



The Lewis and Clark Expedition

In 1803 President Thomas Jefferson guided a splendid piece of foreign diplomacy through the U.S. Senate: the purchase of Louisiana territory from France. After the Louisiana Purchase Treaty was made, Jefferson initiated an exploration of the newly purchased land and the territory beyond the "great rock mountains" in the West.

Jefferson chose his personal secretary, Meriwether Lewis, an intelligent and literate man who also possessed skills as a frontiersman. Lewis in turn solicited the help of William Clark, whose abilities as draftsman and frontiersman were even stronger. Lewis so respected Clark that he made him a co-commanding captain of the Expedition, even though Clark was never recognized as such by the government. Together they collected a diverse military Corps of Discovery that would be able to undertake a two-year journey to the great ocean.

Jefferson hoped that Lewis and Clark would find a water route linking the Columbia and Missouri rivers. This water link would connect the Pacific Ocean with the Mississippi River system, thus giving the new western land access to port markets out of the Gulf of Mexico and to eastern cities along the Ohio River and its minor tributaries. At the time, American and European explorers had only penetrated what would become each end of the Lewis and Clark Trail up the Missouri several miles to the trapper headquarters at Fort Mandan and up the Columbia just a bit over a hundred miles to a point a little beyond present-day Portland, Oregon.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition paddled its way down the Ohio as it prepared the Expedition to be launched officially from Camp Wood, just outside St. Louis, in the summer of 1804. That summer



and fall the company of explorers paddled and pulled themselves upstream, northwest on the Missouri River to Fort Mandan, a trading post, where Corps of Discovery set up camp, wintered, and prepared for the journey to the Pacific.

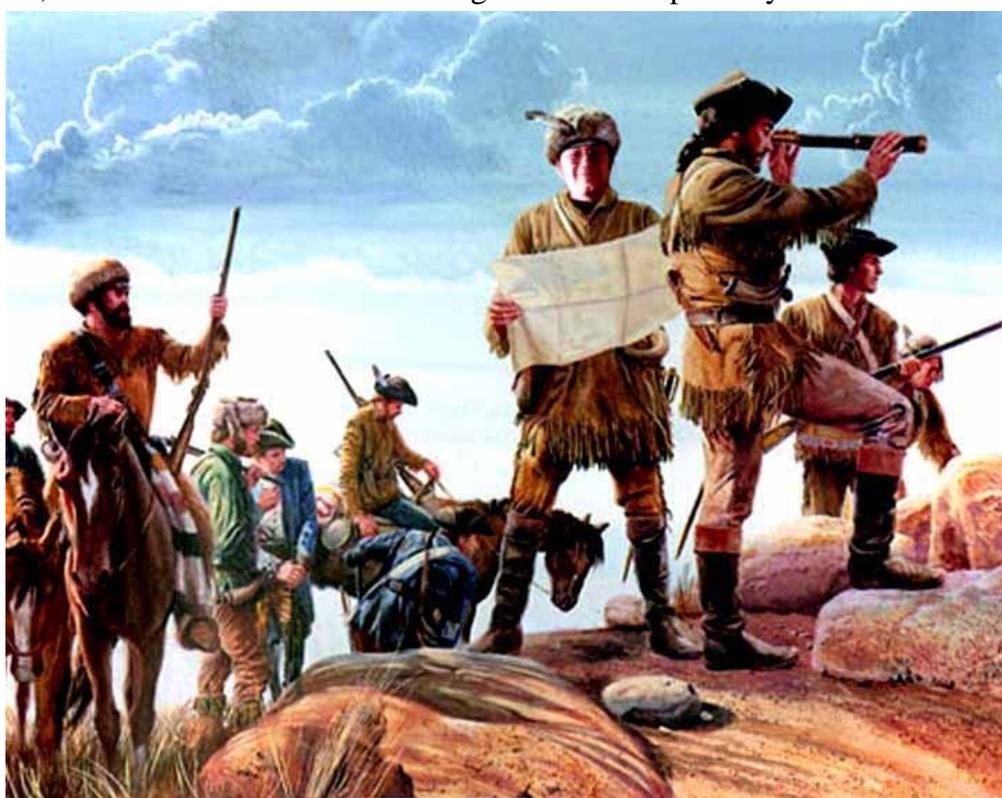
When the spring of 1805 brought high water and favorable weather, the Lewis and Clark Expedition set out on the next leg of its journey. They traveled up the Missouri to present-day Three Forks, Montana, wisely choosing to follow the western-most tributary, the Jefferson River. This route delivered the explorers to the doorstep of the Shoshone Indians, who were skilled at traversing

the great rock mountains with horses. Once over the Bitterroot Mountains, the Corps of Discovery shaped canoe-like vessels that transported them swiftly downriver to the mouth of the Columbia, where they wintered (1805-1806) at Fort Clatsop, on the present-day Oregon side of the river.

With journals in hand, Lewis, Clark, and the other members of the Expedition returned to St. Louis by September 1806 to report their findings to Jefferson. Along the way, they continued to trade what few goods they still had with the Indians and set up diplomatic relations with the Indians. Additionally, they recorded their contact with Indians and described (and at times drew) the shape of the landscape and the creatures of this western

world, new to the white man. In doing so, they fulfilled many of Jefferson's wishes for the Expedition. Along the way, William Clark drew a series of maps that were remarkably detailed, noting and naming rivers and creeks, significant points in the landscape, the shape of river shore, and spots where the Corps spent each night or camped or portaged for longer periods of time. Later explorers used these maps to further probe the western portion of the continent.

The Expedition of the Corps of Discovery shaped a crude route to the waters of the Pacific and marked an initial pathway for the new nation to spread



westward from ocean to ocean, fulfilling what would become to many Americans an obvious destiny.

Over the next two centuries the new Americans and many immigrants would wash across the central and western portions of what would eventually become the contiguous 48 United States. This wave of development would significantly transform virgin forests and grasslands into a landscape of cities, farms, and harvested forests, displacing fauna such as the buffalo and squeezing the Indians who survived onto reservations.

Source:
http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/lewis_and_clark/lewis_and_clark.html

Internet Resources

President Commemorates Lewis and Clark Bicentennial
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/07/20020703-9.html>

Lewis and Clark Bicentennial by the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/07/20020701-5.html>

Lewis and Clark 200.gov
<http://www.lewisandclark200.gov/>

On This Day With Lewis and Clark
http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=297

The Lewis and Clark Expedition and the USGS
<http://www.usgs.gov/features/lewisandclark.html>

Lewis & Clark and the Revealing of America
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/lewisandclark/lewisandclark.html>

Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail
<http://www.nps.gov/lecl/>

Meriwether Lewis & William Clark
<http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/lewisandclark>

The Lewis and Clark Expedition
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trr001.html>

The Learning Page: Lewis & Clark
http://lcweb2.loc.gov/learn/community/cc_lewisandclark.php

Lewis and Clark and the First Soil Surveys of the American West (1803-1806)
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/lewisandclark/>

Teaching With Documents Lesson Plan: The Lewis and Clark Expedition
http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/lewis_and_clark/teaching_activities.html

Lewis & Clark NGS NOAA
<http://www.ngs.noaa.gov/LewisAndClark/>

Lewis and Clark Expedition Resources
<http://www.ed.gov/free/lc.html>

Traveling the Lewis & Clark Trail
http://www.nwo.usace.army.mil/html/Lake_Proj/traveling.html

Lewis & Clark in North Dakota
http://dorgan.senate.gov/lewis_and_clark/contents.html

Lewis & Clark Bicentennial
http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features/001718.html

A High-Tech Look at Lewis and Clark
http://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/k-4/features/F_High_Tech_Lewis_and_Clark.html

Lewis & Clark in Missouri: Follow their footsteps, follow the rivers
<http://www.lewisandclark.state.mo.us/>

Montana: Lewis & Clark
<http://lewisandclark.state.mt.us/>

Lewis & Clark: The Maps of Exploration 1507 - 1814
http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/exhibits/lewis_clark/home.html

Lewis & Clark's Historic Trail
<http://www.lewisclark.net/>

National Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commemoration
<http://www.lewisandclark200.org/index.php?CID=>

Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.
<http://www.lewisandclark.org/>

Lewis & Clark: The National Bicentennial Exhibition
<http://www.lewisandclarkexhibit.org/>

Jefferson's West
<http://www.monticello.org/jefferson/lewisandclark/>

Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery
<http://www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/>

Discovering Lewis & Clark
<http://www.lewis-clark.org/>

Bicentennial 1803 - 2003
The Ultimate Adventure: Lewis & Clark
http://www.time.com/time/2002/lewis_clark/

Lewis and Clark Project
<http://www.lewisandclarkeducationcenter.com/>

LewisAndClarkTrail.com: Re-live the Adventure
<http://www.lewisandclarktrail.com/>

Lewis and Clark Expedition
<http://www.lewis-and-clark-expedition.com/>

Bibliography

1. **Encyclopedia Americana.** 24 vols. International ed. Grolier Educational, 2002.

Encyclopedia Americana offers in-depth treatment of many American history topics providing a factual picture of past and present for academic, public, and high school readers.

2. Schmidt, Thomas. **The saga of Lewis & Clark: into the uncharted West.** California: Tehabi Books, 1999.

This book follows Lewis and Clark from the inception of their expedition to their celebrated homecoming. The journals brought back by various members, excerpted here, present the first written account of the area west of the Mississippi, including the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase.

3. **The New York Public Library American History Desk Reference.** (New York Public Library Series). New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1997

This comprehensive-quick-answer guide on American history contains topical overviews, easy-reference timelines, and capsule biographies, as well as sidebars, maps, and illustrations of the major events and themes from the early migrations of native peoples to the present age.

4. Wexler, Alan. **Atlas of Westward Expansion.** Facts-On File. New York : Facts-On-File, 1995.

This atlas comprehensively traces the mass human migration across the continent and shows how America was shaped through the pioneer spirit. Text and maps tell the story of America's growth from 1754 to the early 1900s.

5. **Historical Atlas of the United States.** Centennial edition. Washington, D.C. : National Geographic Society, 1994.

This atlas contains about 380 maps, 450 photographs, 80 graphs and 140,000 words of text. It was conceived as a reference tool for high-school teachers and college professors working outside their specialization, as well as for history students and the general public.

6. Ferrell, Robert H. **Atlas of American History.** 3rd ed. Facts-On-File. New York : Facts-On File, 1993.

This reference book offers insightful facts on our geography, our politics, our economy, our social evolution and our wars, both foreign and domestic.

7. **The Reader encyclopedia of the American West.** New York : Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1977.

This book contains 2,400 entries that provide a detailed examination of the people, places, institutions, and ideas that collectively define the American frontier experience. Numerous illustrations, photographs, engravings and maps complement the text.

8. **Annals of America.** 22 Vols. Chicago: Britannica Encyclopedia, 1976.

Annals of America is a compilation of primary source documents for the study of American History. These volumes are collections of the current writings by the people who wore at the time in the forefront of these American events.

9. **Concise dictionary of American history.** Revised ed. New York : Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976.

This dictionary provides more than 6,000 concise articles about American history from pre-Columbian times to the present, in a single volume reference guide.

10. **Reader's Digest Family encyclopedia of American history.** New York : The Reader's Digest Association, Inc., 1975.

This book, devoted to the American experience, encompasses a time span that began some 50,000 years ago (when the forefathers of the Indians first came to North America) and extends to the 1970s. To find the information you need, use this book as you would a dictionary.

11. **Atlas of the American Revolution.** New York: Rand McNally and Co., 1974.

The atlas focuses in large part on the land and sea battles of the Revolutionary War, but attention is also paid to the society at large and the international impact of the war for independence.

12. **American heritage pictorial atlas.** New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., 1966.

This book charts and describes the geographic course of American history chronologically, from pre-historic times to the present. It provides data in three fields: history, cartography and reference, plus 210 ten illustrated maps.

13. **Dictionary of American history.** New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961.

This dictionary entries encompass political, diplomatic, military, economic, social, and cultural topics, as well as biographies, essential terms, battles, and key legislation.

14. **The journals of Lewis and Clark.** Edited by Bernard DeVoto. Sentir edition. Boston : Houghton Mifflin Company, 1953.

This book is a condensation of the Lewis and Clark journals, the narrative remains essentially intact and includes nearly every important event of interest.

Estas obras pueden ser consultadas en el Centro de Recursos Informativos Amador Washington ubicado en el Edificio Clayton, Clayton (antiguo Edificio 520).
Teléfono: 207-7100

