



We Proceeded On

Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation / www.lewisandclark.org

February 2012 Volume 38, No. 1

THE INTREPID VOYAGEURS



Thomas Jefferson in the Maritime Alps:
Training Ground for Exploring North America

Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| President’s Message: Peace and Friendship During Troubled Times | 2 |
| Letters: Time for Foundation Award Nominations | 4 |
| Trail Notes: 2011 LCTHF Merit Awards | 5 |
| L&C Roundup: U.S. Supreme Court considers “navigable waters”; 12-year-old pushes for a commemorative York stamp; couple promotes fitness on the Trail. | 6 |
| Passages: Rose Oleson of the Crimson Bluff Chapter | 7 |

Lessons from Tende Pass

During his crossing of the Maritime Alps and on other research excursions in Europe, Jefferson refined methods of enquiry and techniques of exploration that would later guide the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

By Peter Stark

“A Wide and Fruitful Land”

The horticultural potential of plants—such as blue flax, flowering currant, and snow-on-the-mountain—brought back by Lewis and Clark.

By Peggy Cornett

Voyageurs with the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Meet the French river men and fur traders who helped members of the corps move upstream—communicating with the tribes, as well as powering the red and white pirogues and keelboat.

By Orville D. Menard

Review

Thomas Jefferson’s Granddaughter in Queen Victoria’s England: The Travel Diary of Ellen Wayles Coolidge, 1838-1839.

By Stephanie Ambrose-Tubbs

Endnotes

An Oregon High School Teacher & the Corps of Discovery.

By Larry McClure



On the cover
Cordelling the Red Pirogue
by Charles Fritz



Tende Pass, Maritime Alps, 1794, p. 9



Clarkia, named for William Clark, p. 16



Engagé, p. 21



February 2012 • Volume 38, Number 1

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President's Message

Peace and Friendship During Troubled Times

Two hundred years ago this summer, war erupted between the United States and Great Britain. As the War of 1812 commenced, few knew the outcome of that altercation. America, at the time, was a group of disparate colonies that had united together to forge the United States of America. Funds and manpower were in short supply. Factions from several regions of the country jockeyed back and forth for political and economic control. The USS *Constitution* defeated five British warships and captured several merchant ships during naval engagements against superior British firepower. The U.S. Constitution also survived, stronger than ever, as news of the December 24, 1814, Treaty of Ghent, combined with jubilation over Jackson's triumph at the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815, unified the nation and ushered in the Era of Good Feelings. Indian diplomat William Clark spent from 1815 to 1817 negotiating two dozen treaties of peace and friendship with Indian Nations.

Today the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, like America, is facing uncertain times. The economic downturn of the past five years, coupled with the decline of public interest in the Lewis and Clark saga after the 2003–2006 bicentennial and the shrinking budgets of some of our federal partners, has provided us with a healthy opportunity to reevaluate the Foundation. We are grateful for your responses to the member survey and for your evaluations of what you see as the Foundation's essential functions and actions. We are compiling your responses and will communicate the results in greater detail in the May 2012 *We Proceeded On*. Meanwhile, I am gratified by your generous response to the annual appeal letter, your membership renewals (we now have 68 lifetime members!), and the additional contributions. You enable the Foundation to be the nation's premier nonprofit organization for the stewardship of the Lewis and Clark National

Historic Trail and the sharing of its stories. The board is making it a priority to reach out to our members and to support our chapters and we welcome your suggestions for improvement. We will continue to help preserve, promote, and teach the diverse heritage of Lewis and Clark for the benefit of all people.

Our federal partners undoubtedly face challenging years ahead as Congress struggles with the federal deficit and determines what share of the budget they will be allocated. If staff and resources are cut from federal agencies—curtailing their ability to manage and preserve trail sites—those of us who care about the trail will have to become



Jay H. Buckley

more involved and find ways to become better stewards of the trail along with our federal, tribal, state, and local partners. A good example of this was the partnership between some of our Idaho members, who joined with the Forest Service, the Nez Perce Nation, Idaho Rivers United and other entities to petition Idaho's Governor C. L. "Butch" Otter and the Idaho Department of Transportation to oppose the issuance of permits to several oil companies for transporting massively oversized, road-obstructing mega-loads on U.S. Highway 12. This broad coalition opposed passage of the big rigs over the roadway out of concern that it would degrade the intrinsic qualities of the Northwest Passage Scenic Byway. The coalition felt the mega-loads would impede local and regional recreational and business travel; damage the highway and bridges

(accruing costs to American taxpayers); and pose threats to a world-class fishery and wildlife.

The Foundation has become increasingly active in fulfilling our stewardship mission. We are in the final stages of selecting a trail stewardship/office manager responsible for coordinating the work of our chapters and members to protect, preserve, and interpret the trail.

During the 2003–06 bicentennial, the U.S. Mint produced and sold 500,000 Lewis and Clark Bicentennial silver dollars. A portion of the proceeds was presented to the Foundation by the National Council for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial and the Missouri Historical Society to establish the Lewis & Clark Trail Stewardship Endowment: A National Council of the Lewis & Clark Expedition Bicentennial Legacy Project. LCTHF can annually use income from that endowment for trail stewardship. In September 2011, the Foundation's board of directors approved approximately \$50,000 in grant awards to Foundation chapters for trail stewardship projects using funds from that endowment.

Awards were approved for 20 projects by 16 chapters in 12 states. Examples of projects include the following: the installation of a monument and plaque noting Lewis's visits to Frederick, Maryland; preparation of a survey, video, and booklet on Lewis and Clark sites near Kansas City, Missouri; planting of native trees and bushes at an important Lewis and Clark site on the Columbia River in Washington. A number of the projects focused on repairing damage caused by the recent flooding of the Missouri River.

The Foundation is considering trail stewardship efforts in which our chapters and partners would help identify and protect important and/or endangered stretches of the trail, perhaps through conservation easements. This will be an agenda item during the Foundation's annual meeting, *Falls of the Ohio: Where They Met, Departed and*

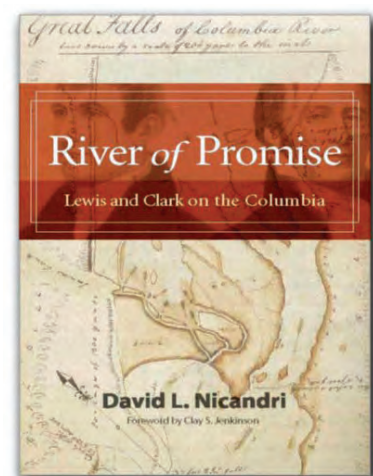
Returned, in Clarksville/Jeffersonville, Indiana, July 28 to August 1, 2012.

We also acknowledge the successful regional meetings like the Tippecanoe gathering in Indiana, and the one held in Frederick, Maryland. We look forward to upcoming meetings that explore a variety of topics related to Lewis and Clark: the flora and fauna along the trail through the Columbia Gorge, the bicentennial of Sacagawea's death, and the Lewis and Clark connections around New Orleans.

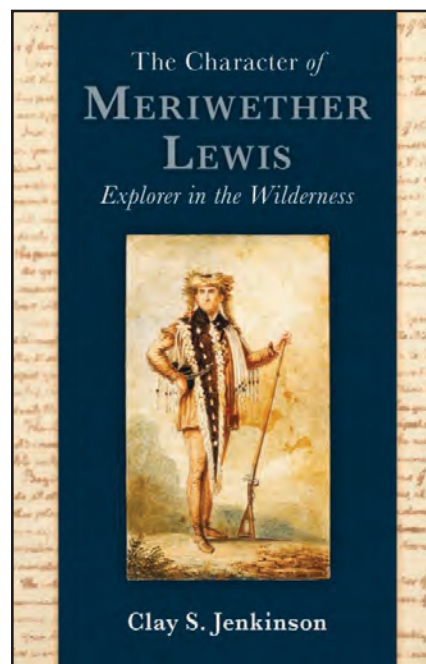
The Lewis and Clark story continues to inspire educators, families, and young and old alike. I have taught a Lewis and Clark workshop to more than 300 teachers over the past three years and have taken 100 teachers on a week-long Lewis and Clark expedition throughout Montana. These teachers caught the excitement of the Lewis and Clark stories as they travelled the trail on foot, by bus, on boats and in canoes. Families also are enthusiastically following in the captains' footsteps. This past summer the Maloney family of North Carolina traveled and camped along the trail from Illinois to Oregon. The two Maloney sons kept journals and photo essays as part of the requirements to earn the new patches from the Boy Scouts of America offered by the chapters whose areas they passed through. The BSA patch program, initiated by the Manitou Bluffs Chapter and expanded to other chapters, is gradually catching on as a new generation discovers the Corps of Discovery.

"It was the most amazing adventure we have ever been on," Faye Maloney said. "Our boys were able to connect the dots between their scouting skills and the expedition's experiences. We were going non-stop the whole time, made some incredible memories and will cherish this journey forever." We need to continue to find ways to reach people of all ages as we travel the trail together.

— Jay H. Buckley
President, LCTHF



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As Keepers of the Story ~
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Letters

Foundation Award Nominations

Each year our Foundation strives to identify and recognize those individuals, groups, or organizations that have made significant contributions to our mission as keepers of the story and stewards of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Now is the time to identify deserving candidates for a Foundation award in 2012.

Categories of Awards

We currently have seven categories of awards: Distinguished Service Award, Meritorious Achievement Award, Chapter Award, Youth Achievement Award, Appreciation Award, Robert Betts Library and Archives Award, and a Trail Stewardship Award. Descriptions of each of these categories follows:

Distinguished Service Award

For a Foundation member who has made an outstanding contribution toward furthering the purposes and objectives of the Foundation.

Meritorious Achievement Award

For a person, organization, or agency that has done scholarly research or made other significant contributions that bring a greater appreciation and awareness of the Lewis and Clark Expedition to the nation.

Chapter Award

For a chapter in good standing that has shown exemplary or distinguished service or promotion of the Foundation on a state, local or national level; and/or has demonstrated or accomplished an activity of merit which benefits its members, their community and the mission of the Foundation.

Youth Achievement Award

For a person or group of people under the age of 21 who have increased the knowledge of others in the Lewis and Clark Expedition through outstanding composition, art, drama, photography, site preservation and enhancement or other significant contribution.

Appreciation Award

For a person or organization for the gracious support (in deed, word, or funds) given to the Foundation and its

endeavors to preserve and perpetuate the lasting historical worth of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Robert Betts Library and Archives Award

This award recognizes individuals or organizations that have made outstanding contributions to the development of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation's William P. Sherman Library and Archives through monetary donations, material donations, or service to the library. It is named in honor of Robert Betts, a noted scholar and author of *In Search of York*.

Trail Stewardship Award

This award recognizes outstanding contributions to achieving the Foundation's Trail Stewardship goals in three areas—leadership, development of trail stewardship techniques, and programs, and trail stewardship support.

Nomination Process

You must submit your nomination using the Foundation's Award Nomination Form. The purpose of this form is to help you focus on what is important when nominating individuals or groups for special recognition. It is also intended to make the task of preparing a nomination package as simple as possible as well as to bring some degree of consistency to the format and content of award nomination packages. This focus and consistency helps your awards committee to evaluate nominations in a timely and effective manner and to determine those most deserving of special recognition.

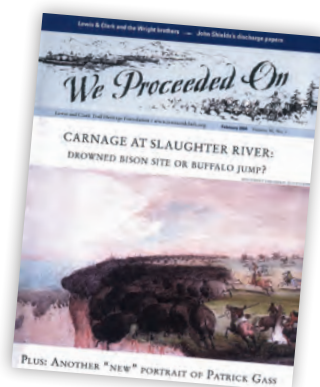
A kit containing the nomination form, criteria used to evaluate nominations in each category, guidelines on how to fill out the form, and a sample cover letter for submitting your nomination may be downloaded from the Foundation's website (www.lewisandclark.org, see Foundation Awards page). The form and sample cover letter are available in both Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat PDF format. If you do not have access to the internet and would like a copy of this nomination kit mailed to you, please contact the Foundation's Awards Committee at one of the addresses provided below.

This is your chance to provide special recognition to someone who has made significant contributions to our mission and purpose and whose efforts have increased awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and its contributions to our nation's heritage. Please take the time to think about someone who deserves this recognition, encourage others to do the same, and submit a nomination.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. **Nominations must be postmarked no later than May 1, 2012 to be considered.** Thanks in advance for your time and effort in support of this worthwhile endeavor.

KEN JUTZI

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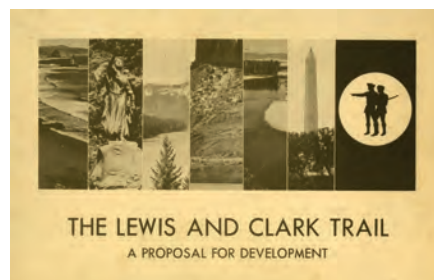
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Trail Notes

Foundation Presents 2011 Awards

On August 1, 2011, at its annual meeting in Omaha, Nebraska, and in Council Bluffs, Iowa, the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation presented its Meritorious Achievement Award to Keith Hay of Newberg, Oregon, and its Chapter Award to the Ohio River Chapter.



Lewis and Clark Trail Commission's Final Report

Meritorious Achievement Award

In 1962, when Keith was a young career employee for the state of Colorado, U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Stuart Udall, tapped him to co-lead a national feasibility study for what became the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Completed in 1966, the study led Keith and his colleagues on a ten-state quest to inventory and evaluate the Expedition's route. Keith worked with the national Lewis & Clark Trail Commission, which evolved into the current Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

In 2004, Keith published *The Lewis and Clark Columbia River Water Trail: A Guide for Paddlers, Hikers, and Other Explorers*, an indispensable guide to the Lower Columbia River. Royalties from his book are donated to the Oregon and Washington Chapters.

Chapter Award

From its launch in 1997, the Ohio River Chapter has worked tirelessly to preserve the Trail and tell the story of Lewis and Clark, both regionally and nationally. An enduring example of such efforts is the Chapter's historical marker program, inaugurated in the spring of 2003 with a \$30,000 grant from the National Park Service. Twenty-two historical markers were erected throughout Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana, which made a wealth of important, albeit oftentimes little-known, facts about Lewis and Clark accessible to the traveling public.

Among these frequently overlooked facets of the expedition was the survey work performed by Captain Meriwether Lewis while passing through the Cumberland Gap on his return journey from the Pacific Coast. This story was related in the Ohio River Chapter's most recent interpretive sign, erected at the Wilderness Road parking lot in November 2010 and unveiled as part of the Cumberland Gap regional meeting.

The Ohio River Chapter's Cumberland Gap regional meeting was exemplary and a spectacular success not just for the enjoyment and emo-



Interpretive sign installed along the Wilderness Road

tional uplift offered the attendees but for the powerful arguments advanced for completing the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and extending it from sea to shining sea.

A River Runs Through It

The U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on Friday, December 9, 2011, in *PPL v. Montana*, a case where the utility is appealing a Montana Supreme Court ruling that the state owns the lands beneath 10 dams sitting on three Montana rivers—the Missouri, the Clark Fork, and the Madison.

Montana claimed that the title to all the land under the rivers within its borders transferred to the state when it achieved statehood in 1889. By law, all commercially navigable waterways go to states upon their entry into the United States.

The relevant inquiry in court is what constitutes a “navigable” river. The key disagreement has focused on what counted as a sufficiently arduous portage. This is where the Lewis and Clark Expedition plays in. The case may hinge upon the journal of the 1804–1806 Lewis and Clark Expedition that opened up the West. Both sides cite Lewis and Clark’s portage around the Great Falls of the Missouri River in their arguments on whether the river were commercially navigable at the time Montana became a state. At that time, explorers had to carry their supplies 17 miles around the Great Falls.

Paul Clement, the lawyer representing PPL Montana, argued that the key was whether the boat was physically lifted out of the river. If the boat had to be lightened and pulled over rapids, navigability was not defeated. If it had to be lightened and carried overland, this kind of portage defined the river as non-navigable.

The state, represented by Gregory Garre, claims that the title to all the land under the Missouri, Clark Fork and Madison rivers within its border transferred when it became a state in 1889. When deciding navigability, the state claims that navigability of the entire river—not just a segment—should be considered and a portage around a natural obstruction does not interrupt the flow of those rivers as a highway of commerce.

Sources close to the court claim the case may be headed back to the Montana court. There is a lot of discussion in the U.S. Supreme Court about “portaging” and “navigability.” Stay tuned.

Notes from the Capital

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation has long been a partner with the National Park Service when it comes to the Lewis and Clark Trail. We are also a member of the Partnership for the National Trails System whose purpose is to “secure better public and private funding for the important work of both its nonprofit trail organizations and their volunteers and the Federal Agencies that administer the National Trails System.”

The National Trails System includes 19 National Historic Trails and 11 National Scenic Trails. The Partnership for the National Trails System is an advocate for adequate funding and authority for all trails including the Lewis and Clark Trail. It has an annual “Hike to the Hill” event in Washington, D.C., every February. The work of the National Trails System has helped increase the annual federal funding for the National Trails System from \$2 million in 1991 to \$28 million in 2011.

Strummin’ the Trail

Check out Tommy Emmanuel’s lovely guitar tribute to the Lewis and Clark expedition. Emmanuel, who was born in Australia and now hails from Nashville, Tennessee, picked up his first guitar at the age of four, and currently has 15 albums of his own and has won numerous awards, including “Best Guitarist (*Juke* magazine) and Best Country Instrumental Album (Nashville Music Awards). Nominated for a Grammy in best country performance for his instrumental “Game Show Rag/Cannonball Rag,” he has shared the stage with such notables as Eric Clapton, Les Paul, and Stevie Wonder.



Tommy Emmanuel

His song, “Lewis and Clark” is on his 2006 album, *The Mystery*. Emmanuel said he was inspired to create the tribute after reading the journals. When he sat down to create it, he said he knew it had to be “simple, haunting” and at the same time, “have elements of the Indian people—of their music, of their culture.” He said that now, when he listens to his song, he sees the Indian people “talking about what’s coming up on the trail.” He said the simple but elegant picking and soulful strumming in the piece sound, for him, like the “preparation before Lewis and Clark finally get on their way.”

A 2013 York Stamp?

When 12-year-old Jackson David V was assigned to do a report on the Lewis and Clark Expedition at Lowell School in Silver Spring, Maryland, he chose to write about York, William Clark’s enslaved man-servant who,



Jackson David V

of course, was an integral part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Inspired by York’s contribution to the expedition, he decided to follow his school’s suggestion that he “think outside the box” and he went to the post office

to look for a stamp commemorating his achievements. After all, he reasoned, Lewis and Clark had a stamp. Sacagawea had a coin. York, however, had nothing.

Jackson decided to change all that. He wrote a letter to the USPS Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee and asked the committee to consider honoring York with a Black Heritage Stamp. The USPS responded that the stamp is "under consideration."

Since then, Jackson has received letters of support from numerous supporters, including President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, and Congressman Chris Van Hollen of Maryland. Jackson, with the help of his parents, created a Facebook page titled "Vote 4 York Black Heritage Stamp 2013" with 2,359 fans. He also has a YouTube video (www.youtube.com/user/JacksondavisV). He was featured in an article in the *Washington Post* and on WUSA TV.

Proceeding On. And On.

When Tom and Nancy Caruso leave Pittsburgh for a trip to Oregon, the couple will launch from "The Point," in downtown Pittsburgh, in a 25-foot fishing boat they bought on eBay for \$8,900. They plan to retrace the Lewis and Clark route. The three-month excursion will begin on the Ohio River, ascend the Mississippi River, then go up the Missouri River where, like Lewis and Clark, they will be forced to travel over the Rocky Mountains by land. At the Snake River, they will be back on the water and travel to the Columbia, where they plan to reach their final destination—Astoria, Oregon.

Sponsored by Edible Arrangements, a company that markets gift arrangements of fruit, the expedition is designed to inspire people to "eat right and move more," said Nancy Caruso, who is also the founder and executive director of Get Inspired!—a nonprofit organization dedicated to "inspiring passion and purpose through the discovery of arts and sciences."



Rose Oleson and the Crimson Bluffs

Passages: Rose Oleson

The Lewis and Clark Trial Heritage Foundation lost an energetic and effective chapter leader when Rose Oleson passed away at her home in Townsend, Montana, on September 13, 2011. A founding member of the Crimson Bluff Chapter, Rose served as the only chapter president until her death. The Crimson Bluff chapter is named after a site near Townsend mentioned in the journals of Lewis and Clark.

Rose played a major role in having the Crimson Bluffs designated as a National Historic Site and securing the transfer of the site from private to public ownership. She also led the effort to have the U.S. Board of Geographic Names designate a group of islands in the Missouri River near Townsend as "Yorks Islands," after their mention in the journals. She was also instrumental in getting the name applied to a nearby fishing access.

A tireless promoter of Lewis and Clark in central Montana, she brought nationally prominent speakers on the Corps of Discovery to the Townsend community, including the local school. The Broadwater County Museum has a permanent Lewis and Clark exhibit because of Rose's encouragement and direction. She was also responsible for the development of a self-guided auto tour and an accompanying brochure about Lewis and Clark sites along the Missouri River. She even overcame her extreme aversion to snakes to encourage the collection and study of black snakes first observed in the area by Lewis and Clark.

Most of all, Rose was a great leader who was able to spot individual ability within a small and diverse group of Lewis and Clark enthusiasts. She was able to rally them together to accomplish more than they thought they could. For all her accomplishments and leadership, Rose was awarded the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation's 2008 Distinguished Service Award in Great Falls, Montana.

Rose will be dearly missed by all who knew her. For those who did not, her work to preserve historical events and sites is her legacy. Rose has proceeded on, but her work to preserve part of the historic Lewis and Clark Trail lives on.

LESSONS FROM TENDE PASS



How Jefferson's Travels in the Alps Laid the Groundwork for Exploring the American West

BY PETER STARK

Thomas Jefferson, the American minister in Paris, boarded his one-man phaeton carriage on February 28, 1787, leaving behind his usual retinue of servants.¹ His immediate destination was Aix-en-Provence, where his doctor recommended he take the mineral waters to heal a bothersome fractured wrist. He traveled from Paris to Dijon to Mâcon, hiring en route a valet, Petitjean, to help him make arrangements with innkeepers and to hire fresh pairs of horses. Freed from these logistical details, Jefferson could focus his powers of observation.

Jefferson was taking three months away from his duties in Paris to tour southern France. Hoping to learn about the cultivation of rice, he then would leave southern France, climb Tende Pass over the Maritime Alps in order to cross into northern Italy's Piedmont, and descend the fertile, rice-growing Po Valley. The Virginia planter had drafted the Declaration of Independence in 1776, served as governor of Virginia, then returned to Monticello, where he wrote what became a book of natural history, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, completing the manuscript in 1782. His wife Martha Wayles Skelton Jefferson died the

same year, and Jefferson fell into a deep depression. At the urging of worried friends, he accepted the U.S. diplomat's post in Paris, arriving in the summer of 1784 and bringing along his young daughter, Martha, whom he placed in a fashionable French boarding school.

As a passionate botanist and connoisseur of architecture, there was much Jefferson wanted to see on his tour to southern France and northern Italy—botanical gardens, classical ruins, and art collections. He was intensely interested in vineyard production and finding strains of rice and olives that might thrive in North America and boost America's fledgling economy. He hungered to understand how the people of the French countryside lived and to learn about their customs, economy, and society. At the urging of his artistic and intellectual Parisian women friends, he also wanted to see the glories of southern Europe.

The late eighteenth century was the height of the Enlightenment in France, a time when there was a great quest for knowledge of all kinds—knowledge about anthropology, botany, geography, meteorology to name a few—and Jefferson embraced the spirit of the age. Paris



Jefferson regarded Tende Pass, seen in this eighteenth-century image, as “the most singular and picturesque view I ever saw.”

itself was in a ferment of enquiry. The massive expedition led by Jean-François de Galaup, comte de Lapérouse—the French version of Captain Cook’s scientific and exploratory voyages—had embarked for the Pacific in 1785, and Jefferson jealously noted that it would be nosing around America’s West Coast.² Jefferson reported that he scoured the bookstalls of Paris to buy everything “he could lay [his] hands on”³ relating to exploration of the Americas—in Spanish, French, and English. In late 1785, Jefferson dined at the house of the renowned French naturalist Count George-Louis Leclerc Buffon, where he vehemently argued against his host’s assertion that North American mammals were inferior to those of other continents. [See Lee Dugatkin’s article in the November 2011 WPO].

The Enlightenment has also been dubbed “the age of measurement,” and Jefferson was its embodiment. In addition to his plant collecting bag, he travelled south with a measuring tape of some sort and a Fahrenheit thermometer. He measured; he weighed; he took temperature readings; he made calculations. He interviewed locals and hired them to guide him around villages and vineyards. He kept a detailed journal to record facts such as these:

The gutters of Burgundy’s vineyards are set 4 feet apart. The new canal at Dijon was dug 30 feet wide.

A mule (not the largest) measured 5 feet, 2 inches high. Fifty arpents of land at Montrachet produced 120 “pieces” of wine yearly.

The mineral waters pouring from the spout at Aix were 90 degrees Fahrenheit.⁴

Jefferson’s was a restless mind, constantly at work, roaming the landscape, noting its significant details, extracting all possible information, and precisely recording his observations. This was the philosophy of the Age of Enlightenment—strive to know everything, and everything can be known—put into practical application by a deeply curious traveler.

Jefferson, the art connoisseur, was delighted by a statue of Diana at Beaujolais, describing it as a “a delicious morsel of sculpture.” Anthropologist Jefferson speculated in his journal that scattered housing patterns, in contrast to tightly packed villages, promoted rural happiness, that tile roofs indicated prosperity compared to straw roofs, and regions where women weeded the fields by hand instead of turning the earth with hoes demonstrated a more

humane society that saved females from heavy burdens. In the Burgundy region of eastern France, the astute observer noted that at Pommard, the peasants were eating good wheat bread, while at Meursault, they ate only rye. When he asked why, Jefferson was told that at Meursault the soil is stonier, unlike Pommard. Thus, they only made white wine, which tended to fail in quality more often than reds. Therefore the farmer at Meursault, he learned, could not afford to feed his laborers as well as the farmer at Pommard.⁵

“On such slight circumstances depend the condition of man!” he marveled.

He soaked in the mineral waters at Aix, but of course the waters didn’t help his wrist. Nevertheless, the farther south he travelled in France, the lighter Jefferson’s mood became. His letters back to colleagues and to the cultured ladies he befriended in Paris’s intellectual salons took on a playful air as he entered this “land of corn, vine, oil and sunshine. What more can a man ask of heaven?”⁶

From Marseilles he wrote to the Comtesse de Tott, a painter of refined artistic tastes and one of his closest Parisian friends, to report that while traveling solo he had frequent imaginary conversations with her:

As a traveler, said I, retired at night to his chamber in an Inn, all his effects contained in a single trunk, all his cares circumscribed by the walls of his apartment, unknown to all, unheeded and undisturbed, writes, reads, thinks, sleeps just in the moments when nature and the movements of his body and mind require. Charmed with the tranquility of his little cell, he finds how few are our real wants, how cheap a thing is happiness, how expensive a one pride ... I should go on, Madam, detailing to you my dreams and speculations ... but for the Four thousand three hundred and fifty market-women (I have counted them one by one) brawling, squabbling, and jabbering Patois ... in the street under my window ...⁷

At Marseilles, Jefferson aimed his carriage east along the Mediterranean coast toward northern Italy. He rolled over hills and mountains along today’s Riviera, spent the night in Antibes on April 10, 1787, and the next day entered into the Kingdom of Sardinia, arriving in the coastal town of Nice. From here he hoped to cross over the Maritime Alps into Northern Italy.

He’d been traveling hard. He would be traveling even harder in the days ahead. The break at Nice gave him a chance to pause and reflect. He wrote a letter to his good

friend the Marquis de Lafayette about the philosophy of travel and observation he had formulated during his journey thus far. He was “constantly roving about, to see what I have never seen before, and shall never see again,” he wrote the Marquis. Although he found it something of a “job” to visit the sights of the great cities, his great love was wandering through the countryside.

On the other hand, I am never satiated with rambling through the fields and farms, examining the culture and cultivators, with a degree of curiosity which makes some take me to be a fool, and others to be much wiser than I am.⁸

Crossing the Maritime Alps

At Nice, he left his carriage and hired mules and muleteers to make the four-day trip of nearly 100 miles, over three passes of the Maritime Alps. In summer, he could have taken a carriage over the route but not in the snows of early spring. During the exhausting journey, Jefferson made

detailed observations about the “tenderer” plants and fruits, “arranging them according to their several powers of resisting cold. Ascending three different mountains, Braus, Brois, and Tende, they disappear one after the other Caper, orange,

palm, aloe, olive, pomegranate, walnut, fig, almond.”⁹ Higher up the switch-backing track, the mountain vegetation thinned to pine and thyme, and, finally, the mules were tramping through the thick snowpacks lingering from the Alpine winter. Jefferson surely recorded temperatures at night below freezing, and noted the snowline dropped lower down the mountains to the north. From the summit, he planned to drop down into Italy’s Po Valley.

In the tiny Alpine villages, he observed that houses were built of stone to save precious wood, lacked glass in the windows, and that among the inhabitants in these remote parts the fashion of powdering the hair had not yet arrived.

The landscape transported him. At the Chateau di Saorgio before the Tende Pass, he encountered a view that he called “the most singular and picturesque I ever saw.”

The castle and village seem hanging to a cloud in front. On the right, is a mountain cloven through, to let pass a gurgling stream; on the left, a river, over which is thrown a magnificent bridge. The whole forms a basin, the sides of which are shagged with rocks, olive trees, vines, herds, etc.¹⁰

Jefferson’s crossing of the Alps and travels in Europe were, in effect, a training ground for the later exploration of North America.

This scene on the way up Tende Pass became a kind of touchstone of his life. In a letter to the beautiful 27-year-old Maria Cosway—an artist and the wife of Richard Cosway, a British portrait painter—Jefferson described the spectacular vista, and insisted that her talent with a pencil and a brush could “consecrate” it to fame. A few months earlier, Jefferson had written her a now-famous love letter detailing his debate between his head and his heart.

“But I am born to lose everything I love,” he lamented. “Why were you not with me?”¹¹ (At some point Maria painted exactly the scene in the Maritime Alps that Jefferson insisted she try; it was found in her art collection years later, but just when she painted it and with whom, if anyone, she might have been traveling remains unclear.)

On April 14, 1787, the day after his forty-fourth birthday, U.S. Minister Thomas Jefferson finally crested the Tende Pass. At the summit he stood at a higher elevation than he’d ever been in his life: 6,145 feet. It was higher than he would ever climb again. In the decades ahead, others would climb far higher in his name.

Lessons from Tende Pass

Over the next several years, Jefferson went on to make several more major excursions of his own, for collecting plants and gathering other information—along the Rhine Valley in Europe, and, back in America, through the mid-Atlantic region and relatively wild Upstate New York. Although he repeatedly expressed interest in travelling down the Ohio River and then the Mississippi, he never did. Tende Pass was in some ways the apex of his career as an explorer.

It was during his crossing of the Maritime Alps and during his other research excursions in Europe and Upstate New York that he came the closest to mounting his own expedition.¹² During these excursions, Jefferson refined his methods of enquiry and techniques of exploration. These methods, in turn, he passed on to his “proxy” explorers, most famously Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, who led the Corps of Discovery. Jefferson’s crossing of the Alps and travels in Europe were, in effect, a training ground for the later exploration of North America.

On Tende Pass, Jefferson may have learned that he’d never really be an explorer himself. For all his far-ranging intellect and political courage, Jefferson was a connoisseur of life’s creature comforts. He was partial to custom-made pianofortes, fine wines, and gilded French chairs. He enjoyed a vigorous and contemplative life of the mind, although, on the other hand, he loved to ride on horseback through his extensive estates even into his late 70s. While



A self-portrait of Maria Cosway, an artist to whom Jefferson wrote a famous love letter about an argument between his head and his heart.

exhausting and difficult, the Tende Pass offered small inns to stay at along the way. A true exploration of the West, Jefferson surely knew, would demand infinitely more hardship and unpredictability. He must have known he wasn’t suited to the demanding life of the explorer.

He was unlike his contemporary and personal acquaintance from Paris, the American adventurer John Ledyard, whose manic energies seemed fueled by physical hardship and uncertainty. An experienced explorer who sailed with Captain Cook, Ledyard had been the first native-born American citizen to set foot on the Northwest coast. As Jefferson slogged through the snowy Alpine passes that mid-April 1787, Ledyard, with measuring-stick tattooed on his arm, was slogging through snowy Russia toward North America’s unexplored West. It was a wild, low-budget scheme that Jefferson and Ledyard had brainstormed together: Ledyard would leave Europe and head east, crossing Siberia overland by foot and coach, hop a Russian fur boat across the Bering Strait to Alaska, and then walk across the entire unknown interior of North America—passing from Indian tribe to Indian tribe like some trans-continental trade good—finally arriving at the Ledyard family home in Connecticut.

Ledyard became one of Jefferson’s first “proxy explorers.” But, as Jefferson crossed the Tende Pass into Northern Italy, he hadn’t heard a word from Ledyard since the adventurer embarked on his epic round-the-world



THOMAS JEFFERSON FOUNDATION, INC. AT MONTICELLO

Thomas Jefferson by John Turnbull, 1788.

walk in the fall of 1786. Finally, after more than a year's travel brought him nearly the breadth of Siberia to the Pacific, Ledyard was arrested on orders from Catherine the Great and escorted all the way back to Europe, with instructions never to set foot in Russia again. When he arrived back in London and Paris, he immediately set out again, the first explorer recruited by the famed botanist Joseph Banks who founded the Africa Association for the purpose of exploring Africa's interior.

Before Ledyard's hasty departure from Europe for Africa, Jefferson asked him to join a later expedition to America. Jefferson wrote to his friend the Bishop James Madison (cousin of the statesman): "[Ledyard] promises me, if he escapes through this journey, he will go to Kentuckey and endeavor to penetrate Westwardly from thence to the [Pacific] sea."¹³

But there would be no more expeditions for John Ledyard. While trying to arrange travel south from Cairo in January 1789, the ever-impatient Ledyard apparently became angry and "bilious" with repeated delays, overdosed on a self-administered emetic and vomited so violently he died of a hemorrhage. Nearly twenty years

before Jefferson chose Lewis and Clark for the trek to the Pacific Ocean, Ledyard's ultimate failure would teach Jefferson about the need for a steady personality to lead an expedition.

"[A] man of genius," Jefferson said of Ledyard. "Unfortunately he has too much imagination."

Jefferson's Travel Notes

On his return trip to Paris, Jefferson spent a delightful week on a hired barge plying the Canal of Languedoc under "cloudless skies above, limpid waters below" while reading and writing on board or periodically walking on the shore for exercise under a double row of shade trees where nightingales sang.¹⁴

"Of all the methods of travelling I have ever tried," he wrote in a letter back to Paris, "this is the pleasantest."¹⁵

But even during the charming canal trip Jefferson took assiduous notes on the canal's construction for use in building America's canals.

The year after his crossing of the Alps and canal trip, Jefferson journeyed down the Rhine River by boat, again keeping an extensive journal of native customs, sketching castles, sampling wines, and collecting vine shoots. During these two tours—in the Alps and on the Rhine—Jefferson formulated a philosophy of travel that would inform later expeditions he sent out in his name. To really understand a place, he wrote to his friend the Marquis de Lafayette:

...you must be absolutely incognito, you must ferret the people out of their hovels as I have done, look into their kettles, eat their bread, lol on their beds under the pretence of resting yourself, but in fact to find if they are soft.¹⁶

A true exploration of the West, Jefferson surely knew, would demand infinitely more hardship and unpredictability.

Jefferson's entire method of travel that he devised on these European excursions—going as lightly, anonymously, and unthreateningly as possible, but enquiring very deeply and rigorously and keeping careful notes—was precisely the method of exploration

that he pressed on Lewis and Clark and other explorers he dispatched into the world. In addition to their primary object of precise geographic route-finding and mapping, he very explicitly instructed his future explorers to treat the native peoples as kindly as possible. He directed his explorers to enquire about their languages, customs, trade, laws, "state of morality," religion, and diseases, which the explorers should treat if possible. He instructed them to collect all manner of botanical specimens and describe in detail interesting flora and fauna, especially unknown animals, to record the

weather and note the soil and mineral production, thereby adding to general scientific knowledge.¹⁷

These were the instructions he gave to the explorers that one day would fill in the great blank spot of the American West, honed from research methods that Jefferson had experimented with himself while on his much more genteel travels in France and the Rhine. Those who succeeded best, like Lewis and Clark, lived up to the high standard Jefferson set for himself. ❖

Peter Stark is a writer of adventure and exploration history. His most recent book is The Last Empty Places: A Past and Present Journey Through the Blank Spots on the American Map, published by Ballantine Books, 2010.

NOTES

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²Donald Jackson, *Thomas Jefferson & the Rocky Mountains; Exploring the West from Monticello* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981, 2002), pp. 48-49, citing Jefferson to John Jay 14 August 1785.

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⁴Thomas Jefferson, "Memoranda Taken on a Journey from Paris into the Southern Parts of France, and Northern Italy, in the Year

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⁶Thomas Jefferson to William Short, 27 March 1787, in *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 11, ed. Julian P. Boyd et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 247.

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⁹Jefferson, "Memoranda Taken on a Journey," p. 256.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 255-256.

¹¹Jefferson to Maria Cosway, 1 July 1787, *Papers*, vol. 11, pp. 519-520.

¹²Jackson, *Thomas Jefferson & the Rocky Mountains*, p. 57.

¹³Jefferson to the Reverend James Madison, 19 July 1788 in Stephen D. Watrous, *John Ledyard's Journey Through Russian and Siberia 1787-1788* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), p. 256.

¹⁴Jefferson to Martha Jefferson, 21 May 1787, *Papers*, vol. 11, p. 369-370.

¹⁵Jefferson to William Short, 21 May 1787, *Papers*, vol. 11, p. 371-373.

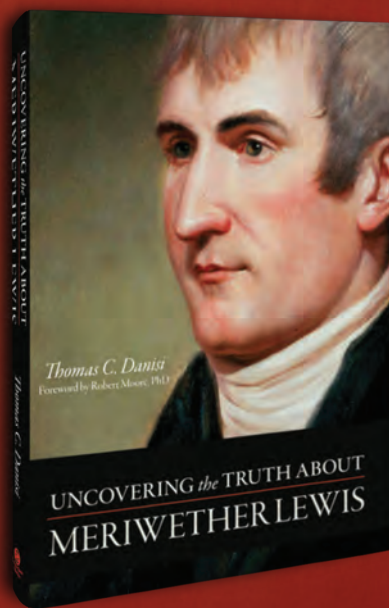
¹⁶Jefferson to Lafayette, 11 April 1787, in *Papers*, vol. 11. pp. 283-285.

¹⁷Jackson, *Thomas Jefferson & the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 75-78, 139-144.

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“A WIDE AND FRUITFUL LAND”

THE HORTICULTURAL POTENTIAL OF LEWIS AND CLARK PLANTS

BY PEGGY CORNETT

The lure of the West, with its promise of untold discoveries, was irresistible to most eighteenth-century Americans, and President Thomas Jefferson was no exception. Monticello, his mountaintop home, stood at the edge of the Virginia frontier with commanding views of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Thus, it was no wonder that Jefferson dreamed of explorations westward with feverish enthusiasm. By the time of the American Revolution, he already was preparing directives for transcontinental scientific journeys that never materialized. In his 1801 inaugural address, Jefferson voiced this desire when he envisioned a “rising nation, spread over a wide and fruitful land, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye.” Two years later, he commissioned Meriwether Lewis to lead the Corps of Discovery.



Scottish gardener David Douglas, who brought Oregon grape-holly and flowering currant from America to Great Britain.

Lewis and Clark were “pioneering naturalists” as Paul Russell Cutright points out in his book of the same title, making collections and observing flora and fauna as they journeyed across the continent. Their three-year exploration led them through the central prairies, high plains, arid Rockies, windswept deserts, and seasonally moist, temperate West Coast regions. These diverse climatic and geographic environments had immensely disparate growing conditions from the woodlands, swamps, fields, and savannahs of eastern North America. Jefferson recognized this diversity when he wrote to American horticulturist Bernard McMahon in 1807, at the conclusion of the mission, “Capt. Lewis has brought a considerable number of seeds of plants peculiar to the countries he has visited.” At the time, it was difficult to recognize or sort out the plants that might prove amenable

to gardens from those requiring very specific and difficult-to-replicate environmental conditions. Although Jefferson, McMahon, William Hamilton, and many others were enormously interested in cultivating these rare specimens, years of experimentation and trial and error would be required to determine which would survive.

Some plants with ornamental potential entered the nursery trade early on. By 1815, Bernard McMahon was offering Lewis's prairie flax (*Linum perenne lewisii*). Other showy flowers like the annual and perennial blanket flowers (*Gaillardia* sp.) were familiar asters that soon emerged as garden favorites. But widespread production and marketing of the Lewis and Clark plants occurred gradually over time. In some cases, it required that the plants be "rediscovered" by other intrepid explorers with more influential connections.

One such naturalist was the Scottish gardener David Douglas, who served on the staff of the Glasgow Botanic Garden before becoming the foremost plant hunter of the Royal Botanical Society. He first travelled the Pacific Northwest in 1825 and explored the upper reaches of the Columbia River and parts of the Canadian wilderness. His western



Prairie flax, *Linum perenne lewisii*, and Oregon grape-holly, *Mahonia aquifolium*, became garden staples after the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

These western North American species often fared better in England than they did in the eastern United States. The elegant Clarkia or "elkhorn flower," named for Captain William Clark by the German botanist Frederick Pursh, became widely popular in nineteenth-century British gardens.

travels crossed and crisscrossed the route that Lewis and Clark had taken 20 years before. In 1827 he returned to London with seeds of dozens of distinct species previously known only to botanists, making available to everyone many garden plants that are now staples, including California poppy, elegant Clarkia, musk or monkey flower, and blue-pod lupines. He also brought choice North American woody shrubs to gardeners around the world, such as the evergreen Oregon grape-holly (*Mahonia aquifolium*, honoring Bernard McMahon) and the flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*). Before his untimely death in Hawaii in 1834, when he fell into a pit trap and was gored by a similarly ensnared bull, Douglas had sent some 500 species to William Hooker, director of the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew.

These western North American species often fared better in England than they did in the eastern United States. The elegant Clarkia or "elkhorn flower," named for William Clark by the German botanist Frederick Pursh, became widely popular in nineteenth-century British gardens. Accounts of London exhibitions in which Clarkias received first-class certificates appeared in American magazines of the 1860s. After traveling to Britain, James Vick of Rochester, New York, wrote

enviously of “immense fields ablaze with bright colors, acres each of pink, red, white, purple, lilac,” which he encountered in a country village in Essex. Although, like most seed men, he offered a broad selection of both single and double cultivars, he readily admitted, “The Clarkia is the most effective annual in the hands of the English florist. It suffers with us in hot dry weather.” Clarkia performed best when sown in the fall, especially in southern states, so that it blooms as the season cools.

Snow-on-the-mountain, *Euphorbia marginata*, which was new to science when collected by Lewis and Clark in 1806, soon became a common annual in nineteenth-century seed catalogues. Although its natural distribution is along the west side of the Missouri River in North Dakota, it proved adaptable to a wide range of soil types and growing conditions and likely escaped from cultivation into farmlands from Minnesota to Texas and New Mexico. Still other adaptable western species like the Western Jacob’s ladder (*Polemonium pulcherrimum*) and even Lewis’s prairie flax never managed to captivate American nurserymen, even though they grow with equal vigor and beauty. Catalogues offered only the traditional European counterparts, probably because it was easier to acquire these perennials from seed sources abroad.

Present-day ecological concerns must temper our rush to obtain certain species, especially those threatened by over-zealous collectors. The prairie coneflower (*Echinacea angustifolia*), for example, has a long history of medicinal use by Native Americans, but our modern-day infatuation with herbal remedies has led to its near devastation by widespread digging of wild plants. The concept of endangered species, diminution of resources,

environmental degradation, even extinction was not part of the mindset of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. It was still a time to document and collect, to observe and understand.

... widespread production and marketing of the Lewis and Clark plants occurred gradually over time and, in some cases, it required that the plants be “rediscovered” by other intrepid explorers.



***Clarkia pulchella* or “elkhorn flower,” which can grow in colors of pink, red, white, purple, and lilac, thrived in the hands of English gardeners.**

As Jefferson predicted in 1804, on the eve of the venture, “We shall delineate with correctness the great arteries of this great country: those who come after us will fill up the canvas we begin.”

Now, we can reflect upon the pristine landscape stretching out beyond the horizon that was viewed with awe and wonder by the men of the Corps of Discovery. While we know they endured near starvation and exhaustion, sickness, scorching heat, arduous winters, monumental hardships, and profound uncertainty about the road ahead, we can still envy their experiences and take pleasure in their discoveries, as did Jefferson. Jefferson’s destiny was to remain behind and wait with excited anticipation for

the seeds, plants, and roots the corps would bring back. In the ensuing years he studied the new and sometimes peculiar flora from western lands, content in the belief that “Nature intended me for the tranquil pursuits of science, by rendering them my supreme delight.” ❁

Peggy Cornett is the curator of plants at Monticello and has worked in the restored gardens of Thomas Jefferson since 1983.

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Presenters

Sunday Evening

Albert Roberts – “The Regency Doctor.” Roberts is a visual communications teacher from Nashville, Tennessee. He demonstrates medical and surgical techniques used in the early 1800s.

Monday Morning

Joshua Bennett – “Destined to be Victims: The Hard Fate of the Shawnee and all Native American People.” Bennett was a member of the 2003–2006 Corps of Discovery and is working in the 2+3 undergraduate and graduate program in history at the University of Missouri at St. Louis and lives in Fairview Heights, Illinois.

Monday Lunch

Lee Alan Dugatkin – “Mr. Jefferson and the Giant Moose: Natural History in the United States.” Dugatkin is a professor and distinguished university scholar in the biology department at the University of Louisville in Louisville, Kentucky.

Monday Afternoon

Carolyn Gilman – “George Rogers Clark, Jefferson’s First Representative in the West.” Gilman is special projects historian at the Missouri History Museum in St. Louis, Missouri.

Robert M. Owens – “Mr. Jefferson’s Secretary Meets Mr. Jefferson’s Hammer: Harrison, Lewis and Clark.” Owens is an associate professor of history at Wichita State University in Wichita, Kansas.

James J. Holmberg – “Lewis and Clark and Their Time at the Falls of the Ohio.” Holmberg is curator of special collections at the Filson Historical Society in Louisville, Kentucky.

Wednesday Afternoon

Ernest “Bill” Smith – “The Fabulous Floyds.” Smith retired after practicing law for more than 40 years in Jeffersonville, Indiana. Smith wrote a book about Davis Floyd and lives in The Villages, Florida.

Margaret Wozniak – “Lewis and Clark: A Trail to Spiritual Awareness.” Wozniak was an elementary school teacher with a degree in sociology from Aquinas College and an associate executive secretary degree from Ferris State University. She is retired and lives in Beulah, Michigan.

John Fisher – “Venereal Disease and Mercury on the Expedition.” An award-winning high school science teacher, Fisher is retired and lives in Julietta, Idaho.

Future Explorers Presentation

Wednesday Closing Banquet

Jay Buckley – “William Clark: A Reflection.” Buckley is an associate professor of history at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah and president of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation Forty-fourth Annual Meeting

Program Activities

- Saturday** *Discovery Expedition of St. Charles, Missouri.*
July 28, 2012 Encampment at the George Rogers Clark Home on the Ohio River in Clarksville, departure site of the Lewis and Clark Expedition October 26, 1803.
At the Camporee, Boy Scouts and other youth can earn badges or certificates for completing Stations of Learning.
- Sunday** *Trough Spring, home of Jonathan Clark. (Extra Fee Required)*
July 29, 2012 Jonathan Clark's home is now the private residence of Dr. Bruce and Becky Campbell. James J. Holmberg, curator of special collections at the Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky and editor of *Dear Brother: Letters of William Clark to Jonathan Clark* will share letters and stories.
- Monday** *Future Explorers, led by Nancy Spencer, Ohio River Chapter, Chapter of the Year 2010*
July 30, 2012 Held all-day Monday and Wednesday afternoon (July 30 & Aug. 1) for ages 6 to 14 years. Children will travel on the bus Tuesday with their parents to Vincennes, Indiana and Wednesday morning to Locust Grove in Louisville, Kentucky.
Cost \$200 (Reduced by a grant of \$100 for a total fee of \$100)
Includes bus trips, lunch and evening meals. Minimum 10 – maximum 25 participants. Children will trace the journey of the Lewis and Clark Expedition from Charlottesville to Oregon and back to St. Louis using narration and pantomime. They also will create scenery and "artifacts" to use as a play for the foundation members at a Wednesday afternoon session. Foundation members who have stories, costumes, songs, artifacts, etc. are encouraged to share them with the children for 10 or 15 minutes during a session on Monday.
- Tuesday** *Bus trip. We will follow the "Old Buffalo Trace" to Vincennes, Indiana and tour the George Rogers Clark Memorial; Grouseland, Home of William Henry Harrison; Vincennes State Historic Sites; and Fort Knox II.*
July 31, 2012
- Wednesday** *Locust Grove, home of Clark's sister. Lewis and Clark were entertained here November 8, 1806 after their return from the west.*
August 1, 2012
-

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VOYAGEURS WITH THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

BY ORVILLE D. MENARD

The contributions of the voyageurs, the French river men and fur traders, to the achievements of Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark have long been overlooked. Descended from the Frenchmen who in the words of one historian “dipped their canoes in every leading river highway in the west from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico,” these men not only helped the Corps of Discovery navigate the daunting Missouri, but their services as interpreters were invaluable.”¹ When Lewis and Clark put their keelboat and pirogues (flat-bottomed boats) on the Missouri River, they had had little experience with the New World’s waters.

Because the languages of Indian peoples were unknown to the English-speaking members of the Corps of Discovery, interpreters were essential to their ability to communicate with tribes as they moved upstream. Richard Hétu, a Montreal journalist, lauds the French explorers and fur traders known as voyageurs as “the forgotten



A French engagé, hired to guide the pirogues and keelboat down the Missouri.

heroes of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.” There are a number of references in the Lewis and Clark Journals that demonstrate the importance of the interpreters.

When two Mandan chiefs visited Clark on November 25, 1804, for example, he noted in frustration that “the interpreters being all with Capt. Lewis I could not talk to them.” In his journal entry for January 9, 1806, about a meeting with Chief Coboway of the Clatsop Tribe, Lewis complained, “I cannot understand them sufficiently to make any enquiries” Similarly, Clark wrote of meeting with Twisted Hair on June 6, 1806, “I was unable to converse with him for want of an interpreter.”

When President Thomas Jefferson instructed Lewis to explore the Missouri River, he told him to acquire knowledge about the people “inhabiting the line you will pursue.”² Commerce, however, with the tribes along the Missouri required knowing about the various tribal customs, intertribal

relations, languages, and traditions, laws, and trade aspirations. Interpreters were essential for fulfilling these responsibilities.

While Lewis and Clark kept accurate records of their American military charges, their lists of the Frenchmen in the corps are inconsistent. The two captains kept careful records of names, numbers, additions, and discharges of their soldiers, but paid little attention to the voyageurs. History is largely silent about most of these men, revealing little about their birthplaces and lives, before or after the expedition.

List of Voyageurs

The following list identifies the Corps of Discovery's voyageurs.

Engagés

E. Cann (Alexander Carson)
Charles Caugeé
Toussaint Charbonneau/Sacagawea, interpreters
Joseph Collin
Jean Baptiste Deschamps (Private?)
Pierre Dorion, Sr., interpreter
George Drouillard, hunter, interpreter
Charles Hébert (possibly Charlo)
Joseph Gravelines, interpreter
René Jesseaume, interpreter
Jean Baptiste La Jeunesse
La Liberté
Etienne Malbouef
Peter Pinaut
Paul Primeau
François Rivet
Pierre Roi (Roie, Roy, Le Roy, Rokey)³

Army Privates

Pierre Cruzatte, bowman and interpreter
François Labiche, bowman, interpreter
Pierre Baptiste Lepage

Not paid

Fairfong [Faufon, Farfong, Fauconn]
Pierre-Antoine Tabeau

Engagés and Higherlins

To communicate with the tribes along the Missouri, Lewis and Clark hired Indian-speaking voyageurs as *engagés*. Clark also occasionally referred to the *engagés* as French *higherlins* or hired hands. In the journals, the captains refer



to their *engagés* as “French” or “Frenchmen.” Most were of French descent and born in Canada, thus more accurately described as French-Canadian. Canada was the birthplace of Toussaint Charbonneau, Joseph Collin, George Drouillard, Hébert, Jeunesse, La Liberté, Etienne Malbouef, Paul Primeau, and François Rivet. Birthplaces are unknown for Charles Caugeé, Jean Baptiste Deschamps, and Pierre Roi. Carson may have been born in Mississippi; Pineau “in the woods.” Pierre Cruzatte and François Labiche, who had French fathers and Omaha Indian mothers, were most likely born in Omaha tribal territory.

The first recruit was George Drouillard, who was half French and half Shawnee. He was recruited by Lewis on November 11, 1803, at Fort Massac on the Ohio



CHARLES FRITZ

The White Pirogue Under Sail. To move upstream against the Missouri River, the corps depended on the voyageurs to help row the pirogues and keelboats.

River's north bank. Drouillard, a sign talker of the Plains Indians, was also fluent in French and English. Cruzatte and Labiche, both of whom were half French and half Omaha, were mixed bloods (or *Métis*), joined the Corps of Discovery as privates at St. Charles on May 14, 1804. They spoke Omaha and could at least get by in one or two other tribal languages.

On December 12, 1803, the corps began construction of its winter quarters at the mouth of Wood River (*Rivière Dubois*), in Illinois. Across from the encampment was St. Louis, founded in 1764 by Pierre Laclède and Auguste Chouteau. Both men hailed from the prominent Chouteau family. They helped Lewis and Clark negotiate the social world of French-speaking St. Louis, assisting them in their

search for maps, fur traders, and others who could add to their knowledge of what awaited them on the Missouri. In a letter to William Crogan in May 1804, Clark noted the politeness and attention given by the Chouteaus, adding that Pierre's house was their home.⁴

After hearing tales of the turbulent Missouri from St. Louis fur traders, the captains were convinced they needed additional manpower to take the keelboat and pirogues 1,600 miles to the Mandan-Hidatsa villages. In early May 1804, the Chouteaus sent Lewis and Clark seven or eight voyageurs familiar with the Missouri-to-Mandan stretch. These *engagés* were contracted to accompany the expedition to add their strength to row, pole, and cordell (pulling the keelboat with ropes) the 14-ton keelboat, 8-ton

white pirogue, and the 9-ton red pirogue. When the keelboat embarked on its epic journey from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean on May 14, 1804, with its American soldiers and French voyageurs, the keelboat's bowmen were Cruzatte and Labiche. In the red pirogue were French fur traders who had travelled the Missouri for many years and knew its denizens as far as the Mandan and Hidatsa villages. In the white pirogue were Corporal Richard Warfington and five soldiers.

When the party set out from Camp Wood, Clark noted that it was in the "presence of many of the Neighbouring inhabitants," likely shouting farewells of "bon chance, au revoir, à la prochaine!" to the American soldiers entering waters where English was little known and river names and words were tribal or French. Crossing the river into the Louisiana Territory, they arrived two days later at St. Charles, a "community of abot 450 Inhabitents principally frinch."⁵ (Clark, of course, was a notoriously creative speller as the Lewis and Clark journals demonstrate. He spelled "Sioux" twenty-seven different ways, and Toussaint Charbonneau was not spelled correctly in fifteen tries.)⁶

From St. Charles, Lewis and Clark traveled on a river whose tributaries and features were known by various French names: *Charette Creek*, *Cul de Sac*, *Les Mamelles*, *Isle de Vache*, *Rivière à la Mine*, *L'Outre Island*, *Boeuf Creek*, *Isle à Beau Soleil*, *Rivière Jacques*, to name a few.⁷

In his detachment orders of May 26, 1804, Lewis organized his men into five messes (squads) and set forth their duties.⁸ In equal proportion, they would stand guard duty, pitch tents, make fires, and prepare meals, except for Jean Baptiste Deschamps, a corporal, and Drouillard, who were freed of guard duty. According to the orders, Drouillard "will perform certain duties on shore which will be assigned from time to time." Cruzatte and Labiche were crucial bowmen, responsible for keeping the keelboat on course and warning about the Missouri's hazards.

The Red Pirogue

The other Frenchmen were assigned to the red *pirogue*, setting them apart for their duty day, their evening meal, and tent locations. Clark mentions the "carelessness" of the French hands when goods on the red pirogue were left uncovered and became wet after a rainstorm. When some

of the voyageurs complained about not eating five or six meals a day, as they were accustomed to, Clark roughly rebuked the "higherlins." Sergeant Patrick Gass registered a negative attitude toward the French, perhaps widely shared. Writing of the Indian "fair sex," Gass lamented the "severe and loathsome effects of certain French principles" An image of the voyageurs as licentious and profligate, as "morally reprehensible and irresponsible" was not uncommon among Americans.¹⁰ Other than Gass's reproach, the Frenchmen are rarely mentioned except for Drouillard, Labiche, Cruzatte, and Charbonneau.

When the men departed St. Charles, their labors began. Over the next months, the Missouri River confronted them with an array of challenges: huge drifting logs, rafts of driftwood, falling banks, quicksand, sandbars, snags, and sawyers, swift and changing currents. Struggling to move upstream against such obstacles, solders and *engagés* rowed, poled, cordelled, and occasionally raised their sails. They were

essential elements of the journey because the captains could not have moved the keelboat and pirogues without their collective strength.

Lewis and Clark heard the latest news about the river from traders coming downstream on the Missouri headed for St. Louis, their canoes loaded with furs. One of them, Pierre Dorion, who lived with the Sioux for 20 years and spoke English, French, and Sioux, was hired July 12, 1804, to return upriver as an interpreter.

Diplomats in Pirogues

Jefferson instructed Lewis and Clark to represent the United States as diplomats and to act as trade representatives to the Indians of the Louisiana Purchase. On July 28, 1804, Drouillard brought to their camp a Missouri Indian from a small tribe that lived with the Otos near present-day Omaha. He stayed the night, explaining, through Drouillard, that his people and the Otos were on a buffalo hunt nearby. The next morning, Lewis and Clark, seeing an opportunity to initiate their diplomatic activity, sent the Missouri Indian and Oto-speaking La Liberté to the Oto camp with an invitation to meet them at the next bend of high land on the left (west) side of the river. How did they know about the bluff ahead? Perhaps the Oto described the spot. Or did Cruzatte and Labiche, familiar

Only the Frenchmen on the keelboat and in the red pirogue knew the meaning of these words. The American soldiers, including Lewis and Clark, knew neither French nor the Missouri River.



George Drouillard, the first voyageur recruited by Meriwether Lewis on November 11, 1803.

with the area from their childhood, designate the site of the first council? Their river knowledge, passed on to the captains and embodied in the invitation from La Liberté, pinpointed a landmark—the high land at the next river bend—that the Indians recognized.

On July 30, 1804, Clark wrote about a bluff approximately 70 feet higher than the river bottom, where the corps made camp at its base to await the Indians. Writing of the view from the bluff that rose immediately above their camp, he noted the country's beauty:

Soil of good quality &, Still further back at the Distance of about a mile the Countrey rises about 80 or 90 feet higher, and is one Continual Plain as fur as Can be Seen, from the *Bluff* on the 2d rise immediately above our Camp the most butifull prospect of the River up & Down and the Countrey ospd. prosentet it Self which I ever beheld; The River meandering the open and butifull Plains interspured with Groves of timber, and each point Covered with Tall timber, Such as willow Cotton Sun [NB: *Some*] Mulberry, Elm, Sucamore, Lynn & ash ...¹¹

When the six chiefs of the Otos and Missouris arrived three evenings later at sunset for a council on August 3, 1804, Cruzatte and Labiche were engaged as translators. The process was arduous. Cruzatte and Labiche translated Lewis and Clark's English words into French for a fur trader named Fairfong, who lived with the Otos and Missouris. Fairfong then translated the captains' words into the Oto language for the Oto chiefs. After his return to the Missouri Camp, the trader was never heard from again.

In his half-hour speech to the "Great Father's Children," followed by lengthy translations, Lewis informed the chiefs and their warriors that the United States now had jurisdiction over their lands, would protect them and bring trade advantages. Failure to comply with the "Great Father's" message, he added, would create a plains fire to consume them. Although the complicated translations may have slightly changed the message, Clark noted that they welcomed the news with "approbation."

Nations Will Not "Open Their Ears"

On August 19, 1804, Lewis and Clark met with Oto Chiefs who were not present at the Council Bluff gathering. The chiefs were interested in trading and the captains in diplomacy, but linguistic difficulties and differing expectations marred the talks.

The next council was held at the end of August 1804, near present-day Gavins Point Dam, with the Yankton Sioux. The council went well, thanks to Pierre Dorion and his fluent Sioux, and the captains departed the village on friendly terms. When Lewis and Clark moved on, they made a decision they later regretted. Unable to satisfy the chief's request for "powder and ball," the captains left Dorion with the Yankton Sioux to promote peace among the tribes.

As the corps left Omaha territory and traveled farther north, Cruzatte and Labiche's language usefulness diminished, necessitating new translators. As the Americans prepared to depart, a Yankton chief, Arcaweche, warned that "nations above will not open their ears." Arcaweche's prophecy seemed to be confirmed when the corps reached the Brulé band of the Teton Sioux near Pierre, South Dakota, in late September 1804. The Teton were an aggressive tribe of the High Plains that monitored traffic on the Missouri for its own economic benefit. They appeared ready to block passage until a fee was paid. The lack of an interpreter was crucial, and Dorion's absence was sorely felt. The Americans had no one skilled enough

for translations: Cruzatte knew little Sioux Teton and Drouillard's hand signals did not bridge the language gap. Clark expressed his consternation in his journal, noting, "we feel much at a loss for want of an interpreter the one we have can Speak but little." Lewis' speech was cut short.

Later that day, a confrontation arose between Teton Sioux warriors and Clark. Bows were strung, swords drawn and swivel guns filled with buckshot—the atmosphere was tense. Chief Black Buffalo broke the tension by ordering four warriors to go ashore from the pirogue they had boarded, and violence was avoided. Then, on September 27, 1804, Omaha prisoners of the Teton Indians told Cruzatte that the Americans were to be stopped. A guard was posted for the night and the next day they proceeded on, with a new appreciation for the crucial role of interpreters.

Speak Arikara, Anyone?

When the Corps of Discovery reached the Arikara Indians in what is now northern South Dakota, not one of the corps spoke the language of the Indians. Fortunately, Lewis and Clark discovered two French fur traders living with the tribe, Joseph Gravelines and Pierre Antoine Tabeau. Fur trader Gravelines spoke French, English, Arikara, and Sioux; Tabeau was also multilingual. The men provided the captains with information on the lower Missouri and Gravelines; the principal interpreter in council meetings with the Arikaras, was hired to accompany the expedition to the Mandan villages.¹² Although Lewis and Clark repeated their cultural error of treating one chief as superior to two others (in their American hierarchical world there was always a singular leader), the Arikaras agreed in subsequent talks to consider a trip to meet President Jefferson. Trade talks, however, were complicated by the tribe's relationships with the more powerful Tetons.

When the corps reached the Mandan and Hidatsa villages on October 27, 1804, the captains needed someone to translate their English into Mandan and back again. René Jesseume, a French trader who lived among the Mandans for 15 years and had a Mandan wife, was signed on by Clark as an interpreter and supplied needed information from his experiences on the Upper Missouri River.

Shoshone Translator: Sacagawea

In November 1804, Toussaint Charbonneau came to Lewis and Clark at Mandan, unable to speak English, and was hired as an interpreter. He quit the following March, asserting that he wanted to return when he wished, use as many provisions as he could carry, and would not have



Half-French, Half-Omaha Indian, Pierre Cruzatte entertained the corps with his fiddle-playing.

to stand guard. Five days later, he apologized and agreed to Clark's terms.

Charbonneau's major qualification, however, was his Shoshone wife, Sacagawea, who had been kidnapped by the Hidatsas from her tribal home near the Bitterroot Mountains when she was 10 or 12 years old. By hiring Charbonneau, Lewis and Clark gained Sacagawea as their interpreter for the discussions. When the corps reached the Shoshones, she would be able to convey to her people the expedition's need for horses. Lewis and Clark would speak English to Cruzatte or Labiche, who spoke French to Charbonneau, who spoke Hidatsa to his wife, who spoke Shoshone.

On November 3, 1804, Private Jean Baptiste Lepage signed on as a private and went with the permanent party to the Pacific. Little is known about him other than Clark's remark that he took the place of John Newman, who was court-martialed and "discharged from the party in October for mutinous comments."¹³

Thanks to their interpreters, the captains and their men lived in harmony with the Mandans and Hidatsas during

their winter encampment at Fort Mandan. The Indians provided important geographical information about the “unknown territory,” as they called it on their maps, the explorers would enter once they got underway again in the spring.

One night in February, Lewis found himself in unknown territory of a different sort as he stood by helplessly by and watched Sacagawea endure a painful delivery of her first child. As an army officer with no experience as a midwife, Lewis was assured by *engagé* Jesseaume that the rattle of a rattlesnake would induce birth. Lewis had a rattle and gave it to Jesseaume, who broke it into little pieces, which he mixed with water. He gave the concoction to Sacagawea, and ten minutes later she delivered a boy. “[P]erhaps this remedy may be worthy of future experiments,” observed Lewis, “but I must confess that I want faith as to its efficacy.”¹⁴

Tab-ba-bone!

The pirogues and keelboat left Fort Mandan on April 7, 1804, the pirogues heading west with the permanent party (33 adults and Sacagawea’s baby) to the Pacific, while the keelboat departed for St. Louis with four more *engagés*. Five Frenchmen went with Lewis and Clark, four of them interpreters: privates Cruzatte and Labiche and *engagés* Drouillard and Charbonneau. Lepage was included, likely because he and another trapper had traveled farther up the Missouri than any other white men.

When they entered Shoshone country the captains’ anxiety intensified as days passed without contact with the tribe that possessed the horses needed to cross the Bitterroot Mountains. On August 11, 1804, Lewis, while scouting ahead of the main party with three others, spotted a mounted Indian. To the captain’s chagrin, the Indian turned his horse and rode off when he shouted “Ta-ba-bone!” Lewis thought he was saying “white man,” a Shoshone translation had learned from Sacagawea. In fact, he was identifying himself as a “stranger,” an “alien,” or expressing “look at the sun,” which explained why the Indian kept looking over his shoulder.¹⁵

Soon after, as sixty Shoshone warriors thundered up on horseback with Chief Cameahwait, Lewis assumed they were a party of enemy Blackfeet. His apprehensions

faded away when he and his companions were accorded a friendly greeting. Drouillard was able to converse with them in sign. When the rest of the corps caught up with Lewis, Sacagawea realized that Cameahwait was her brother and embraced him in a tearful reunion — a scene Lewis called “very affecting.”

Sacagawea was a key link in the translation chain set up to converse with the Shoshones: Lewis and Clark spoke English to Labiche, who spoke French to Charbonneau, who spoke Hidatsa to Sacagawea, who spoke Shoshone to Cameahwait and back again. Passing through several languages here as on other occasions was tedious, but the captains gained 29 horses plus valuable information about the territory ahead.

When Language Fails

The corps moved north across Lost Trail Pass, into the Bitterroot Valley, and encountered a band of Salish, accompanied by a Shoshone boy who served as another link in the translation chain. He spoke Shoshone to Sacagawea, who helped to interpret for the corps. Lewis

and Clark made an arduous crossing of the Bitterroots. An advance party led by Clark, staggered into a Nez Perce village on the Weippe Prairie, famished and weak. When the main party arrived, they communicated with the Nez Perce by way of Drouillard’s sign language.

At Canoe Camp, five miles west of present-day Orofino, Idaho, Lewis and Clark added two Nez Perce chiefs, Twisted Hair and Tetoharsky as interpreters, realizing that they would encounter different Indian tribes. Before the corps entered the last set of falls on the Columbia River at The Dalles, the two returned home. Ahead were the Chinooks, who were of a different culture and language and who were at war with the Nez Perce.

From November 1805 until the expedition’s departed from Fort Clatsop in March 1806, the expedition’s members could not communicate with their neighbors. Drouillard’s sign language was of no use with the coastal Chinooks or the Clatsop Indians. Lewis complained after a visit with Chinooks he was unable to communicate without a translator. They had learned from coastal traders a few words of English: “mosquit, powder, shot, nife, file, damned rascal, sun of a bitch &c.,” but little that was of use to Lewis and Clark and their men.¹⁶

Thanks to their interpreters the officers and their men
lived among the Indians during their winter quarters
at Mandan in peace and friendship, enjoying their
hospitality and assistance . . .

On the return journey, when they entered Blackfeet country, the lack of communication proved deadly. Drouillard was off scouting, when a small party went up the Marias River. Lewis encountered a band of eight Blackfeet warriors and attempted signing, without success. The parties camped together that night, but in the early morning, the Blackfeet attempted to take the explorers' guns. Lewis and his men recovered their weapons after a brief struggle, during which Reuben Field fatally stabbed one of the warriors. Then the Blackfeet stole their horses. Lewis chased two of them, calling several times that he would shoot unless they returned his horses. Lewis' warnings in English were words most likely unintelligible to the man.¹⁷ As the man turned to face his pursuer, Lewis shot him in the stomach.¹⁸

Talking Hands

As Lewis and Clark prepared for their Missouri River exploration they learned they needed knowledgeable and fit men able to serve as interpreters to accomplish Jefferson's purposes and instructions. They could satisfy several of the President's requests for data on flora and fauna with their own observations, but asking questions and understanding answers meant they needed to understand the numerous Indian languages. *Engagé* interpreters, therefore, were vital to the success of the Lewis and Clark expedition as it left St. Charles.

Without the voyageurs a difficult journey would have been immensely more arduous. Canadian historian Denis Vaugeois asserts that "without the teams of French Canadian *engagés*, without these men to manoeuvre (sic) watercraft over shallows and around snags with poles and cordelles, without the two experienced pilots, Cruzatte and Labiche, they would have had a very hard time getting their keelboat as far as the Mandan country." "Without them, the Lewis and Clark Expedition probably could not have reached the Mandans," wrote Vaugeois in *America: the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Dawn of a New Power*. "At least not in such good shape."¹⁸

Jefferson directed Lewis and Clark to accumulate information from tribesmen whose languages they couldn't understand. Their *engagés* were the intermediaries between the explorers and the explored, making the captains' English somewhat understandable to the

Indians. Drouillard, wrote Lewis, knew the common language of signs, which allowed them to communicate broad points, but was, according to Lewis, imperfect and liable to error.²⁰

For his contributions as a translator, hunter, and woodsman, Drouillard has been ranked as the most important person in the entire detachment after Lewis and Clark.²¹ "Eh bien," Drouillard remarks in Alexander Thom's historical novel, *Sign-Talker*, "it was language that the officers had hired him for. They might have made it out or back without his hunting skills, but not without his talking hands."²² The corps could say the same about reliance on Drouillard. Drouillard's importance is suggested by the number of entries in Moulton's index—he has a total of 311 entries, a total exceeded only by those of Lewis and Clark.

Lewis suggested Labiche receive a pay bonus, extolling his essential services as a translator, although his proposal was rejected. Despite problems, Charbonneau

earned high marks from Lewis as a cook, especially his *boudin blanc* (white pudding), which consisted of buffalo intestine stuffed with chopped meat, salt and pepper, flour, and various ingredients, that

was boiled and fried.²³ His wife Sacagawea helped the captains bargain for horses with the Shoshone to cross the formidable Bitterroot Mountains. Although one-eyed Cruzatte, the interpreter, was remembered most vividly for accidentally shooting Lewis in the buttocks while hunting—Cruzatte fired at what he thought was an elk—and Lewis shouted, "Damn you, you have shot me." But Cruzatte also entertained his comrades with his fiddle playing and taught them how to build caches to bury and preserve supplies.²⁴

Perceptions about the Lewis and Clark Expedition have vastly changed over the years. In the twenty-first century, the historic mission to the West is widely recognized as a joint venture of peoples and cultures. The unheralded Frenchmen are an indispensable feature of this historic mission to the west. Possibly Lewis and Clark would have succeeded without the voyageurs. The Captains' courage, adaptability, and inventive qualities may have overcome the absence of the interpreters' abilities but the journey would have been much more arduous and dangerous. As words passed from one language to another, hours were spent as the parties strove to create—between the two

For his contributions as a translator, hunter, and woodsman, Drouillard has been ranked as the most important person in the entire detachment after Lewis and Clark.

languages—some kind of understanding among nations. Captain Clark describes the strain to understand—between the Americans and the Salish near Camp Creek. Clark describes the sounds of the English being translated into Salish as the “gugling kind of language Spoken much thro the Throught” as each party struggled to tell the other “who we were, where we Came from, where bound and for what purpose &c. &c.”²⁵ ❖

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NOTES

¹A.P. Nasatir, ed., *Before Lewis and Clark* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press: 1990) pp. 1-115 for North American expeditions before Lewis and Clark, including Jacques Cartier in 1534; Samuel de Champlain in 1608; Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet in 1673; René de la Salle in 1683. Explorer Sieur de Bourgmont followed the Missouri as far as the Platte River, and two brothers, Pierre and Paul Mallet ascended the Platte eighty-four miles in 1739 to the South Fork of the River Jacques. D'Eglise made it from St. Louis to as far as the Mandan /Hidatsa villages in 1790 and six years later John Evans made a careful map to the villages. On January 1, 1804, President Jefferson provided Lewis a copy of Evans's map, writing “It is said to be very accurate.” John Bakeless, *Lewis and Clark: Partners in Discovery* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1947), p. 109. Lewis took the map along. See Vaugeois, *America: the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Dawn of a New Power* (Montreal: Véhicule Pre, 2005) “Charting the Territory,” text and maps, pp. 143-156.

²For Jefferson's instructions, see www.montecello...org/Jefferson/lewisandclark/instructions/html.

³Gary E. Moulton, ed. *Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition*, 13 volumes. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1986 Moulton, Vol. 2, pp. 254-259 and, Field Notes, p. 254. Appendix A, “Members of the Expedition” 509-529. Biographical sketches of these men are scarce. See Charles E. Clarke, *The Men of the Lewis and Expedition: A Biographical Roster of the Fifty-one Members and Composite Diary of Their Activities/Clark* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002); Larry E. Morris, *The Fate of the Corps* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Stephanie Ambrose-Tubbs and Clay Strauss, *The Lewis and Clark Companion: An Encyclopedic Guide to the Corps of Discovery* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2003); Elin Woodger and Brandon Toropov, *Encyclopedia of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (New York: Facts on File, Checkmark Books, 2004).

⁴On the Chouteau's see Shirley Christian, *Before Lewis and Clark: the Story of the Chouteaus, The French Dynasty That Ruled America's Frontier* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2004). On the assistance of the Chouteaus, see William Foley, “The Lewis and Clark Expedition's Silent Partners: the Chouteau Brothers of Saint Lewis,” *The Missouri Historical Review*, January 1983, pp.130-146.

⁵Moulton, Vol. 2, p. 233. Uncertainty of jurisdiction is seen in Lewis and Clark carrying passports and letters of recommendations from the French and British ministers in Washington, D.C. See François Larocque, *The Journals of François Larocque* (Fairfield, WA: Galleon Press, 1981), p. 14. See Philip J. Kastor in James P. Ronda and Ronald and Nancy Tystad Koupal, eds., *Finding Lewis and Clark: Old Trails, New Directions* (Pierre, SD: South Dakota State Historical Society, 2004), pp. 25-27; Denis Vaugeois, *America*, pp. 91-103

⁶Robert B. Betts, “We Commenced Writing, A Salute to the Ingenious Spelling and Grammar of William Clark,” <http://www.lewisandclark.org/pages/writing.htm>.

⁷See Richard R. Sutton and Kenneth R. Canfield, eds., *The Missouri River: the River Rats Guide to Missouri River History and Folklore* (Leawood, KS: Squire Publishers, 1974); John C. Luttig, *Journal of a Fur-trading Expedition On the Upper Missouri*, 1812-1813 (New York: Antiquarian LTD, 1964) Moulton, Vol. 2, Lewis and Clark, Detachment Orders, pp. 254-260.

⁸Moulton, Vol. 2, Lewis and Clark Detachment Orders, May 26, 1804, p. 260.

⁹Ibid., Vol. 10, p. 75.

¹⁰Tanis C. Thorne, *The Many Hands of My Relations: French and Indians on the Lower Missouri*, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1996), p. 161.

¹¹Moulton, Vol. 5, p. 430.

¹²Elin Woodger and Brandon Toropov, *Encyclopedia of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (New York: Facts-on-File, 2004), p. 160.

¹³Moulton, Vol. 3. pp. 156-158.

¹⁴Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 291.

¹⁵Ibid., Vol. 5. pp. 76-84.

¹⁶Ibid., Vol. 7, pp.. 242-243

¹⁷Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 430

¹⁸Ibid., Vol., 8., pp. 133-137; James P. Ronda, *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984) pp. 238-243.

¹⁹Vaugeois, *America*, pp. 116, 244.

²⁰Moulton, Lewis, August 14, 1805.

²¹Richard Dillon, *Meriwether Lewis: A Biography*, (New York: Coward-McCann, 1965) pp. 91, 273; Ambrose-Tubbs, *Lewis and Clark*, pp. 176-77. See Robert E. Lange, “George Drouillard (Drewyer): One of the Two or Three Most Valuable men on the Expedition,” *We Proceeded On*, May 1979, pp. 14-16.

²²James Alexander Thom, *Sign-Talker: The Adventure of George Drouillard on the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2000) p. 481.

²³Moulton, Vol. 4, p. 130-133. See Dale W. Nelson, *Interpreters for Lewis and Clark: The Story of Sacagawea and Toussaint Charbonneau* (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 2003) for a more favorable accounting than he usually receives.

²⁴Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 54-157. Lewis spent the next several days in a canoe lying on his stomach. <http://mohumanities.org/programs/manyfaces/presenterindex>.

²⁵Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 188.

**Thomas Jefferson's
Granddaughter in Queen
Victoria's England: The Travel
Diary of Ellen Wayles Coolidge,
1838-1839**

Edited by Ann Lucas Birle and
Lisa A. Francavilla

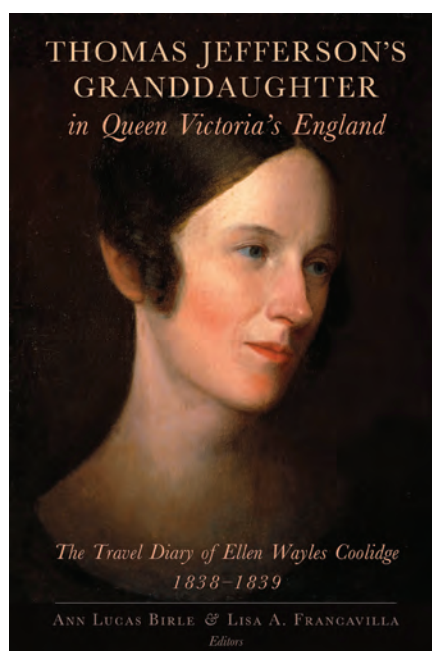
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When President Thomas Jefferson described Captain Meriwether Lewis's "fidelity to truth as so scrupulous that whatever he should report would be as certain as if seen by ourselves," little did he know the same could be said about his granddaughter, Ellen Wayles Coolidge, and her travel diary describing an 1839 trip to London. Coolidge accompanied her husband, Boston merchant Joseph Coolidge, Jr., and their youngest son, Thomas Jefferson Coolidge, on a nine-month business trip to England and Scotland. She faithfully kept a diary for her sisters and herself, never intending to publish it. Thanks to the Massachusetts Historical Society and the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, however, we have the good fortune to get to know this remarkable woman as she observes the similarities and differences between America and its mother country, England.

She went on her journey intending to "visit Parks and Picture Galleries—to extend my acquaintance with Nature & Art but not with the motley mixture of nature & art called society." As the favorite grandchild of the third president, she certainly could have carried letters of introduction

to the landed gentry of England and Scotland. She chose not to. Instead, she viewed more than 400 works of art and visited 40 public and private art collections. Inevitably, of course, she was invited into the parlors and drawing rooms of some of the most famous people in British society. Thanks to several of her American friends living in England, she met many of the "Lions" of the land, as she called them, including Thomas Carlyle, Harriet Martineau, and the Duchess of Kent.



As intimate and entertaining as her travel diary is, it is infinitely enriched by the research in the annotations of the two editors, Ann Lucas Birle and Lisa A. Francavilla. These annotations include details of what Coolidge is describing and to whom she is referring as well as quotes from additional sources and other Coolidge letters to further fill in this rich portrait of her journey. Some of these additional sources include eight pages of beautifully reproduced illustrations related to Coolidge's descriptions.

Much like a friendly conversation with a learned lady friend, this account covers a wide range of subjects about Victorian England—including the French Revolution, the English working class, as well as the involvement of women in politics—along with observations about her own famous family and her "earliest and best friend, Thomas Jefferson." Particularly insightful are her descriptions of the relations between America and England and the difficulties of travel overseas with a busy husband while leaving behind her children with kind relations. Throughout this narrative the unique character of Mrs. Coolidge shines.

Nothing or no one escapes her scrutiny. Of the new Queen Victoria, she observes, "She is altogether too short for a Queen." She compares the the hustle and bustle of nineteenth-century London to "an Ant Hill as seen through a powerful microscope." She is keenly aware that a few of the English gentry she meets have no clue about her countrymen, "expecting probably to have seen Americans on all fours, or at least dressed in skins."

One of the most charming aspects of her account is her love of painting and her confession of ignorance about some works of art. After repeated visits to the National Gallery, she writes, "I am just now beginning to see clearly and understand understandingly." She could also be poetic in her descriptions. After seeing a famous dancer perform the Cachaça, she writes, "She is a wonderful creature, light as a snow-flake, pliant as a flower stalk, sparkling and playful as moonbeams on the water."

Despite her confidence in visiting strangers' homes, artists' studios,

and museums without the protection of her husband, it is also clear she learned her lesson on the separation of spheres of influence vis-à-vis gender. Of women dabbling in politics she writes, "What a pity that women will meddle with politicks, for they will not take the trouble to understand any of the great questions."

Ellen described her travel diary as an "idle record of idle hours" but for twenty-first-century readers it is so much more. Not only do we see straight into the heart of this exceedingly observant and gentle soul, but through her we also glimpse the upstairs and downstairs of English society in the late 1830s. Things were beginning to change in jolly old England. Businessmen were becoming successful enough to establish their own art collections and to claim their own role in English politics.

Despite her statements to the contrary, Ellen Wayles Coolidge knew how to read society and all of its developments. Ultimately, we come to understand why Jefferson called her the "immediate jewel of his soul," and why she was so beloved by every member of her family.

Thanks to the Thomas Jefferson Foundation and the Massachusetts Historical Society for publishing this document and to its editors for fleshing out the salient details. This is an important addition to our book of knowledge on the third president and his legacy. Not only is this work a tribute to him and to his powerful influence on his granddaughter, it is a glimpse into a period of history on the verge of modernization, a time of princesses and protocol, and of Old World ways giving way to New.

—**Stephenie Ambrose-Tubbs**

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An Oregon High School Teacher & the Corps of Discovery

By LARRY MCCLURE

If they're lucky, students might learn about Lewis and Clark in their elementary or middle school years. But in Woodburn, Oregon, located in the upper Willamette Valley, 30 miles south of Portland, a high school teacher created an experimental class for juniors and seniors called "The Science and History of Lewis and Clark." It has been a ten-year success story in secondary education.

I first visited David Ellingson's classroom in the fall of 2001. It was immediately apparent that his students were being exposed to learning opportunities not available in traditional classrooms. Certified to teach science and history, David offered to develop a new semester-long class for students needing one-half credit more to graduate. The majority of students are Latino and another significant percentage are Russian.

Canadian by birth, David had grown up learning about explorer Alexander MacKenzie, but after he launched his teaching career in the U.S., David's grandmother-in-law introduced him to the stories and journals of the Lewis and Clark. His naturalization was complete. And the story continues: his son Andy is among the first to earn the Oregon Chapter's Boy Scout patch for activities related to the Lewis and Clark expedition. For his Eagle Scout project, and with his father's support, his son hopes to work with Oregon Historical Society's curators and archeologists to test the authenticity of a whale bone said to be associated with the expedition.

One of his enthusiastic students, Cody Leder, who graduated from Woodburn High School in 2005, is finishing his bachelor's degree in health sciences in 2012. When asked what stood out about the class, Cody said it was "appreciating the importance of Lewis and Clark's mission to head into uncharted territory, find new plants and creatures, encounter friendly and fierce tribes, and finally their amazing navigation of the wild Columbia River by canoe."

Using the Lewis and Clark journals as his primary textbook and a growing class library of donated materials, Ellingson focuses on the geopolitical and scientific discoveries of the expedition, always letting students guide their own independent research projects. School counselors soon realized this was an ideal class for foreign exchange students. To date, David has spread the Lewis and Clark story to youth from China, Norway, Italy, Mexico, and Australia.

When I first sat in on Ellingson's class, it was during the initial entry of coalition military forces into Afghanistan. David connected these current events to the Corps of Discovery, pointing out that the corps also had difficulties understanding and communicating with Indian tribes,

making incorrect assumptions about the tribal leadership and misunderstanding language and cultural differences between Indian nations.

Each year David takes students into the Columbia Gorge to gather plant specimens from locations described in the journals and then mounting them back at school following botanical protocols. At The Dalles, Oregon (known in the journals as Fort Rock), students double-check journal references to see if they can verify the actual campsite.

During his field trip to The Dalles, Leder talked with a scientist using ground-penetrating radar to locate carbon deposits from possible expedition campfires. On a trip to the coast, students visited the reconstructed Fort Clatsop and sites on a nearby beach where the explorers distilled salt and found a beached whale.

"Since graduation," said Cody, "I have read more about Lewis and Clark as well as watched all the documentary presentations I can find. I didn't take any more history classes in college, but I doubt any of them would have been more interesting than Mr. Ellingson's class. Later on, I took my family up to Beacon Rock and up to The Dalles where I could show them myself where Fort Rock is located."

"Mr. Ellingson was a perfect teacher for this course because of his passion for Lewis and Clark" said Cody. "Every American student should have such hands-on opportunities to learn history and enjoy this story."

For school year 2012–2013, David has been given the green light to expand the course to a full year, enabling him to add new units of study, such as taxidermy. He also has his freshman classes exploring a nearby archeological dig site. (Just down the hill from his classroom, several years ago city workers working on a pipeline uncovered ancient animal bones later determined to be a *bison antiquus*. Now each year a backhoe uncovers additional Ice Age bones, which David's freshman science classes study as they piece together a life-size reproduction from actual bone fragments.)

In this era of making sure all students achieve high standards, teachers must focus on prescribed subject matter and worry how well students do on standardized tests. It's an unusual educator who risks giving students time to get out of the classrooms and into the field to experience subjects like science and history. Our job as Foundation members is to help teachers across America see these same possibilities, no matter what their grade levels or subject areas.

Larry McClure is the secretary of the Foundation. Before retirement, he was an education researcher studying innovative school practices in the Pacific Northwest.

David Ellington & Students



David Ellington's students gathered at Seaside, Oregon statue of Lewis and Clark and dog Seaman.

Ellington and class at Fort Clatsop.



The class in front of the *Bison antiquus* excavated on the ground of Woodburn High School.

Ellington and student study a chukar.



Field trip: Columbia River Gorge.



The White Pirogue Under Sail by Charles Fritz