe the Lewis and Clark bicentennial in the same wonderful fashion that we are commemorating the bicentennial. This will be our legacy to those future generations.

As I have said on other occasions, ultimately everything we do as an organization has to do with education. It is the key to our entire enterprise, from providing trail stewardship to making sure that the Lewis and Clark story is told with accuracy and due acknowledgment of the crucial role of Native Americans in the L&C saga. Education is at the heart of our work with our tribal partners and with government agencies and officials at the local, state, and national levels, and it underpins all that we do as individuals at the chapter level.

Educating visitors is critical to successful trail stewardship. Now and in the years ahead, we must work with visitors to impress on them the importance of the Lewis and Clark Trail and its preservation to our historical sense of the L&C story. Visitors need our assistance finding sites along the trail and understanding the need to tread lightly and to respect the rights of property owners. Once they return home, we need to provide them with resources—including the Foundation’s outstanding curriculum guide (available by calling 888-701-3434)—that foster continued interest in the story.

There is much that we can do as individuals. I urge you to become involved with your local schools and get the curriculum guide into the hands of teachers. You can also circulate trail-stewardship brochures and video messages to senior-citizen and history organizations and help your local LCTHF chapter recruit historians and Native Americans as speakers. The possibilities are endless.

I can’t say it enough: education is the key. I know because I married an educator. You don’t have to go that far, of course, but please—resolve during this first, critical year of the bicentennial to promote history education in your community. You will find that your efforts yield a real sense of accomplishment that will also be shared by the teachers you help.

Speaking of education, on behalf of the Foundation I want to pay special tribute to two wonderful educators and gentlemen we recently lost: the eminent historian Stephen Ambrose and Ted Carter, a member of the National Council of the L&C Bicentennial and librarian of the American Philosophical Society, where many of the Lewis and Clark journals are housed. (Please see their obituaries on page 37.) Both were great and true Keepers of the Story, and we extend our heartfelt sympathies to their families.

—Larry Epstein
President, LCTHF

HOW WILL THE FUTURE FIND US?

Excitement is high as we begin the bicentennial that will dramatically share the L&C story and trail with thousands who at this time know them only vaguely.

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation has been key to readiness for the Bicentennial, and the Foundation needs to remain on duty and on guard long after the last Signature Event has followed Corps I and II into history.

How well will we handle that task? Recent times have been hard, with income barely adequate to cover the basic programs. Our Library, with its rich resources for research and study, has been particularly handicapped, understaffed, and often closed.

But as we look ahead, we can see a path, a way that will take us over our Mountains! You read in the May 2002, issue of WPO about the late, longtime LCTHF member, Bob Shattuck, who made several generous estate gifts to the Foundation: valuable, interesting books, and a monetary portion of his assets. What incredible provisions for the Foundation’s journey forward!

To do this — and much like the Captains before him — Mr. Shattuck had to look ahead, think ahead, and act. He wanted to add strength to an organization whose mission resonated with his own goals and interests, and he knew that financial stability is vital to that mission. He saw that he could help, and he did.

Thank you, Bob Shattuck! There are still mountains ahead, but friends like you can help the Foundation over them and into a strong future of service to our nation’s heritage!
his spring a long-overdue marker will be placed at the graves of two American Indians whose connection to the Lewis and Clark Expedition is established but not, until now, publicly recognized. Here is their story, or rather what we know of it:

Twenty-five years after Lewis and Clark returned to St. Louis, four Nez Perce warriors followed a similar route to visit William Clark, by then superintendent of Indian affairs for the Missouri River country and the Pacific Northwest. These four men—Black Eagle, Man of the Morning, No Horns on His Head, and Rabbit Skin Leggings—had likely met Clark during the Corps of Discovery’s journey beyond the Rockies. It was their tribe who assisted the Corps of Discovery when it was near starvation, exhaustion, and failure at the foot of the Bitterroot Mountains. Without the hospitality and advice of these people who, as Clark wrote, “are among the most amiable we have seen,” the expedition would no doubt have perished in impassable mountain snows.

It is ironic that Black Eagle and Man of the Morning never returned to their homeland; exposed to new ailments and lacking immunization against the white man’s common diseases, they perished in the town they had come to visit. But No Horns on His Head and Rabbit Skin Leggings were aboard the American Fur Company’s Yellowstone the following spring, for we have their portraits by George Catlin, who met and painted them aboard that boat, and we know that No Horns on His Head died of an unrecorded illness later in 1832. Rabbit Skin Leggings found a group of his kin beyond the Montana plains but was later killed in an encounter with Blackfeet.

The original intent of the Nez Perce warriors’ trip from their distant homeland is not entirely clear. As with so much of the past, we can only know what has been brought, accidentally or with purpose, into the present. They may have been on a mission for their people; that meeting with the Corps of Discovery a quarter of a century before had marked the beginning of changes that challenged the foundations of the way the Nez Perces had lived from time immemorial. They may have been interested, or at least curious, about white people’s religion. Bishop Rosati of St. Louis wrote of their stay, “they came to see our church and appeared to be exceedingly well pleased with it.” Significantly, the bishop added, “there was not one who understood their language.” Evidently, clergy baptized Black Eagle and Man of the Morning, for they were buried at the Cathedral, a prerogative reserved for Catholics. But their journey was not yet over. Later their remains were moved to another cemetery, then to the vaults of St. Bridget’s Church, and finally to an unmarked mass grave in St. Louis’s Calvary Cemetery.

Now, one hundred and seventy-eight years after they died so far from home, the Nez Perce voyagers will be appropriately recognized with a marker that acknowledges their people’s contribution to the historic journey of the explorers from the east. An eight-foot monument featuring two eagle feathers carved in granite will be dedicated at the site of the warriors’ final resting place. A narrative will be incised around the base, compelling visitors to make their own journey around the monument to experience the whole story, to physically participate and thus make the story their own.

The monument—a collaborative effort of the Nez Perces, the St. Louis Warriors Organization, the Missouri Historical Society, and Missouri’s Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission—is one more way we are bringing the story of the past into the present, offering from more than a single perspective the adventure story that has shaped the life and the peoples of what eventually became the United States.

Other matters

The National Advertising Council (N.A.C.) has adopted the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial as a pro bono project. Through the N.A.C. and the advertising firm of Young and Rubicam we have been developing themes and interpretations appropriate for the bicentennial. These include stories related to American Indian cultures, trail stewardship, the 19th-century Enlightenment worldview, and the risks and responsibilities inherent in the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

The Bicentennial Council’s conference this year will take place in Great Falls, Montana, April 13-16. In addition to the usual planning sessions, the conference will include meetings of various organizations associated with the Council, including the LCTHF.

—Robert R. Archibald
President, Bicentennial Council
St. Joseph, Missouri -
1 page B&W
pickup from p. 7 of
November WPO
L&c Trail managers try to keep pace with increasing numbers of visitors

I'm thinking today about Lemhi Pass and the Lolo (Nee Me Poo) Trail, the Upper Missouri Breaks National Monument, the Gates of the Mountains, Cape Disappointment, and to a lesser extent places like Ponca State Park, in Nebraska.

Why is my concern so much greater for Lemhi Pass than, say, Fourth of July Creek near Atchison, Kansas, Fort Pierre, South Dakota, or the Missouri River at Jefferson City, Missouri? I'm concerned because today's average visitor to the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail tries to cram a lot into a short Lewis and Clark vacation. That desire to “see everything” in a week or two means people reduce the L&C experience to a relatively short list of what our culture identifies as the “sexy” or “happening” places along the trail.

This doesn't mean there aren't interesting and exciting stories elsewhere on the trail. Daily life for members of the expedition ranged from boredom to exhilaration to near-death experiences: Lewis saves himself from falling off a cliff a few days out of St. Charles; the keelboat is nearly lost in the Devil's Racetrack; the captains barely avert a fatal confrontation with the Teton Sioux at present-day Fort Pierre, South Dakota; encounters with grizzlies and stampeding buffalo on the upper Missouri; etc. If we do our job as “Keepers of the Story,” more and more visitors will come to know these and other adventures. And wherever visitors go along the trail to relive such events, we need to share with them the message of stewardship.

The number of visitors to the Wild and Scenic portion of the Missouri River, Lemhi Pass, and other popular trail sites is expected to increase dramatically during the three-year Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, which officially began last month. Our friends and partners in the National Park Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Corps of Engineers, and other land-management agencies are preparing for the onslaught, which has already begun. Some of the strategies for dealing with the crowds will inconvenience those of us used to wandering alone or in small groups, but they are necessary for the protection of the trail and the visitors themselves.

For example, if you plan to float the Missouri Breaks, the BLM now requires you to register beforehand and to tell officials where and when you plan to put in and take out. “It's mandatory,” says Dick Fichtler, the BLM's Lewis and Clark coordinator for Montana. “You can register online, through the U.S. mail, or in person at one of the launch points. This isn’t about Big Brother—we're just trying to provide a better level of service.” That includes search-and-rescue operations for people overdue at their expected exit points.

No cap on numbers

Fichtler adds that there won’t be a cap on the number of visitors allowed on the river. “I think a bigger constraint is that there will be no upstream travel into the Breaks allowed between Memorial Day and Labor Day.” Crowded camping areas may also discourage large crowds. “We are already seeing some pretty big numbers at the Eagle Creek camping area. That’s the start of the White Cliffs area and was a Lewis and Clark campsite. I’ve seen as many as 60 people camping at Eagle Creek in a single evening and have heard reports of 200 people there. That concerns us.”

In Idaho, visitors to the Lolo Motorway may be subject to a Forest Service permit system designed to limit the number of people, vehicles, and horses on this rugged one-lane road, which closely follows the expedition’s route. In December, the Clearwater National Forest began accepting permit applications for group travel on the motorway. If demand proves high enough, the permit system will be put in place for the period from July 15 to October 1. The permit area lies between the Wendover area and a point about 17 miles west. The western portal is easily accessed by a paved road 30 miles east of Kamiah. Travelers along this stretch can stay in developed campgrounds and hike maintained portions of the trail. (You can find out more about the permit system by checking the Web site www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater/LewisClark/LewisClark.htm.)

Lemhi road improved

In anticipation of crowds, many facilities have been upgraded. The Lemhi Pass Road in Montana, for example, has been improved to county standards. “It’s still a gravel road,” says Katie Bump of the Forest Service office in Dillon, “but it’s a lot better than it used to be. It’s still narrow in the last four or five miles on the Montana side, but there now are turnouts for motorists.”

Construction crews will return to Lemhi Pass this summer to continue upgrading visitor services such as picnic areas, foot trails, and restrooms. Bump says there are no visitor-control plans under consideration for Lemhi Pass, although there will be a restriction on the length of vehicles allowed on the Lemhi Pass Road. There is a new rest area at the junction of the Lemhi Pass Road and Montana Highway 324, where people can stop at Shoshone Ridge and park their overlength vehicles. There’s also a picnic area at Shoshone Ridge, and interpretive signs will soon be in place there as well.

—Jeff Olson
Trail Coordinator

Jeff Olson can be reached at trail@lewisandclark.org (P.O. Box 2376, Bismarck, ND 58502; Tel.: 701-258-1809.)
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Thwaites edition of
the L&C Journals
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Pick up from bottom of p. 39,
November WPO
Reliving the Adventures of Meriwether Lewis

The explorer’s biographer explains his special attachment to “the man with whom I’d most like to sit around the campfire”

by Stephen E. Ambrose

Stephen E. Ambrose, the prize-winning historian, long-time friend of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, and author of the 1996 bestselling biography of Meriwether Lewis, Undaunted Courage, died last October 13. An obituary appears on page 37. (A tribute to Ambrose was also included in the mailing of the November WPO.) The article below was published in The Chronicle of Higher Education of June 7, 1996, and is reprinted by permission of the Ambrose family.—Ed.

In the fall of 1975, I had just finished a comparative study of the lives of Sioux Indian Chief Crazy Horse and U.S. Army General George Armstrong Custer. I had learned long ago, from my work in the Civil War and World War II, never to write about a battle until I had walked the ground on which it was fought. So my research on the two adversaries at the Battle of the Little Big Horn had included two summers of camping with my family in the area Crazy Horse and Custer had traveled and fought over in South Dakota and Montana. My wife, Moira, and our five children had enjoyed the 10 weeks outdoors and had loved the West, so I was looking for another western subject to study. (As an associate professor, the only way I could afford to skip teaching summer school was
to find a way to make our trips tax deductible.)

That same year, an aunt gave me a set of the journals of the explorers and soldiers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. I read them and was entranced. So began the turning of a private and family obsession with the American West into a scholarly project.

As an American historian, I wanted to go someplace special for our nation’s 200th birthday. On Christmas Day in 1975, at dinner, I suggested to my family that we spend the upcoming Fourth of July at Lemhi Pass on the Continental Divide (today’s Montana-Idaho border), where Lewis had become the first U.S. citizen to step into the Pacific Northwest. Moira and the children were enthusiastic. So off we went, accompanied by some 25 students, for a summer on the Lewis and Clark Trail.

We canoed in the wake of the captains and their men, backpacked in their footsteps. We took along the journals in which both men had made entries and read them aloud at night around the campfire at campsites they had used 172 years before us. Part of what makes their expedition so irresistible today is that we can retrace much of the route, seeing what Lewis and Clark saw (except for the huge herds of buffalo), since major sections of Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and the Dakotas are still pristine. Reading their words aloud, while traveling as they did along the same route, made us feel as if we were making their discoveries right along with them.

We became so enthralled that we have returned to the trail for at least some part of every summer since. Three of our children graduated from the University of Montana and now live in Helena and Missoula, along with our three grandchildren. Moira and I live half the year in Helena (guess which half), the other half on the Gulf Coast. Throughout our two decades of visiting Montana, I wanted to write about the Lewis and Clark Expedition, but other projects kept me busy. Finally, with my book on D-Day finished in time for the 50th anniversary of that invasion on June 6, 1944, I was free. I turned full time to Meriwether Lewis.

I am a biographer, having written multivolume works on Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon. The historian James Ronda was already well into a biography of William Clark, so I felt inclined to write about Lewis, since no biography of him had been written since Richard Dillon’s popular 1965 book, Meriwether Lewis: A Biography. The 30 years since then had produced a good deal of scholarship on Lewis, including Gary Moulton’s magisterial edition of The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, Donald Jackson’s seminal edition of the Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and scores of articles in We Proceeded On, the quarterly journal of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, an organization of scholars and fans of the expedition. So a lot of new material existed that someone needed to meld into an up-to-date biography.

The research I conducted on Lewis was much different from my previous work on Eisenhower, Nixon, and World War II. Mountains of documents exist on those subjects, and I have spent thousands of hours in libraries, reading and having copies made. Material on Lewis, on the other hand, is scant. Only a handful of letters exist from his youth, and almost no material is available from two years of his adult life—1807 and 1808. Making up for the lack of documents, however, are his entries in the journals, a source unsurpassed for insights into his thinking, mood, and expectations, as well as one of our nation’s great literary treasures.

Readers will have to judge for themselves how thoroughly I understood him, but my feeling is that I got to know Lewis better than I know Ike or Dick, thanks to Lewis’s journals. Not even the Nixon tapes, not even the hundreds of hours that I spent interviewing Eisenhower, yielded so intimate a view of the man.

My previous studies had prepared me well for undertaking the task of writing Lewis’s biography. I knew a great deal about the U.S. Army during the Civil War and World War II, and found that it hadn’t changed all that much since Lewis joined up in 1794. The qualities that a good company commander needs—fairness, competence, a willingness to share the risks, a sense of being a father to a family—have not changed. I also knew a lot about the practice of politics in Washington in the second half of the 20th century; it hadn’t changed all that much either since the beginning of the 19th century—especially the partisan excess.

I admire and love Eisenhower, as a leader and a human being. But I adore Meriwether Lewis. He is above all others the man with whom I’d most like to sit around the campfire at the end of a day of canoeing or backpacking, because he saw so much, was so excited by all the new things he encountered, and could talk and write about them with enthusiasm and insight. (While I find much in Nixon to admire, he would be my last choice of a camping companion.)

I also envy Lewis: Imagine being the first white man to see the Rocky Mountains and the Great Falls of the Missouri River, or to catch and eat a cutthroat trout, or to cross the Continental Divide. Even more, imagine serv-
As Thomas Jefferson’s personal secretary, living in the White House for two years, dining with the President almost every evening, and being tutored by him in the natural sciences in preparation for a thrilling and dangerous expedition. (Jefferson has to be everyone’s first choice of a dinner companion.)

I hope that my passion enlivens my biography and brings Lewis to life. But it certainly made it difficult to write about his death. When it came time to write Eisenhower’s death scene, I shed a tear or two, but he had enjoyed a long, full life and was ready when the end came. Indeed, his last words were, “I want to go. God take me.” I shed no tears at all while finishing volume three of Nixon’s biography, although I did regret what might have been.

With Meriwether Lewis, I could scarcely see my computer screen for the tears. I bawled as I wrote, because he died by his own hand at age 35, a broken man in every way. He had become a drug addict, a heavy drinker, a bankrupt land speculator, a rejected suitor. As governor of Upper Louisiana, he could not resist the temptations of high office, and the government in Washington was questioning his chits and expense accounts. He was an explorer who felt that his expedition had been a failure, because it had not discovered an all-water route to the Pacific.

I identified with Lewis in a way that I never could with Ike or Dick: I could never be a general or a President, but I could have done at least some of what Lewis did. Not so well, obviously, but still, I can spend a day in a canoe, backpack over mountains, describe a plant or animal. The pain of Lewis’s suicide was particularly poignant for me, because my first wife had been a manic-depressive who died by her own hand at age 28. Her year in a mental hospital before her death gave me some sense of what the men close to Lewis—most of all Clark and Jefferson—must have gone through trying to convince him that life was worth living.

For me, all research involves an emotional commitment. Without it, I couldn’t possibly spend so much time with the people about whom I write. Of course, I cannot fully understand what it is like to be a President or a five-star general, any more than I can fully understand what combat is like. But after listening to hundreds of veterans talk about their experiences in battle, I can come close. And so, after 20 years on the trail with Lewis, and after reading his journal entries over and over, my identification with him has been almost total.

As Moira said, when we were hiking for the first time on the Lolo Trail in his footsteps, “My feet tingle.”
THE “ODYSSEY” OF LEWIS & CLARK

A look at the Corps of Discovery through the lens of Homer

“Sing to me of the man, Muse, the man of twists and turns.”

by ROBERT R. HUNT
hen Meriwether Lewis viewed “seens of visionary enchantment” on his westward journey, he was gazing at the White Cliffs of the Missouri River Breaks, in present-day Chouteau County, Montana. “The hills and Cliffs exhibit,” he wrote (May 31, 1805) “a most romantic appearance ... a thousand grotesque figures ... elegant ranges of lofty freestone buildings ... statuary ... collums of various sculptures ... long galleries ... with pedestals and capitals.”

His descriptions of this and other “curious scenery” found in the journals would, in later years, stir adventurers back in the “U. States” to see these faraway places for themselves. Travelers, observers, and writers for nearly 200 years have turned to the journals as a kind of travel guide. One such observer, Marius Bewley, writing in the 1970s about Lewis and Clark, comments that “apart from a few very writers like Bernard DeVoto, [the] essentially creative and imaginary character of the expedition] has been missed, its essentially 'heroic' quality sacrificed.”

But in more recent years the “visionary” and “mythic” elements have come to be better appreciated. Historian Bob Moore has written that “the story of Jason and the Argonauts closely resembles that of Lewis and Clark.”

The journey of the Corps of Discovery, Moore writes, “parallels famous myths and hero tales, and I believe this is the root of its popularity.” Another scholar, Albert Furtwangler, has noted “abiding epic strains” in the record—how the men of the corps, in crossing the continent, “conquered obstacles worthy of Odysseus.”

On a more prosaic level, Bill Gilbert, writing in Audubon magazine about the magpies, grouse, and prairie dogs sent from Fort Mandan back to Thomas Jefferson via the expedition’s keelboat in the spring of 1805, titled his story “The Incredible Odyssey of the President’s Beasts.” More graphically, Ingvard Eide, for his comprehensive photographic essay illustrating the Lewis and Clark Trail, titled his great work American Odyssey.

Thus it seems almost by rote that the expedition is associated with the word “Odyssey.” But this term and its adjective “odyssean” have settled into the language simply as references for “arduous lengthy travel.” So when Marius Bewley claims that “Lewis turned out to be a veritable Odysseus in the wilderness,” is he (and the others noted above) really comparing two personalities, i.e., Lewis and Odysseus (and by implication their respective voyages) in terms of deeds, character, and literary interest? Or is he simply making a commonplace reference out of a generalized vocabulary? Can the Corps of Discovery actually be said to evoke Homer’s story—what one writer has called that “extraordinary journey 3000 years ago [which] has never been eclipsed”?

To test this idea, put the narratives alongside each other, and proceed on. Open The Odyssey and start reading, page one:

This is the story of a man, one who was never at a loss. He had traveled far in the world, after the sack of Troy, the virgin fortress; he saw many cities of men and learnt their mind; he endured many troubles and hardships in the struggle to save his own life and to bring back his men safe to their homes.

Change only a phrase and a word or two above and you have a picture of Meriwether Lewis and the Corps of Discovery. Reading further in Homer’s text, you will find scenes and events which stand out as strikingly parallel to situations in the Lewis and Clark journals. An overall impression emerges that both narratives evoke similar basic issues: trust, loyalty, faith, friendship, bravery, kindness—universal personal themes, never out of date. But in drawing this analogy, let it be said at the outset (with all due respect for other members of the corps, particularly William Clark), that the focus here does not rest solely on Meriwether Lewis as a counterpart to Odysseus—each of these two personalities with his own respective “twists and turns”: In the Odyssey, “heroic” scenes involve not only Odysseus but also Telemachus (his son), and others. Likewise in the Corps of Discovery, Clark and others stand out “heroically” as much in the action as Lewis. With that in mind, read further to see how Odysseus and company offer ancient parallels to experiences of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. (NOTE: In the comparisons below, edited excerpts from Homer’s story are referenced by book and approximate line number in any line-numbered Homeric text. References to the Lewis and Clark journals are by date.)

Preparations

Remember first that Thomas Jefferson, Lewis’s mentor, had known and respected William Lewis (Meriwether’s father) before William’s death; when appointing Meriwether as his secretary, Jefferson said that Lewis would be “one of my family.” His later instructions to Lewis for the expedition thus evoke a message which Mentor, a character in Homer’s text, spoke to the son of Odysseus:

[T]he journey which you desire shall not be long delayed, when you have with you such an old friend of your father as I am; for I will provide a swift ship ... [Y]ou must ... get provisions ready, and put them all up in vessels, wine in jars, and barley-meal, which is the marrow of men, in strong skins. (2:280)
Following instructions, Lewis went to Philadelphia in the summer of 1803 to gather provisions, then afterwards to Pittsburgh to oversee the building of his keelboat. He supervised his contractor, just as Odysseus cared for building his boat—assuring that timbers were shaped neatly ... and made true to the line. ... Calypso brought him a boring tool, and he bored holes and fitted the spars together, making them fast with pegs and joints. He made his craft as wide as a skillful shipwright would plan out the hull ... . He fixed ribs along the sides, and decking planks above, and finished off with copings along the ribs. He set a mast in her, and fitted a yard upon it, and he made also a steering-oar to keep her straight ... . Then Calypso brought him cloth to use for a sail, and he made that too. Stays and halyards and sheets he made fast in their places, and dragged her down to the shore on rollers. (5:245)

Meanwhile, before shoving the keelboat off from Pittsburgh (August 30, 1803), Lewis proceeded (as Athena did for Telemachus) to “go at once and collect volunteers among the people.” (2:290) Clark likewise, by the time Lewis joined him near Louisville, had also collected volunteers. With a crew now assembled, including the nine young men from Kentucky, the boat was ready to move on from Clarksville on October 26, 1803. (2:385)

The sun went down, and the streets were all darkened. Then Athena ran the boat down into the sea, and put in all the gear that ships carry for sailing and rowing; she moored her at the harbour point, and the crew assembled, fine young fellows all, and she set them each to work. (2:385)

WATER TRAVEL

On storm-tossed rivers—the Ohio, the Missouri, and the Columbia—Lewis and Clark were figuratively in the same boat with Odysseus on the sea:

The gods were all sorry for him, except Poseidon, god of the sea, who bore a lasting grudge against him all the time until he returned. (1:20)

All the way up the Missouri, the river would persist (like the sea in Homer), belching up terrific showers of spray which covered the cliffs in a mist; for there was no harbour for a ship, and no roadstead, nothing but bluffs and crags and headlands along that shore. (5:400)

The “grudge” of the sea god was like Lewis’s “evil genii” haunting the white pirogue: when Cruzatte was trying to save that vessel on May 14, 1805, in a “sudon squawl of wind,” he resembled Odysseus in the same predicament—

how all the winds come sweeping upon me! Now my destruction’s a safe thing! a great wave rolled up towering above him, and drove his vessel round. He lost hold of the steering-oar, and fell out into the water: the mast snapt in the middle as the fearful tempest of warring winds fell upon it; sail and yard were thrown from the wreck. (5:313)

Farther on, the corps’s keelboat still had to deal with a Poseidon grudge. The boat was near destruction several times on the Missouri in storms almost as terrible as the one in which Odysseus lost his steersman:

[S]uddenly came the west wind screeching and blowing with a furious tempest, the gale broke both the forecastays, the mast fell aft, and all the tackle tumbled into the hold, the mast hit the steerman’s head and crushed the skull to splinters, he took a header from his deck and was drowned. Zeus at the same time thundered and struck our ship with his bolt; she shivered in all her timbers at the blow, and the place was full of sulphur. The men were cast out, they were bobbing up and down on the waves like so many crows ... . A rolling wave carried her along dismantled, and snapt off the mast close to the keel. I used [stout oxhide] to lash together keel and mast, and I rode upon these drifting before those terrible winds ... But why go on with my story? I have told it already, and no one cares for a twice-told tale. (12:400-455)

Twice-told indeed! Clark too on several occasions had to replace his mast (e.g., June 4, 1804). His crew also had to cast into the water (e.g., June 9, 1804), and while not bobbing up and down like crows, they were a perfect team, saving the boat from capsizing.

MOURNING THE DEAD

Just as Odysseus suffered a loss and observed honors for his dead, Lewis and Clark also mourned a loss—a key man, Sergeant Floyd. The melancholy scene for Floyd’s funeral and burial at present-day Sioux City, Iowa (Au-
gust 20, 1804), is strangely reminiscent of Odysseus’s mourning one of his companions:

as soon as the next day dawned, I sent my companions to Circe’s house to bring the body of Elpenor. We cut chunks of wood for a pyre, and buried him on the end of the foreland, mourning for our dear dead friend. And when the body was burnt with his arms, we raised a barrow with a large stone upon it and set up his own oar on the summit. (12:8)

On shore

Proceeding on, there were times when some of the party (Lewis, Clark, Shannon, and others) were on shore alone, fighting weather, mosquitoes, and cold or hot nights (e.g., Lewis July 30, 1805)—just as Odysseus did:

So he entered a coppice which he found close to the river, with a clear space around it; there he crawled under a couple of low trees which were growing close together out of one root … . So thick and close they grew that no damp wind could blow through, nor could the sun send down his blazing rays, nor could rain penetrate. Odysseus crept into this thicket, and found there was plenty of room for a bed, so he scraped up the leaves with his bare hands … . Down he lay in the middle, and heaped the leaves over his body. (5:474)

Confronting the elements ashore was not as demanding as when Clark, farther up river, found himself staring down the hostile Teton Sioux on September 25, 1804—alone on shore, hundreds of warriors with drawn bows aimed at him, Clark was threatened, (as was Mentor, the protector of Odysseus’s household, by hostile taunts)—one against many is done, a many’s too many for one, in fights for a supper. (2:242)

At last, beyond the Sioux, the expedition reached the Mandan villages on October 26, 1804, there to spend the winter waiting through cold and boredom. To pass the time, the captains (and others of the party) could be imagined (as Homer pictured men idling time)
amusing themselves with a game of draughts in front of the door, sitting on the skins of cattle which they had killed themselves. (1:105)

Temptations nonetheless lurked in those precincts, like those facing Odysseus when passing through the Strait of Messina and the threat of Scylla and Charybdis. Warned by Circe that irresistible songs of female Sirens could lure sailors to their deaths, Odysseus plugged up the ears of his men with wax to block out the singing, then had himself tied to the mast (12:153-183). The captains perhaps should have taken similar precautions at Fort Mandan.

There the lures of young females caused the kind of mischief Odysseus feared while passing between Scylla and Charybdis. Sergeant Ordway, for one, should have had more stuffing in his ears; one siren song got him in deep trouble on November 22, 1804. Again with the Shoshones on the Continental Divide, those irresistible female strains echoed, and were even more enticing later at Fort Clatsop. By then the captains gave further heed to Circe’s warning when an “Old Boud” [bawd], as the captains described her, of the Chinooks stood in the wings on March 15, 1806, with six young sirens. Lewis admonished the men to take an oath of chastity—not exactly like plugging their ears, but apparently it caused enough tone-deafness, for awhile at least.

Back at the Mandan villages, the captains were like Telemachus’s visitor:

I have come here now with ship and crew, voyaging over the dark face of the sea to places where they speak other languages than ours. (1:182)

For help with “other languages than ours” farther west, the captains hired Charbonneau, with Sacagawea, as interpreter on March 17, 1805, and were ready to proceed. Some of the Mandans wished the men would stay longer and were sorry to see them leave. Lewis or Clark could be imagined speaking (with poetic license) to one of the chiefs (as Telemachus spoke to Menelaus, wishing to delay a parting):

My Lord, do not keep me here long. It is true I could stay here a whole year with you, idle, and I should not miss home or parents; for I … love … your stories and your conversation: but my compatriots are bored already … . [H]orses I will not take …. I will leave them for you to enjoy; for you are lord of a broad plain, in which is plenty of clover. (4:593)
The Mandans watched the corps ship out. Lewis, in his journal entry of April 7, 1805, thought of Columbus and exulted in his fleet. The captains had to pay attention to the surveying and navigation requirements of the voyage. Some sleepless nights, they were star gazers (like Odysseus):

Calypso saw him off—No sleep fell on his eyes; but he watched the Pleiades and the late-settling Wagoner, and the Bear, or the Wagon, as some call it, which wheels round and round where it is, watching Orion, and alone of them all never takes a bath in the Ocean … . Calypso had warned him to keep the Bear on his left hand as he sailed over the sea. (5:273)

The captains occasionally walked alone on shore, carrying an espontoon, a spearlike weapon that also served as a walking stick. On May 29, 1805, Clark killed a wolf with his. Odysseus too carried a spear while walking on shore—he spied a stag with towering antlers right on my path … . I struck him on the spine in the middle of the back, and the spear ran right through; down he fell in the dust with a moan, and died. I set my foot on him and drew out the spear from the wound. Then I laid the body on the ground, and strung a strong rope of a fathom’s length: with this rope I tied together the legs of the great creature, and strung him over my neck, and so carried him down to the ship, leaning upon my spear. (10:160)

Clark may not have carried his wolf quite in this manner, but it is certain that the hunters of the corps did indeed bring in their meat just as Odysseus did.

MONSTERS

The “spear” would prove a life-saver for Lewis on June 14, 1805, when he unexpectedly encountered an onrushing grizzly; fortunately, he was carrying his espontoon, which he pointed at the charging bruin, thereby averting an attack. Odysseus was not quite so lucky when he was close upon the hounds, with a long spear in his hand … . There in a dense thicket lay a great boar: no damp wind was strong enough to blow through that thick scrub … . The boar was aroused by the trampling of the men and dogs; out he came from the bushes … his neck bristling and his eyes flash-

ing fire … . Odysseus in front of the rest ran at him, pointing the spear to deal him a blow; but the boar charged sideways and struck him first, above the knee. (19:437)

Lewis referred to the grizzlies as “these gentlemen.” In Homer’s story a comparable creature is called an “Old Man.” This is Proteus, a sea god constantly hostile to Odysseus’s kin and friends; he becomes a beast as elusive and terrifying as several of Lewis’s gentlemen near the Great Falls, particularly the one that treed Private McNeal on July 15, 1806. In animal disguise the “Old Man” gets in a brawl with Menelaus, who tries to catch him by trickery:

at once we rushed on him with yells, and seized him—the Old Man did not forget his arts! First he turned into a bearded lion, then into a serpent, then a leopard, then a great boar; he turned into running water, and a tall tree in full leaf, but we held fast patiently. (4:457)

This beast was as reluctant to give up as Clark’s huge grizzly, which took eight bullets through its head and lungs and still came on charging (May 14, 1805).

Harassed at the Great Falls, not only by bears but by the toil of portaging and the failure of the iron boat (June 21-July 14, 1805), the corps lost valuable time. On June 25 the men had even tried sailing a crudely fashioned wagon over harsh terrain for the portage. Lewis’s discouragement and impatience is an echo of Menelaus, stuck in Egypt:

there the gods kept me back for twenty days; never a good wind blew over the brine, none of those which speed a ship over the broad back of the sea. All our provisions would have been used up, and the spirit of the men gone, if a divine being had not pitied me and saved me … . I must have touched her heart, when she met me wandering alone without companions; for they used to go about fishing with hook and line, since famine tore at their bellies. (4:351-371)

Private Goodrich, the lead fisherman of the corps, was expert with hook and line and could help calm the bellies of his comrades (June 11, 1805).

Moving on to the Three Forks of the Missouri, Clark on July 26, 1805, climbed the overlooking hill to see what he could see, just as Odysseus did at the Island of the Winds:
Then I climbed the cliff and stood still to get a good view. There was no arable land or garden to be seen, but we saw smoke rising in the air. So I sent some men to find out who the natives were, two picked men with a third as their spokesman. (9:90)

Proceeding on, Clark personally had no luck in turning up the much sought-after Shoshones. On August 1, 1805, Lewis relieved Clark in the search. He then did as Menelaus had done in a different kind of search:

when dawn showed the first streaks of red, I walked along the shore ... earnestly praying to the gods; and I took three comrades, men whom I trusted most for every enterprise. (4:431)

Finally, Lewis (with three trusted comrades, Drouillard, Shields, and McNeal) found the Shoshones on the Continental Divide and met their chief, Cameahwait, near Lemhi Pass on August 13, 1805.

There they spent the night, and their host gave them gifts as a host ought to do. (15:185)

Shoshone hospitality lasted long enough to permit purchase of horses for overland travel through the tortuous Bitterroot Mountains. Near the summit of the Bitterroots, in the neighborhood of Lolo Pass on September 16, 1805, the corps passed in the shadow of what looked like the awesome creature in Homer’s story—the Cyclops, or Polyphemous, the one-eyed monster eager to devour Odysseus’s entire crew when they were trapped in his cave (9:216–461). This huge rock sentinel, remarkably resembling Homer’s monster, was photographed by Ingvard Eide, who labels it “Granitic Rock,” relating it to September 15, 1805—a terrible day in the life of the Corps of Discovery, a day when horses and men half-dazed, stumble, sick from fatigue, hunger and cold on the mountain side. A rock image of the Cyclops at this place on this date is weirdly evocative of such a grim day: starvation, sickness unto death—the party stayed alive only by eating a “killed colt” and ingesting roots. They were like the exhausted Odysseus supplicant before Alcinoös:

[T]here is nothing in the world more shameless than this cursed belly! [It] forces a man to remember it, in spite of dire distress and sorrow of heart ... ; yet the belly commands me to eat and drink, and makes me forget all that I have suffered, and bids me fill it up. Do your best, I pray you, early tomorrow, that an unhappy man may return to his own country after so much suffering. Let me once set eyes on my lands and my men and my great house, and then let me die. (7:214)

Somehow they managed not to die and moved on to make contact with the Nez Perces, with whom they were able to recover their wits at Canoe Camp, reached September 26, 1805. Their new friends were like Calypso, who said to Odysseus,

[C]ome along, cut down trees, hew them into shape, make a good broad raft; you can lay planks across it and it shall carry you over the misty sea! I will provide you bread, water, red wine, as much as you like, you need not starve. I’ll give you plenty of clothes and send a fair wind behind you to bring you home safe and sound. (5:160)

Strengthened by this interlude, the corps moved down the Clearwater River to the Snake, then to the Columbia, and
at last to the ocean. As with Menelaus on his return from Egypt, Lewis and Clark noted on November 15, 1805, near the mouth of the Great River of the West, a capital harbour, where voyagers take in fresh water before they push off again. (4:335)

Homeward Bound

It was a long and depressing winter before the party could “push off again.” At times the leaders felt a need for solitude. Like Telemachus who prayed by the shore, William Clark at least once, on December 10, 1805,

went by himself by the seashore. There he washed his hands in the gray brine. (2:260)

and perhaps like Telemachus offered a prayer. (Clark did indeed later attribute ultimate success to the hand of Providence.)

Recall then how Homer has Zeus instruct his messenger, Hermes:

Go and declare our unchangeable will, that Odysseus shall return after all his troubles. But no god shall go with him, and no mortal man. He shall build a raft, and a hard voyage he shall have, until after twenty days he shall come to land on Scheria, the rich domain of our own kinsmen … . They shall honour him like a god in the kindness of their hearts, and they shall escort him in one of their ships to his native land. (5:28)

It would take Lewis and Clark longer than 20 days to return to their old friends, the Nez Perces, who would give them respite and later an escort toward their native land.

While the men moved upriver seeking these friends, they were belabored by hostile natives, hunger, and the turbulent Columbia. But they were heartened when an eagle was seen with a salmon in its beak (a sign of the impending annual salmon run)—just as Telemachus had been heartened at least twice by good omens:

Zeus sent Telemachus a pair of eagles, flying from lofty mountainpeak. On they flew down the wind awhile … soaring on wide-stretched sails. (2:146)

Later, when Telemachus was departing from Menelaus, a good omen came; a bird flew over to the right, an eagle carrying in his claws a huge white goose which he had caught up from a farmyard, and there were the men and women following with shouts … . At that sight all felt a deep glow of satisfaction. (15:160)

To the corps the eagle omen proved good when, farther upriver, the men observed native celebrations of the return of the salmon on April 19, 1806. The day before, Clark had also observed and was intrigued by native hand games. Despite these diversions, all was not “fun and games.” Lewis was enraged when, on April 11, 1806, Indians briefly stole his Newfoundland dog, Seaman, an act that showed a certain disrespect. Odysseus too had been galled by sneers of challengers:

You are all making fun of me. My mind is more set on troubles than on games. Suffering and sorrow is what I have had so far; I am here in your gathering only as a suppliant … and all I want is to get home … . Broadsea said to him: Ah well, sir, I would not want to put you down as a fellow who goes in for games, though that is the way of the world, you know; skipper of a trading crew is what you look like … thinking of cargo, keeping an eye on the goods and grabbing what profits you can … . Odysseus said with a frown: You have made me angry by your bad manners … . Now I am tired and worn out with perils in battle and perils of the sea … . You have cut me to the quick, and I cannot sit still any longer. (8:152-186)

These ugly episodes gave way to happier occasions when the corps reached the Walla Walla Indians on April 27, 1806, and after them, the Nez Perces (May 8, 1806). While spending more than a month with these helpful people, waiting for the snowbound mountain passes to open, the men gathered strength to resume travel. With a bit of leisure, there was time for sports matches with the Nez Perces—the first international olympic games on the North American continent—following Homer’s model when Odysseus was with the Phaiacians:

Let us go and try our luck at games and sports, that our guest may report to his friends when he gets home how we beat the world at boxing and wrestling and jumping and running! … All made haste to the ground, and a huge crowd followed … . Young champions were found in plenty: Topship and Quicksea and Paddler, Seaman [emphasis added] and Poopman … . The first contest was a foot-race. The running was fast from start to finish. … Next came wrestling. … At jumping Seagirt was first; … Paddler was easily first at putting the weight, and in the boxing Laodamus … . A man ought to know about games. Game is the best way to fame while you’re still alive—what you can do with arms and legs. (8:98-146)

In the contests with the natives, Drouillard and Reubin Field held up U.S. honors in running (June 8, 1806). Although the journals don’t mention him as a participant, we can assume that Private John Colter also took
part in these games with the Nez Perces. After the expedition, Colter returned to the mountains as a fur trapper. When captured by the Blackfeet at the Three Forks and ordered to run for his life, Colter killed one of his pursuers and outraced the rest. In this deadly sport he proved that “game is the best way to fame.” What he did with “arms and legs” kept him “still alive” and earned him a place in the record (or at least history) books forever.16

From the Nez Perces on, over the mountains, down the rivers, the rest is history—200 years and 3,000 years ago. As they swept by St. Charles and arrived at St. Louis on September 23, 1806, the explorers who had been to the Pacific and back could echo what Odysseus said to Calypso: “I tell you there is no sweeter sight any man can see than his own country.”(9:32)

MORE MIRROR IMAGES

This story cannot be put to rest without noting the following additional parallels:

The names of the two principal “heroes” are subject to pun: Meriwether Lewis encountered anything but “merry weather”; a goddess says to our ancient voyager, “Poor Odysseus! You’re odd-I-see, true to your name.” (5:339; see translator Rouse’s note substantiating the pun in Homer’s Greek.)

Odysseus and crew, like Lewis and Clark (September 17, 1806), were all taken as long lost and dead by their families and countrymen. Telemachus mourning his father:

But he is dead and gone in this miserable way, and there is no comfort for us, even if there are people in the world who say he will come back. (1:158)

Both Lewis and Odysseus carried scars from wounds incurred on their voyages—Lewis, by gun shot, on his buttock (August 11, 1806) and Odysseus, by the boar’s tusk, on his knee (19:450).

Lewis’s dog, Seaman, was as versatile and accomplished as Odysseus’s 20-year-old hound, Argos:

If his looks and powers were now what they were when the master went away and left him, tha’d see his big strength and speed! Never a beast could escape him in the deep forest when he was on the track, for he was a prime tracker. (17:290-324)

Finally, if you think that Lewis’s fight with the Blackfeet at the Two Medicine River site was breathtaking (July 27, 1806), then turn to Homer and read for comparison “The Battle in the Hall” with Penelope’s suitors (22:1-500).

These parallels in the two narratives—the Corps of Discovery reflected in the mirror of The Odyssey—help us, as one scholar has put it, “to experience the stories,” stories so good that “every generation has wanted to preserve them for the next.”17

Foundation member Robert R. Hunt lives in Seattle.

NOTES

1 The first lines of The Odyssey as translated by Robert Fagles (New York: Viking, 1996).

2 Gary E. Moulton, ed., The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 13 volumes., 1983-2001) Vol. 4, pp. 225-226. All quotations or references to journal entries in the ensuing text are from Moulton, Vols. 2-11, by date unless otherwise indicated.


9 Homer, The Odyssey: The Story of Odysseus, as translated by W. H. D. Rouse (New York and Toronto: Mentor Books, 1937). All quotations from this translation are referenced by chapter (i.e., “book”) and approximate line number when compared with other translations (necessarily approximate, as line numbers vary in different translations—lines are not numbered in Rouse’s translation).


11 Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 61-66.


13 Ibid., p. 85.

14 Jackson, Vol. 1, p. 359. The reference is to a letter written by Clark on January 18, 1807.

15 Robert R. Hunt, “Fun and Games on the Lewis and Clark Expedition,” We Proceeded On, August 1993, pp. 4-14.


What were the essential events of the Lewis & Clark Expedition?

by Arlen J. Large

EDITOR’S NOTE: Foundation member Jerry Garrett, of St. Louis, sent us the following. It was written by the late Arlen J. “Jim” Large, a Foundation president and frequent WPO contributor who died in 1996. Explains Garrett, “In the early 1990s, as chair of the Bicentennial Committee, I asked committee members to submit what they thought were the essential components of the Lewis and Clark story. This was Jim’s response.” We welcome readers’ comments and their own contributions of other major events of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.¹

1 August 12, 1805. Lewis reaches the crest of Lemhi Pass on the Continental Divide, “from which I discovered immense ranges of high mountains still to the West of us with their tops partially covered with snow.”

The expedition’s single most important geographical discovery was the width of the Rocky Mountain chain, rammed home by the vista greeting Lewis at Lemhi. Thomas Jefferson’s whole plan for a transcontinental water route was based on the assumption that the Rockies amounted to a single narrow dividing ridge between the Missouri and Columbia Rivers. Instead, Lewis and Clark found several parallel mountain ranges, including some west of the divide. Their discovery changed everyone’s concept of the North American interior. More than another month passed before William Clark, on September 18, 1805, looked west from Sherman Peak on the Lolo Trail to see “an emence Plain and leavel Countrey”—the end of the Rockies at last.

2 June 20, 1803. Thomas Jefferson signs his detailed set of expedition instructions to Meriwether Lewis.

These orders broadened the expedition’s goals from geographic discovery alone to a whole cafeteria of Enlightenment inquiry: Who are the native residents and how
do they live? What do the plants and animals look like? How cold does it get? How hot? When do the flowers bloom? What are the minerals? Having to satisfy the breadth of Jefferson’s curiosity is what made the expedition unique in the history of human exploration, at least to that time. Jefferson’s ambitious assignment became a model for later U.S. government investigations of the West. In 1819, when Secretary of War John C. Calhoun aimed Major Stephen Long toward the Rockies, he said: “The instructions of Mr. Jefferson to Capt. Lewis, which are printed in his travels, will afford you many valuable suggestions, of which as far as applicable, you will avail yourself.”

3 January–February, 1806. Following Lewis and Clark’s return, Jefferson fails to follow up his triumph.

Lewis and Clark were back in Washington, hailed as heroes of western discovery. This was the time for their commander-in-chief to order the two officers to stay in the capital and work on publication of their priceless maps and journals. It was an event that should have happened, but didn’t. Instead, Jefferson gave them cushy patronage jobs in distant St. Louis. As a result, the first ghost-written paraphrase of their journals, and only one map, didn’t see print until 1814—too late to help the second wave of private fur traders seeking to exploit the expedition’s findings.
(The remaining events are listed in chronological order.)


The half-Shawnee was chosen because of his skill at Indian sign-language, but he also blossomed into the expedition’s best woodsman and hunter. Of Drouillard, Lewis later wrote: “It was his fate also to have encountered, on various occasions, with either Capt. Clark or myself, all the most dangerous and trying scenes of the voyage, in which he uniformly acquitted himself with honor.”


St. Louis fur traders repeatedly warned the captains about Sioux efforts to halt northbound traffic on the Missouri and thus protect their monopoly in British trade goods. That was a factor in the American explorers’ decision to take more men than originally planned. Sure enough, the Tetons tried to halt the expedition. Tensions ran high for two days until Friday, the 28th, when a Teton chief “Sayed we might return back with what we had or remain with them, but we could not go up the Missouri any farther,” according to Sergeant John Ordway. “Boath of our Captains told him we did not mean to be trifled with.” Lewis and Clark won the war of nerves, and the party proceeded on.

6 April 7, 1805. The expedition leaves Fort Mandan with its final complement of people who would cross the Rocky Mountains and reach the Pacific Ocean.

Earlier in the trip there had been a whole series of preliminary “departures”: Lewis from Washington and Pittsburgh, Clark from Louisville, the keelboat and two pirogues from Camp River Dubois. Each time the expedition roster included different individuals joining and dropping away. Not until the end of the North Dakota winter, with the keelboat’s return to St. Louis, was the permanent party honed down to the 33 souls who would see the Pacific beaches and return.

7 June 13, 1805. Lewis hears “a roaring too tremendous to be mistaken for any cause short of the great falls of the Missouri.”

It was tangible proof that the expedition was on the right course after doubt and indecision at the Marias 10 days before. In North Dakota the Hidatsas had given Lewis and Clark a reality check for following the Missouri: you will come to a mighty falls. But the explorers hadn’t been warned about a big river, the Marias, entering the Missouri from the north. At the junction of rivers the captains feared picking the wrong one, and then having to backtrack: that “would not only loose us the whole of this season but would probably so dishearten the party that it might defeat the expedition altogether,” wrote Lewis. Leading a small advance party up the south branch,
Lewis knew he was on the true Missouri “whin my ears were saluted with the agreeable sound of a fall of water.”

August 17, 1805. Clark makes a nick-of-time appearance at Camp Fortunate on the upper Beaverhead.

A Shoshone of Cameahwait’s band “reported that the whitemen were coming, that he had seen them just below,” said a much-relieved Lewis. Earlier that week Lewis had found the Shoshones on the west side of Lemhi Pass, and persuaded Cameahwait to re-cross it with him and meet “my brother Chief” who was coming in canoes up the Beaverhead River. But when Lewis and the Indians reached the river on August 16, Clark wasn’t there. Lewis spent a sleepless night worrying that the Indians would take alarm and vanish, ruining chances of buying their horses for continuing the trip. But he talked them into staying until Clark was spotted coming upriver the next morning.

October 16, 1805. The expedition comes to the junction of the Snake and Columbia rivers.

The British Navy had already mapped the Columbia’s Pacific entrance and other Northwest coast features, so what Lewis and Clark would find there wasn’t new. However, no literate investigators had previously explored the river’s inland tributaries. Now the Americans understood how the Clearwater and Salmon combined with the Snake, which ran into the Columbia. They also would take back the first reports on the main Columbia’s navigability east of the Cascades (not good!).

July 27, 1806. Lewis and party fight the Blackfeet at their campsite on Two Medicine River.

There is continuing controversy over whether this skirmish, in which two Indians died, was the main cause of later Blackfeet hostility to all Americans entering the northern Rockies. At any rate, some people at the time thought that was the case, and history changed accordingly. In 1811, an overland party headed for John Jacob Astor’s new Columbia River trading post encountered John Colter not far from St. Louis. Colter had returned several times to Blackfeet country after his trip with Lewis and Clark. He warned them to stay away from the upper reaches of the Missouri, where he said the Indians were still bitter about the fight with Lewis. The Astorians dropped their plan to follow the Lewis and Clark route and took a more southerly course on horseback. That helps explain why Lewis’s “most practicable rout” across the mountains was never used again.

Notes

1 Because the author did not write this article for publication, he did not reference his sources, and because he is deceased we cannot ask him to do so retroactively. Most of the quoted passages are dated and can be easily found in Volumes 2-11 of Gary E. Moulton, ed., The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, 13 volumes (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983-2001).
On a bright, cool morning in the late summer of 1804, privates John Colter and John Shields of the Corps of Discovery were hunting together along Corvus Creek, a tributary of the Missouri in what is now South Dakota. Both men carried Army-issue flintlock rifles. With the sun at their back, they moved slowly upwind into a faint breeze. The thick oak brush kept them out of sight of each other, but they remained in easy calling distance. When Colter noticed some movement in the brush about 60 yards ahead, he knelt and brought the rifle to his shoulder while silently feathering the hammer from half to full cock. The deer was feeding on acorns and remained unaware of his presence as Colter gently squeezed the trigger.

From his position closer to the cottonwoods along the river, Shields heard the familiar roar of the flintlock and saw the white smoke wafting down the creek bottom. *Wind’s perfect*, he thought. *I knew that big doe was gonna get in front of him.* He would give his partner some time to follow up on his shot before going to assist him.

It can easily be argued that the most important tool of the Lewis and Clark Expedition was the flintlock rifle. Because the explorers lived mainly off the land, they depended on rifles for subsistence. From their departure from Camp Dubois in Illinois until their return more than two years later, rifles kept the party—which ranged in size from 33 to more than 40—supplied with buffalo, elk, deer, antelope, and bear.

The Corps of Discovery carried a variety of weapons. Besides rifles they included blunderbusses (short, heavy scatterguns mounted on the two pirogues), a swivel cannon, an airgun, pistols, and muskets. Both muskets and rifles are shoulder arms, but the barrel interior, or bore, of a musket is smooth, while a rifle’s is cut with spiral grooves. The grooving, or rifling, imparts spin to the ball, giving it much greater accuracy and range. Members of the expedition carried both the Kentucky long rifle and a shorter half-stock rifle, an early or possible prototype version of the Model 1803 produced at the government arsenal at

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**Hunt on Corvus Creek**

A primer on the care and operation of flintlock rifles as practiced by the Corps of Discovery

by Gary Peterson

Drawings by the author
Harpers Ferry, Virginia.3 The Model 1803—referred to in the journals as the “short” rifle—had a barrel length of 33 or 34 inches (compared to the 42-48 inches of a typical small-calibered Kentucky rifle) and fired a relatively large-caliber ball, which would have been more adequate for hunting larger game such as buffalo and elk.4

Like many other commonplace items and activities, rifles and hunting are often mentioned in the journals but are not discussed in detail. This brief, fictionalized account is a narrative reconstruction of what might have occurred in the way of rifle handling and maintenance before, during, and after a typical hunt. It draws on the journals, secondary sources, and my own experience as a sportsman who for many years has practiced “primitive” hunting with a muzzle-loading rifle and black powder.

Our hypothetical hunt takes place in the vicinity of Corvus Creek (now known as American Creek), a Missouri tributary near present-day Oacoma, South Dakota.5 The explorers camped above the mouth of the creek on September 16, 1804, and remained there several days. They named the creek, wrote Lewis, “in consequence of having kiled a beatiful bird of that genus near it.” He is referring to the black-billed magpie.6 The wooded bottomland, added Lewis, was thick with wild plum, and in his journal entry of the next day Clark called this place “Plomb Camp.” The timber gave way to rolling prairie, “pleasing and beatiful” and filled with “immence herds of Buffaloe deer Elk and Antelopes which we saw in every direction feeding on the hills and plains.”7

John Colter was one of the ablest members of the Corps of Discovery, and Shields was its trusted gunsmith. Both men were frequently assigned to hunting details.

Preparations for the hunt on Corvus Creek had begun the evening before, when Colter’s squad leader, Sergeant John Ordway, approached him after dinner to tell him he was one of six hunters who would go out with Captain Lewis in the morning.8 Colter and Shields would work the creek together. Colter was prepared to use his personal weapon, a Kentucky long rifle, but instead Ordway...
issued him one of the short rifles, along with a sling, shooting bag, powder horn, measure, powder, balls, a piece of linen cloth, bear’s oil, and a new flannel shirt (compliments of Captain Clark). He got his bullet pouch, vent pick, pan brush, small screw driver, short starter, and priming horn from his shooting bag and transferred them to the one supplied by Ordway. [Boldface indicates illustrated items—Ed.]

The 30 bullets issued by Ordway he placed in the bullet pouch, which also went into the shooting bag.

Ball patches are essential items in any black-powder hunter’s kit, and Colter now turned to making a supply of them. He took the linen cloth and ripped it into strips about an inch and a quarter wide. With his hunting knife he then cut the strips into squares, folded each square over twice, and cut the open corner so that, unfolded, the patch was octagonally shaped for a neater fit. The ball’s diameter is slightly less than the bore’s, and the patch fills the space between them. Greased with bear’s oil and wrapped around the ball before its insertion into the barrel, a patch keeps the ball snug against the rifling, holding it in place and imparting spin when the ball is fired. The greased patches were stowed in the patch box on the rifle’s stock near the butt, along with a worm (patch puller), a ball screw (bullet puller), and spare flints.

A hunter normally loaded his rifle by pouring a measure of powder down the barrel, followed by the patched ball rammed down on top of it. To save time he could also preload powder and ball into a paper cartridge. Ordway had a supply of cartridges and issued several to Colter. These too went into his shooting bag.10

(It is also possible that some of the expedition’s hunters may have carried their cartridges in a leather cartridge box with a shoulder strap and a wooden block bored to hold the cartridges. A hunter might also have carried, either around his neck or attached to his shooting bag, a bullet block—a wooden board with holes drilled in it for holding balls wrapped in greased patches for quick reloading.)

Colter completed his preparations by checking the rifle’s front and rear sights to make sure they were tight and centered. He then went over the lock. This is the
mechanism that produces the spark that ignites the powder which propels the ball. Its main components are the **frizzen** (also called a battery) and the **hammer** (or cock), which holds the flint. He drew back the hammer to the **half-cock position** and closed the frizzen over the priming pan, then gently lowered the hammer against the frizzen. The contact between flint and steel was good. He noted too that the flint was tight in the jaws of the hammer and properly aligned. None of this surprised him, for Shields always kept the guns in good working order.

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Before the smoke had rolled away in the breeze, Colter knew the shot was good. Mentally, he marked the spot where the deer had stood. Shields would probably be along shortly to help him with it. He reloaded immediately—always the first priority.

Getting up from his kneeling position, Colter set the rifle’s butt on the ground and blew through the muzzle to clear the touch hole. This extinguished any lingering embers in the bore and softened the fouling, which eased reloading. He took a cartridge from his shooting bag, then bit off the twisted paper tail and dumped the powder charge down the barrel. Stripping away the remaining paper exposed the ball wrapped in its greased patch. He pressed ball and patch against the muzzle and with a couple of sharp raps on his short starter inserted them a few inches into the bore. He used the ramrod to drive them all the way down into the breech.

The rest took just a few seconds. He half-cocked the hammer and with a thumb cleared the frizzen of powder fouling, then half-filled the pan with fine-grained powder from the priming horn and closed the frizzen over the pan. Finally, he checked to make sure the flint was still tight. (Although he didn’t utilize them on this occasion, he also carried a set of specialized tools for field cleaning the lock. These were the pan brush and vent pick. The former was used for removing powder fouling from the pan and the rest of the lock and breech area, and the latter kept the vent or touch hole—the opening between the pan and powder chamber—clear of powder fouling.)

With the rifle now reloaded, primed, and ready, Colter approached the kill. He found the first sign, a smear of
blood on the leaves of a little oak, just a few paces from where he’d last seen the deer standing. The blood was frothy and a pinkish color, telling him that he’d hit the doe in the “lights,” or lungs. A few more paces and blood seemed to be everywhere. The air was so crisp that he caught the musky odor before actually seeing the doe, which lay stone dead in the brush. She was one of the big black-tailed deer with the big, mule-like ears they’d been seeing of late, not the smaller white-tailed deer common to eastern woods. *The Cap’ns will be pleased to finally get one of these,* he thought.

With his hunting knife he quickly field-dressed his kill—slitting it open from anus to throat and splitting the breastbone. After spilling the guts he wedged a tree branch into the chest cavity to keep it open so it would cool out properly. He was done by the time Shields arrived.

“Seen ya afore I heard ya,” he said.

“Got one myself out on the edge of the cottonwoods,” Shields told him.

“Heard ya shoot,” said Colter.

Together they dragged the doe a short distance from the entrails and covered her with brush to keep away any scavenging birds. They had more hunting to do and they would return later for the carcasses.

* * *

That evening, Clark recorded the hunt’s tally in his journal: 13 deer, three buffalo, and a “goat,” or pronghorn antelope, taken by Colter later in the day. Clark commented on the “curious kind of deer” Colter had shot, noting its dark gray color, unusually long, fine hair, large ears, and black-tufted tail. He was describing what Lewis would later designate the mule deer, a species previously unknown to science.11

His weapon is always a hunter’s primary concern, and once back in camp Colter took care to clean and oil the short rifle he’d been issued before returning it to Ordway.

First the rifle had to be unloaded. Removing the cartridge from a modern breech-loading firearm is relatively simple, but extracting the ball and powder from a muzzle-loader is a good deal more complicated. The tip of a flintlock rifle’s *ramrod* was threaded to accommodate the *ball puller*, an accessory with a short, sharp, screwlike steel point. With the puller in place, Colter rammed a water-soaked flannel patch down the bore to soften the powder fouling the breech. This would make the ball easier to extract. A few twists of the ramrod at the end of the downward stroke secured the flannel to the puller. He pulled out the ramrod and removed the flannel, then reinserted the ramrod and gave it a few good twists when he felt it against the ball. The threaded steel point bit into the soft lead, and the ramrod came out with the ball attached. (The ball now had a hole in it, so it would no longer shoot true. It would go into the lead pot, to be melted down for molding into a new bullet.)

With the puller still in place, Colter reinserted the ram-
rod and gave it a few more twists to loosen the powder charge. He removed the rod and tipped the muzzle toward the ground, dumping the powder onto a piece of buckskin and returning what he could of it to his powder horn.

Now it was time to clean the barrel with boiling water. With the screwdriver from his shooting bag, Colter removed the lock and set it aside. He then placed a sharpened twig into the touch hole in the rifle’s breech to plug it. The water was heating in a tin cup at the edge of the fire. Colter held the gun upright with a piece of buckskin looped around the barrel to protect his hand from scalding fire. Colter held the gun upright with a piece of buckskin and returning what he could of it to his powder horn.

Finally, he turned his attention to the lock. After thoroughly wiping all the powder fouling off the lock, he checked the flint to see if it needed knapping (re-sharpening) or tightening. All looked well. He then checked the camming action of the frizzen against the frizzen spring and with a twig placed a drop of oil on the spring where the stud (or heel) of the frizzen rode back and forth. He screwed the lock back onto the stock, returned the ball puller and worm to the patch box, reinserted the ram rod into its pipe along the base of the barrel, and rubbed down the entire weapon—lock, stock, and barrel—with oil. He removed his personal gear from the shooting bag Ordway had issued him and returned it and the rifle to the sergeant.

Foundation member Gary Peterson lives in Buffalo, Wyoming. His hobby for 25 years has been western history and the firearms used in opening the West. He has built and used both flintlock and percussion traditional rifles.

Notes

1 “Feathering” the hammer—noiselessly cocking it so as not to alert game—is accomplished by drawing back the hammer while simultaneously applying some pressure to the trigger, which disengages the connection between them. Once the hammer is at full cock, the pressure on the trigger is released, reengaging the hammer and holding it in place.


3 Lewis spent much of March and April 1803 outfitting the expedition at the Harpers Ferry armory. Firearms historians debate whether the 15 rifles Lewis acquired there were actual production models or prototypes based on specifications drawn up by Secretary of War Henry Dearborn. Lewis also drew 15 gun slings from the armory. Because no existing 1803 Rifle is equipped with a sling, it is reasonable to assume that Lewis had his rifles modified with sling attachments.


5 Gary E. Moulton, ed., The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, 13 volumes (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984-2001), Vol. 3, p. 79, note 2. All quotations or references to journal entries in the ensuing text are from Moulton, by date, unless otherwise indicated. See also Missouri River Commission Map no. 37.

6 Ibid.

7 Lewis, September 17.

8 The enlisted men were divided among three squads, each headed by a sergeant. Moulton, Vol. 2, pp. 188-189.

9 Linen and buckskin were the materials commonly used for patching the ball. Lewis’s list of weapons and accoutrements includes powder, flints, lead, and other items but fails to mention linen, at least for ammunition purposes. (Donald Jackson, Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854, 2 volumes (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2nd ed., 1978), Vol. 1, pp. 69-99). Still, we may reasonably assume that such an essential item was carried on the expedition.

10 Clark’s journal entry of May 13, 1804, written on the eve of the expedition’s departure from Camp Dubois, mentions that the men’s outfits were complete (“Compe.”) with cartridges (“Powder Cartriges”) and “100 Balls each.” Moulton, Vol. 2, p. 214.

11 The mule deer (Odocoileus hemionus) is about a third larger than the eastern white-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginianus) and prefers open country to the wooded bottomland favored by white-tails. Paul Russell Cutright, Lewis & Clark: Pioneering Naturalists (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), pp. 83-84. The captains first observed mule deer on September 5, 1804. Lewis first recorded the name mule deer in his journal entry of May 10, 1805.
Jefferson's maps reveal a landscape of geographic fact and fancy

Lewis and Clark: The Maps of Exploration 1507-1814
University of Virginia Library
Howell Press
88 pages/$24.95 hardcover

Like all armchair explorers, Thomas Jefferson was fascinated by maps. They play on our imagination in a way that paintings or photographs of physical places cannot. Notes geographer and historian John Logan Allen in the foreword to Lewis and Clark: Maps of Exploration 1507-1814, maps “remain when nearly everything else in our visual imagery has been erased by the passage of time or buried under the accretions of new information. ... Almost no one assumes that the Hudson Valley looks exactly like it was portrayed by the early romanticists of the mid-nineteenth century or that the Grand Canyon is precisely depicted in the paintings of Thomas Moran. But maps—even those that contain obviously apocryphal information—are different: the images obtained from maps persist beyond the boundaries of time and, often, beyond the bounds of rational thought as well.”

Surely no one believed in rational thought—in the power of reason—more than Jefferson. Yet this son of the Enlightenment was also a dreamer and a romantic who could see what he wanted in the maps of North America he assiduously collected. Maps that appeared to confirm his views about symmetrical geography, a notion suggesting that the Rocky Mountains, like the Appalachians, were a narrow chain that could be easily portaged, and that the Missouri and Columbia rivers headed in the same region and were easily navigable to their sources. Such wishful thinking was at the core of his decision to send an expedition to the Pacific under the leadership of his secretary, Meriwether Lewis, and Lewis’s old army friend William Clark—an expedition that more than any other in the the history of the United States filled in the blank spaces of North American cartography, replaced geographic conjecture with fact, and dispelled forever the myth of the Northwest Passage.

Lewis and Clark: The Maps of Exploration 1507-1814 began as an exhibition at the University of Virginia’s Alderman Library in the summer of 1995. The exhibition, which coincided with the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation’s annual meeting that year, in Charlottesville, was the brainchild of Foundation member Guy Meriwether Benson. Most of the maps in the exhibition and in this handsome volume came from university’s collection. Thomas Jefferson was familiar with all the maps on display, and many of them had once been in his personal possession. Of particular interest to WPO readers is the section devoted to the maps by Aaron Arrowsmith and Nicholas King which were actually used by Jefferson and Lewis in planning the expedition.

The exhibition catalogue was published as a paperback volume, Exploring the West from Monticello. The new volume reviewed here is based on that earlier title. It has the same text (with the notable addition of Allen’s foreword) and includes all of the maps in the first volume, along with several others absent from the first. The design and layout have been improved: each map now appears on the righthand side of a spread with accompanying text on the opposite page. More significantly, the maps are reproduced in color and are the products of digital technology that renders them in much greater detail than the 1995 volume’s black-and-white photographs. (Missing from the current volume is a section on the navigational instruments of Lewis and Clark.)

The 30 maps are arranged chronologically, from the first crude renderings of the Western Hemisphere to Clark’s astonishingly detailed map of the trans-Mississippi West, completed in 1810 and published four years later in the first (Biddle) edition of the Lewis and Clark journals. Clark’s map included geographic information from the expedition itself and from subsequent explorations by expedition members John Colter and George Drouillard, as well as findings from the expeditions of Zebulon Pike and other government-sponsored explorers.

Readers will happily note that the maps in this volume are again on display at the University of Virginia and can be viewed by the public through the end of May. They can also be accessed online at www.lib.virginia.edu/special/exhibits/lewis_clark. To order Lewis and Clark: Maps of Exploration 1507-1864, call 1-800-868-4512.

—J.I.M.
“Eclipse” casts a brooding shadow on the bright adventure of Lewis and Clark

Eclipse
Richard S. Wheeler
Forge Books / Tom Doherty Associates
382 pages / $27.95 hardcover

Attempts to synopsize the Lewis and Clark Expedition or offer a postscript invariably suffer by comparison with the gold standard of expedition history and artistry—the journals themselves. No equal exists in print or on celluloid for their rich cinematic color and factual intricacy, their awe and bemusement, their drama and suspense.

Undeterred, Richard Wheeler in his historical novel Eclipse wades into an issue as murky as the Missouri, the much-mooted cause of Meriwether Lewis's presumed suicide. His thesis is that Lewis suffered psychologically from advanced syphilis contracted from a Shoshone woman of Cameahwait's band.

Lewis and Clark, we say. Like scotch and soda. James Ronda, among others, notes the indelible linkage. Eclipse, however, reads more like Lewis or Clark. The captains' disjunctive diary-like accounts, mimicking the journals, document steadily diverging life paths. Without the unifying spine of shared expedition experience, this literary device simply doesn't resonate as well.

Occasionally lyrical, Eclipse gets off to a brisk start, opening with the Corps of Discovery's triumphant return to the St. Louis docks. The saga-like pace is not sustained, however, and the novel quickly settles into a tedious chronicle of domestic routines, bureaucratic infighting, tallies of Lewis's unpaid bills, and clinical descriptions of his symptoms.

Wheeler's warm narrative of Clark's marital and domestic bliss with the winsome Julia and their young family stands in stark contrast to his rendition of York's abysmal treatment by his master. The mildest show of individuality by York seems to enrage Clark, who remains resolutely insensitive to York's pining for his absent wife; Clark even contemplates beating his boyhood companion. York's complaint of slaves crammed into a small attic raises an eerie echo of the "tight packing" of human cargo on the middle passage.

Clark offers a tardy manumission in which York's dialogue is rendered is bound to grate on the sensibilities of readers.

York's degradation is as disturbing as Lewis's decline. In an era that seeks to atone for past omissions of nonwhites from the American historical record, York has become an obligatory part of expedition iconography. The York of Eclipse, peevish but submissive, is not the York of the Charles M. Russell painting of a man of sinewy masculinity and austere dignity being examined by the wondering Mandans.

As to Lewis's reaction to his malady, it is difficult to fathom the novel's portrayal of his scathing judgment of himself for the unremarkable decision to spend one night in the Bitterroots in the solacing arms of a woman. After all, Clark refers early to women of the "Rickores" who, after polite rebuffs, "pursisted in their civilities."

Lewis in the journals also records his men being "very polite to these tawney damsels." Offers of favors for hire on the Columbia are characterized more as a nuisance or hygiene issue than a moral affront. Amorously frustrated, Lewis was forever in pursuit of some "damsel" of his own and never saw a pretty face or an expanse of flesh he didn't like.

The captains recognized that liai-

At last, a paperback Moulton

Arriving just in time for the L&C Bicentennial is a paperback edition of the Lewis and Clark journals edited by Gary E. Moulton. Published by the University of Nebraska Press in a slightly smaller format and retitled The Definitive Journals of Lewis & Clark, this scholarly landmark comes in a seven-volume set for $149.95, or $24.95 for individual titles (versus $75 for the hardback versions). The set covers the captains' journals (volumes 2-8), and the enlisted men's journals (volumes 9-11) are also available. For more information, see the Web site http://nebraskapress.unl.edu.
FAR COUNTRY PRESS
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CD-ROM INCLUDED IN
James Allen PACKAGE —
JAP TO PLACE
sons with Indian women reflected romance, hospitality, and overtures linked to diplomacy and trade. The inevitable “frolicking” by members of the corps seemed to provoke little more than a “boys will be boys” reaction. Treatment of venereal disease among the corps is generally mentioned with the equanimity used for other maladies, from boils to gastrointestinal afflictions.

Lewis’s “undaunted courage” inspired a Jeffersonian encomium and the title of a bestseller. In Wheeler’s tale, however, it fails in the face of an insidious invasion by a spirochete that undermines not only Lewis’s flesh but also his noble soul.

In Wheeler’s novel as in life, Clark emerges as the big winner of the expedition postlude. Too many others, like Lewis and Sacagawea, died young, while others, like Potts and Drouillard, came to a bad end at the hands of the Blackfeet. Somber in title and tone, Eclipse bares the uncomfortable truth that on one level the Lewis and Clark Expedition is a sad story. It is sobering for contemporary Americans, glorying in the past, to remember the sorrow that was often alloyed to the splendor of bygone heroism.

—Dennis M. O’Connell

In Brief: Before Lewis and Clark; Biddle reprint; L&C in Illinois country

• Before Lewis & Clark: Documents Illustrating the History of the Missouri, 1785-1804, edited by A.P. Nasatir, with an introduction by James P. Ronda. Originally published in 1952 as a two-volume work by the St. Louis Historical Documents Foundation and reissued in 1996 by Bison Books, a subsidiary of the University of Nebraska Press, this scholarly trove is once again available, this time in a single-volume edition of 853 pages and five foldout maps that were part of the original edi-
tion but missing from the Bison version. Nasatir (1904-1991), a professor of history at San Diego State University, assembled, and when necessary translated from the Spanish and French, 239 documents relating to the exploration of the Missouri River in the 20 years preceding the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Nasatir’s 115-page historical narrative offers a comprehensive overview of efforts by Spanish, French, and British fur traders to establish themselves on the upper Missouri. As Ronda points out in his introduction, some of these entrepreneurs recognized, along with Thomas Jefferson, the potential of the Missouri as a river route to the Pacific. (University of Oklahoma Press, $49.95 paper.)

- **History of the Expedition of Captains Lewis and Clark, with an introduction by James K. Hosmer. This two-volume work is a reissue of a 1903 edition of the original 1814 edition of the paraphrase of the L&C journals written by Nicholas Biddle in collaboration with William Clark. What might be thought of as the Hosmer edition was first published in the fall of 1902 by the Chicago-based A.C. McClurg & Co., doubtless in time for the centennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition; this reprint is of the second edition, published a year later. Hosmer’s edition was the second reissue of the Biddle narrative. The first, published in 1893 in four volumes, was edited and extensively annotated by the irascible polymath Elliott Coues, who sprinkled the narrative with long footnotes filled with sharp opinions and occasional invective. Unlike Coues, Hosmer limited himself to writing an introduction and compiling an index. Not much appears to be known about Hosmer—neither he nor this edition is even mentioned in Paul Russell Cutright’s *History of the Lewis and Clark Journals* (Oklahoma, 1976)—but according to the biographical précis on the reprinted title page he was president of the American Library Association and the author of books on the Louisiana Purchase and the exploration and colonization of the Mississippi Valley, subjects that are also the focus of his introduction. For more information, see the Web site www.digitalscanning.com. (Digital Scanning, Inc.; 2 volumes, each $39.95 hardback, $27.95 paper.)

- **Reconstructed Fort Massac, a Lewis & Clark landmark on the Ohio, in southern Illinois

- **Lewis and Clark in the Illinois Country: The Little-Told Story, by Robert E. Hartley. The author, a veteran journalist who has written about Illinois history and politics for more than 40 years, makes the case that the six months—November 1803 to May 1804—spent by Lewis and Clark in what is today southern Indiana and Illinois were crucial to the success of their expedition to the Pacific and back. It was an intense period of preparation. Many of the most important members of the Corps of Discovery, including the Nine Young Men from Kentucky (William Bratton, John Colter, Charles Floyd, George Gibbon, Joseph and Reuben Field, Nathaniel Pryor, and John Shields) and the indispensable hunter and interpreter George Drouillard, were recruited during this period, and it was during the explorer’s first winter encampment, at the confluence of the River Dubois and the Mississippi, that the captains whipped their men into a cohesive unit. Other authors who have told the story of Lewis and Clark have given this period its due, but Hartley provides an extra measure of context about the region’s geography and history and the important but generally overlooked roles played in that saga by men such as landowner and entrepreneur John Edgar, trader Nicholas Jarrot, and John Hay, a Cahokia-based local official and a confidant of the captains who translated documents for them, interpreted maps, and advised them on Indian relations. (Sniktau/ XLibris; $34 hardcover, $22 paper, postpaid. Order from Sniktau Publications, POB 350368, Westminster, CO 80035-0368 or through bookstores or from www.Xlibris.com.)

- **Only Two Came Back: The Untold Story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, by Gregg E. Moutoux. This what-if historical novel asks what might have happened if the British, like the Spanish, had sent a military force to stop Lewis and Clark. The narrative takes the form of an official report from the colonel leading a Royal Marines unit sent to keep track of the Corps of Discovery and if possible to prevent it from reaching the Pacific. The author resists the temptation to rewrite history—the mission fails despite several efforts at “engineered catastrophes,” including driving a herd of bison into the explorers’ camp and conniving with the Blackfeet to impede their journey. (XLibris; $18.69 paper, $28.79 hardback, $8 e-book. Order through bookstores or from www.Xlibris.com.)

- **Indian vs. Forest Service trails

- **Bitterroot Crossing: Lewis & Clark Across the Lolo Trail, by Gene and Mollie Eastman. The 150-mile-long Lolo Trail is one of the most storied routes of the American West—famous not just for Lewis and Clark’s use of it but as the path of Chief Joseph and his Nez Perces in their heroic retreat of 1877. A National Historic Landmark since 1960, the Lolo Trail is actually a
system of trails that includes the routes of Lewis and Clark and the Nez Perces as well as the Bird-Truax Trail (an old wagon road), a primitive truck road, and other trails made by domestic cattle and wild animals.

Few people probably know the Lolo Trail better than Idahoans Gene and Mollie Eastman, and they argue convincingly that the Lewis and Clark routes designated by the National Forest Service do not, in fact, trace the explorers’ actual route. They point out that Lewis and Clark kept mostly to ridge lines and followed Indian trails, “which followed the best ground in a direct manner” and did not employ switchbacks. Bitterroot Crossing reviews the long history of the Lolo system and the many attempts to locate the actual route taken by Lewis and Clark, beginning with Olin D. Wheeler in 1902.

The Eastmans believe that a careful reading of Clark’s field notes, coupled with an understanding of how Indians made trails and a recognition that a “mile” on horseback over rough terrain is different from a “mile” as determined by modern surveying instruments, can yield a truer tracing of Lewis and Clark.

A prolific author best known for his popular histories of World War II, Ambrose was also the author of a two-volume biography of Dwight D. Eisenhower and the founder of the National D-Day Museum, in New Orleans. In all, he wrote or edited some 35 books. In 1998 he was awarded the National Humanities Medal.

A college professor for most of his adult life, Ambrose retired from the University of New Orleans in 1995 to devote full time to writing, advising on film projects, and various causes, including environmental preservation of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and the Missouri River. He supported trail stewardship efforts of the LCTHF and for many years provided a subvention to WPO that enabled it to increase the number of pages per issue. He also contributed to local L&C projects along the trail and to the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

He was born on January 10, 1936, in Decatur, Illinois, and earned his B.A. and Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin. He is survived by his wife, Moira; brothers Harry and Bill; children Andrew, Barry, Grace, Hugh, and Stephanie; and five grandchildren.

Edward C. “Ted” Carter, a scholar and a former member of the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, died of a heart attack on October 2 in Philadelphia. He was 74.

As librarian at the American Philosophical Society, Carter was responsible for the Lewis and Clark journals housed there. He oversaw the production of facsimiles of three of Lewis’s 18 red morocco-bound journals. He served on the L&C Bicentennial Council from 1994 to 2001.

“From my first contact with him in 1991, Ted Carter was very supportive of all things Lewis and Clark,” recalls Frank Muhly, a LCTHF director and founder of the Philadelphia chapter. “He loaned the chapter use of the A.P.S.’s libraries for our meetings and offered the help of his staff.”

The Philadelphia Inquirer called him “a respected history scholar” whose acquisitions for the A.P.S. ranged from the sketches of 19th-century naturalist Titian Ramsey Peale to the papers of Nobel Prize-winning geneticist Barbara McClintock. During his 21-year tenure with the A.P.S., use of the library more than doubled. He also taught seminars at the University of Pennsylvania and edited a 10-volume edition of the writings of Benjamin Henry Latrobe, the early American architect and engineer.

Carter earned a B.A. and M.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and a Ph.D. from Bryn Mawr College. He is survived by his wife, Louise, a brother, and four stepdaughters.
A new visitor center at Camp River Dubois, where the Corps of Discovery spent the winter of 1803-04, before ascending the Missouri River, opened December 12. The centerpiece of the 14,000-square-feet center, which is located on the 300-acre grounds of the Camp River Dubois Lewis and Clark State Historic Site, south of Hartford, Illinois, is a full-size cut-away replica of the expedition’s keelboat (pictured above). Other exhibits include replica log cabins, tents, firearms, tools, and other implements carried by the explorers. The center’s 100-seat theater shows “At Journey’s Edge,” a multimedia presentation about the expedition.

Operated by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Nagle Hartray Daner Kagan and McKay, the center is the brainchild of George Arnold, a member of the LCTHF Camp River Dubois Chapter. The exhibits were designed by Hilfery & Associates, of Athens, Ohio. The center is open 9-5, Wednesday through Sunday. Admission is free. For more information, check the Web site www.greatriverroad.com/lewclark/lewhome.htm?plewclark.

COLD WAR MEMORIAL
The U.S.S. Lewis and Clark (SSBN 644), a submarine scrapped some years ago, lives again—or at least parts of it. According to Jane Henley, the Foundation’s immediate past president, the submarine’s sail, sail planes, and rudder were saved and are now installed in a full-sized mock-up of a Polaris submarine on display at the Cold War Submarine Memorial, located at Patriots Point, South Carolina. The memorial is part of the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum, in Charleston Harbor. (See www.cwsmf.org.)

MOUNTAIN NAMED FOR CLARK
Following a recommendation by the Oregon Chapter of the LCTHF and the Oregon Geographic Names Board, the highest point on Tillamook Head, a rocky cliff overlooking the Pacific south of Seaside, Oregon, has been named Clark’s Mountain by the U.S. Board of Geographic Names.

Rising 1,250 feet above sea level, Tillamook Head was climbed by Clark and other members of the Corps of Discovery on January 8, 1806, while on the way to see a beached whale. In his journal Clark declared the view “the grandest and most pleasing prospects which my eyes ever surveyed.” Lewis named the peak “Clark’s Mountain and Point of View,” but like many geographic names penned by the captains it did not survive.

According to an article in The Oregonian of November 13, 2002, the executive secretary of the Board of Geographic Names, Roger Payne, said the name Clark’s Mountain will retain its apostrophe, something that almost never happens, “because board members were convinced of the site’s historical significance.” This is only the fifth exception to the rule since 1890.

JEFFERSON IN ORBIT
Thanks to Foundation member Bob Phillips of Fort Collins, Colorado, who works with NASA, a replica Jefferson peace medal of the type carried by Lewis and Clark will fly on the Space Shuttle Endeavor when it goes into space next November 10 or 11. The medal will spend time aboard the International Space Station before being brought back to earth. Phillips hopes it will then be placed on display or become part of a traveling exhibit during the L&C Bicentennial.

CLARK’s DAUGHTER HONORED
Members of the Ohio River Chapter gathered last July 26 to pay tribute to a daughter of William and Julia Hancock Clark who died young and is buried in Cave Hill Cemetery in Louisville, Kentucky. With help from the cemetery and the Kentucky Historical Society, the chapter purchased and installed a grave marker for Mary Margaret Clark (1814-21). Above, standing next to the marker at its dedication, are from left, Jim Mallory, Lloyd Randall, Thomas McCulloch, Jim Holmberg, the Reverend Richard Humke, Margaret Holt Chapman, Chuck Parrish, and Matthew Randall. The Randalls are Clark family descendants.

PHILADELPHIA BROCHURE
The Philadelphia Chapter, which will host the Foundation’s annual meeting next August 10-13, has produced a new brochure, “Lewis and Clark in Historic Philadelphia.” It details the City of Brotherly Love’s pre- and post-expedition roles with vintage cityscapes...
SOUTH DAKOTA TOURISM
1/2 H.

L&C INTERPRETIVE CENTER
WEB PAGE
1/2 H

PICK UP FROM P. 43,
NOVEMBER WPO
Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.
thanks the following individuals and organizations for contributions to Foundation programming at
the inaugural Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Signature Event in Charlottesville, Virginia:

Hon. Gale Norton, Secretary, Department of the Interior; Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, US Army Corps of Engineers;
Hon. Kathleen Clarke, Director, Director, Bureau of Land Management; Hon. Fran Mainella, Director, National Park
Service; Mr. Dale Bosworth, Chief, USDA Forest Service; Hon. Steve Williams, US Fish and Wildlife Service;
Dan Jordan, Monticello and the Thomas Jefferson Foundation; Gerard Baker and Dick Williams, National Park
Service; Lewis and Clark Trail State Bicentennial Commissions of Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Iowa, Ohio,
Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania;
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Missoula, Montana; Virginia Committee for the Humanities and Public Policy.

Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio; Carolinas Chapter, LCTHF; Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport; Charlottesville Press;
DoubleTree Hotel, Charlottesville, VA; Far Country Press, Helena, MT; Home Front Chapter, LCTHF; Makoche
Recording Co., Bismarck, ND; Mazza Museum, Findlay, Ohio; David Peck, D.O., San Diego, CA; Rob Quist and Jack
Gladstone, Kalispell, MT; School of Continuing and Professional Studies, University of Virginia; Tony James, Allen
Printing & Design, Conshohocken, PA.

United States Army Old Guard; Robert Anderson; Peyton C. “Bud” Clark; Ron Laycock; Jon Stealey; Wm. P.
Sherman Library & Archives, Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.; Robert Weir; Jim Baker; Vicki Dixon;
Larry Epstein; Jane Henley; Page Henley; Kat Imhoff; Beth King; Nancy King; Laura Krom; Barb Kubič; Wayne
Mogielnicki; Joe Musselman; Keith Peterson; Kathy Pond; Michelle Dawson Powell; Millie Travis; Krista Weih;
Robbie Wilbur; Terri Dean, Marketing Director, Charlottesville Airport; Bridget LaPorta, DoubleTree Hotel,
Charlottesville, VA; The People of Charlottesville, VA; Major Meredith Bucher, U.S. Army, Washington, D.C.;
Joe Stark, Stray Moose Productions, Great Falls, MT; Jerry Viemeister, Charlottesville Performing Arts Center.
and maps showing the cites visited by Lewis, Clark and others. (See www.lewisandclarkphila.org.)

**REENACTORS AWARDED GRANT**

The four nationally recognized Lewis and Clark living history groups have received a National Park Service grant to share information and research that will help them develop consistent policies of historical interpretation for the L&C Bicentennial.

The recipients are the Discovery Group, Inc., of Council Bluffs, Iowa; the South Dakota Chapter of the LCTHF, of Bushnell, South Dakota; the Brigade of Discovery, of Washburn, North Dakota; and the Lewis and Clark Honor Guard, of Great Falls, Montana.

In the first phase of the project, the groups met last October in an encampment at Fort Atkinson, Nebraska, to discuss common issues relating to historical dress, period-correct drill, public safety, recruitment of new members, and other matters. Still in the planning stage is a second reenactment and—eventually—a resource guide for current and future L&C reenactors.

More information is available from Mike Lamphier or Ron Ukrainetz, Lewis and Clark Honor Guard of Great Falls, P.O. Box 125, Great Falls, MT 59403.

**LEWIS IN BRONZE**

The Stevensville (Montana) Main Street Association has unveiled a 16-inch-high bronze of Meriwether Lewis—the first in a series of five such works it has commissioned to commemorate the Corps of Discovery. The artist for all the bronzes is Jim Brousseau, a sculptor in Libby, Montana. The four other statues will be of William Clark, York, Sacagawea, and Lewis’s Newfoundland dog, Seaman. Each bronze will be limited to 35 pieces and will cost $1,500. Net proceeds will be used by the nonprofit association for
L&C Roundup (cont.)

historic preservation and education.
For more information, contact Joan Prather, Stevensville Main Street Association, P.O. Box 18, Stevensville, MT 59870 (406-777-3773).

MISSOURI RIVER GUIDES
The Omaha District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has established a Missouri River Information Center at the Gavins Point power plant near Yankton, South Dakota. The center provides Corps of Engineers maps of the river as well as a boaters’ and travelers’ river guides covering such topics as endangered and exotic species, cultural resources, and water safety. For more information, call 888-285-3219 or visit the Web site gavinspoint@usace.army.mil.

CONGRESSIONAL TEAM
The U.S. Department of Interior has created and filled two new positions related to the L&C Bicentennial. Tom Fulton, a Montana native who until recently was the department’s deputy assistant secretary for lands and minerals management, has been named director of the Congressional Lewis and Clark Caucus. Bob Reynolds, a retired National Park Service officer, has been named the department’s new coordinator of bicentennial activities.

L&C IN OTHER PUBLICATIONS
The Fall/Winter 2002-03 Continuance, a publication of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, has eight articles related to the teaching of Lewis and Clark in secondary schools, including a list of important sources and a roundup of L&C Bicentennial signature events. (www.siu.edu/offices/iii)

The Historical Journal of Wyandotte County (Kansas) features articles about the Corps of Discovery in its Winter and Spring 2002 issues. They are, respectively, “The Court Martial at Kaw’s Point,” by Loren L. Taylor, and “Simple Medicine with Undaunted Courage,” by Pete Cuppage, M.D. (Contact: Loren L. Taylor, 913-321-6195; ltaylor@idir.net.)
of Juice add 3 quarts of Water, and for every gallon of this Mixture add 3 lbs of Brown Sugur, put it in a clean cask leave it open 6 weeks, then carefully draw it off into another cask. then Bring it up and dont have it opened until November when it will be fit fer wne...The Cask must not be Shaken until the wine has fermented.[2]

Green Corn Cakes
Grate Green Corn fine, add Cream & Yelk of Eggs to the thickness of fritter batter, and fryed in Butter & formed in round cakes is excellent[.]

Vinager pudding
Take the Yelks of ten Eggs, Three-quarters of a pound of Sugar, Half a pound of Butter, about three table Spoon fuls of flour, nutmeg, mace, orangpeel, and venigar to your taste[.]

James J. Holmberg is curator of special collections at The Filson Historical Society and editor of Dear Brother: Letters of William Clark to Jonathan Clark (Yale University Press, 2002).

Notes
3 All three manuscript recipes bear similarities to William Clark’s handwriting, especially that for the wine, but a definite determination has not been made if he in fact transcribed them. It seems unlikely that he would have devoted time to writing down recipes, but perhaps the wonders of the kitchen, desires of the palate, or a request by his Julia moved him to do so.
From Julia’s Kitchen

We can assume these recipes — even the one for vinegar pudding — were favorites of William Clark

by JAMES J. HOLMBERG

There resides among the Preston Family Papers at The Filson Historical Society, in Louisville, Kentucky, the recipe book of Caroline Hancock Preston, the sister of Julia Hancock Clark. It is a wonderful record of cooking practices and tastes in early 19th-century America. The recipes for crackling pone, pickled beef, stewed oysters, ginger beer, raspberry wine, orange marmalade, bacon, and other food and drink reveal the favorites to be found on the Major William Preston family table.¹ By all accounts, the Prestons enjoyed their food. Not only does the Joseph Bush portrait of Preston portray him to be rather portly, but a letter of brother-in-law William Clark remarks that he wished his old army comrade had brought his “fat sides” to St. Louis for a visit.²

Caroline Hancock married William Preston in March 1802. In January 1808, Julia Hancock married William Clark. The recipe book reveals that both women had been prepared in the cooking arts. Some instruction most likely would have been received before their marriages from their mother, Margaret Strother Hancock, and family cooks. After their marriage they would have undoubtedly learned more, suffered through failures, and relied upon their own cooks—almost definitely African-American slave women—to put meals on the table. When Caroline began her recipe book is not known. She most likely began it soon after her marriage. It definitely was being compiled by 1808 and the marriage of Julia to William Clark. The last dated entry is from 1827 (although Caroline lived another 20 years).

Caroline, as almost every cook does, collected favorite recipes from family and friends. Either copied into her book or glued in as sent to her, she noted who the contributor was. Thus we have an idea of the favorite dishes of not only the Prestons but contemporaries as well.

This includes Julia Hancock Clark and her husband. William no doubt enjoyed a good meal and undoubtedly had his favorite dishes and beverages. (Dog certainly wasn’t among them!) Julia contributed three recipes to her sister’s book. From Julia’s kitchen came “Currant Wine,” “Green Corn Cakes,” and “Vinager Pudding.” One can surmise that they were favorites of William Clark. All three are written on paper that was clipped and glued into the book.³ Other recipes in the book also may have been fare enjoyed by the famous explorer and his family. Whether it was “Currant Wine” from Julia’s kitchen or “Calf’s Head Soup” from Caroline’s, her recipe book provides an excellent insight into the foodways of the early 19th century.

Would today’s tastes make these favorites in our kitchens? Perhaps or perhaps not, but in case you’re game to try them, here, from Julia’s kitchen, are her recipes for currant wine, green corn cakes, and vinegar pudding.

Currant Wine
Gather the Currants Clean of Stems & Leaves, mash them, and strain the Juice through a flanele Bagg—for every quart

Soundings continues on page 43