



We Proceeded On

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

February 2002 Volume 28, No. 1

THE DEATH OF MERIWETHER LEWIS

New perspectives on the captain's mysterious demise

MERIWETHER LEWIS AT GRINDER'S STAND, BY LARRY JANOFF



Lewis approaches Grinder's Stand on the evening of October 10, 1809.

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.

P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, Montana 59403 Ph: 406-454-1234 or 1-888-701-3434
Fax: 406-771-9237 www.lewisandclark.org

Mission Statement

The mission of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. is to stimulate public appreciation of the Lewis and Clark Expedition's contributions to America's heritage and to support education, research, development, and preservation of the Lewis and Clark experience.

Officers

President

Cindy Orlando
1849 "C" St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

President-Elect

Barbara Kubik
10808 N.E. 27th Court
Vancouver, WA 98686

Vice-President

Jane Henley
1564 Heathrow Drive
Keswick, VA 22947

Secretary

Ludd Trozpek
4141 Via Padova
Claremont, CA 91711

Treasurer

Jerry Garrett
10174 Sakura Drive
St. Louis, MO 65128

Immediate Past President

David Borlaug
Washburn, ND 58577

Executive Director

Sammye Meadows

Active Past Presidents

David Borlaug
Washburn, North Dakota

Robert K. Doerk, Jr.
Fort Benton, Montana

James R. Fazio
Moscow, Idaho

Robert E. Gatten, Jr.
Greensboro, North Carolina

H. John Montague
Portland, Oregon

Clyde G. "Sid" Huggins
Covington, Louisiana

Donald F. Nell
Bozeman, Montana

James M. Peterson
Vermillion, South Dakota

William P. Sherman
Portland, Oregon

L. Edwin Wang
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Wilbur P. Werner
Mesa, Arizona

Stuart E. Knapp
Bozeman, Montana

Directors at large

Beverly Hinds
Sioux City, Iowa

James Holmberg
Louisville, Kentucky

Ron Laycock
Benson, Minnesota

Larry Epstein
Cut Bank, Montana

Dark Rain Thom
Bloomington, Indiana

Joe Mussulman
Lolo, Montana

Robert Shattuck
Grass Valley, California

Jane SchmoyerWeber
Great Falls, Montana

Frank Muhly
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Incorporated in 1969 under Missouri General Not-For-Profit Corporation Act. IRS Exemption Certificate No. 501(c)3,
Identification No. 510187715.

Contents

Letters: Meriwether Lewis, R.I.P.; celestial navigation	2
Bicentennial Report: Corps II; looking toward Lewiston	4
From the Directors: Bicentennial legacy	5
Louisville Preview: Mark your calendars	6
Trail Notes: Discover, explore, respect	8

The Death of Meriwether Lewis

Introduction	9
---------------------	---

The “Ague” Made Him Do It	10
----------------------------------	----

Did Lewis shoot himself to exorcise the demons of malaria?

By Thomas C. Danisi

Meriwether Lewis’s Personal Finances	16
---	----

Documents suggest he was land rich but cash poor

By L. Ruth Colter Frick

Moonlight and Meriwether Lewis	21
---------------------------------------	----

How could Mrs. Grinder have seen what she claimed?

By John D. W. Guice

Naming the Animals	26
---------------------------	----

The captains’ nomenclature can both clarify and confuse

By Kenneth C. Walcheck

Reviews: Vardis Fisher; James Ronda; music; briefs	32
---	----

L&C Roundup: Bronson joins Foundation; Lewis statue; more	36
--	----

Passages: Glen Bishop (1925-2001)	42
--	----

New Sacajawea center going up in Idaho	43
---	----

By Angel Wynn

Soundings	44
------------------	----

Patrick Gass: on the trail with Lewis & Clark

By William Kloefkorn

On the cover

In Montana artist Larry Janoff’s evocative painting, Meriwether Lewis approaches Grinder’s Stand, Tennessee, on the evening of October 10, 1809. The nation’s most famous explorer died of gunshot wounds the next morning. Whether those wounds were self-inflicted or the result of robbery or assassination remains a point of controversy, and scholars who accept that Lewis killed himself debate what drove him to suicide. The articles beginning on page 9 explore some of these issues.



Lewis, p. 9



Big White, p. 19



Pileated woodpecker, p. 30



February 2002 • Volume 28, Number 1

We Proceeded On is the official publication of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. Its name derives from a phrase that appears repeatedly in the collective journals of the expedition. © 2002

E. G. Chuinard, M.D., *Founder*

ISSN 02275-6706

Editor

J. I. Merritt
51 N. Main Street
Pennington, NJ 08534
609-818-0168
wpo@lewisandclark.org

Art Direction

Margaret Davis Design
Princeton, New Jersey

Printed by James-Allan Printing & Design
West Conshohocken, Pennsylvania

Editorial Board

Gary E. Moulton, *Leader*
Lincoln, Nebraska

Robert C. Carriker
Spokane, Washington

Robert K. Doerk, Jr.
Fort Benton, Montana

Glen Lindeman
Pullman, Washington

Membership Information

Membership in the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. is open to the public. Information and applications are available by writing Membership Coordinator; Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.; P.O. Box 3434; Great Falls, MT 59403.

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

Annual Membership Categories

Student \$30
Individual/Library/Nonprofit \$40
Family/International/Business \$55
Heritage Club \$75
Explorer Club \$150
Jefferson Club \$250
Discovery Club \$500
Expedition Club \$1,000
Leadership Club \$2,500

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. is a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation. Individual membership dues are not tax deductible. The portion of premium dues over \$40 is tax deductible.

Letters

Meriwether Lewis, R.I.P.

I want to thank Professor John Guice for his comments about my book *The Character of Meriwether Lewis: "Completely Metamorphosed" in the American West* (Letters, November 2001). In Mr. Jefferson's day such an assault might have ended in a duel, but in ours it has led to a useful dialogue about the life, character, and untimely death of Meriwether Lewis.

I agree with Mr. Guice that the Lewis and Clark community has too uncritically accepted the conclusion that Meriwether Lewis committed suicide in 1809. I also agree that our presentist urge to call the great Lewis a "manic depressive," a man who suffered from "bipolar disease," has been an unrigorous application of terms most of us don't fully understand to an era that did not think in such categories.

In fact, I do believe that Meriwether Lewis probably took his own life, but my mind is open to other possibilities. The fact that William Clark later in his life retreated from his early acceptance of the suicide story should be enough for us all to remain agnostic on this issue.

Even so, I disagree with portions of Mr. Guice's letter. I nowhere argue that Lewis was a sexual pervert. I'm not quite sure what to make of his consumption in alcohol late in his life. I find no evidence to suggest that Lewis may have been a homosexual (nor did the age of Jefferson think in such terms). I do believe that Lewis (like Jefferson) can at times fairly be called a racist, and a racist, it seems to me, is still a racist irrespective of time or place.

I stand by the thesis of my book: Meriwether Lewis was a gifted, high-strung, proud, tightly wired young man before Thomas Jefferson sent him into the wilderness. Some of his experiences in the wilderness exacerbated the streak of instability in his character. When he returned, his psychic "immune system" was worn down, so that when the great gubernatorial crises came to him in 1808-9 he had no significant reserves on which to draw.

The great Jefferson believed in a free marketplace of ideas where truth would drive out error and good sense would prevail over nonsense. Those who read my book will decide for themselves if they think it has insights.

In the meantime, in the spirit of Jefferson, I publicly challenge John Guice to a public debate about Meriwether Lewis—any time, anywhere!

CLAY JENKINSON
Reno, Nev.

I couldn't agree less with John Guice's conclusion that "the integrity of American scholarship demands" a forensic examination of Meriwether Lewis's remains. While I have not read Clay Jenkinson's "troubling" essay about the troubled explorer, it hardly seems "presentism" to believe that a man who dealt with so much stress in such a short period of his life could become depressed and suicidal. High achievers have considered suicide a valid alternative to disgrace since the time of Cleopatra.

What truly boggles my mind is the question of what Mr. Guice expects reductionist science to accomplish in terms of throwing light on the death of a man who has been in his grave nearly 200 years. Will the forensic anthropologists check for serotonin levels inside the skull as a way of determining if Lewis was depressed? Can one tell if a wound was self-inflicted after two centuries? What threshold of credibility do we set for such "findings"? Considering that the evidence would have been resting in the Tennessee clay for generations, it would have to be a rather low one. Any "facts" thus gained would hardly be more solid than Mr. Jenkinson's speculations.

Nature abhors a vacuum; more specifically, human nature abhors an incomplete narrative. (I suspect this has been true since Stone Age people listened to hunting stories around the primeval campfire.) Thus, myths and speculation grow up to fill the gap where facts are scarce. People embroidered the story of Sacagawea, just as they are now busily weaving a heroic myth about the hijacked United Airlines Flight 93. Just as they have done concerning Meriwether Lewis. Is this natural folk process necessarily harmful, given the absence of reliable information? There are practical reasons to resist myth-making about current events such as Flight 93's crash. But in the case of Meriwether Lewis, it

is hard to see how the various versions of his downfall harm anybody.

Mr. Guice's problem, as I see it, is a lack of ambiguity tolerance. He cannot be content with his own hero-myth of the fearless, invulnerable captain and let other people have their own speculative versions of him. He wants his myth to be proven true under the microscopes of experts. But can it? More importantly, why must it?

Given the complexity of human beings, I for one have no problem believing that Lewis was a courageous and resourceful leader *and* a sufferer from depression. I applaud the National Park Service's firm stand against disturbing his grave, no matter who is asking. To paraphrase an old adage, let sleeping heroes lie.

MARK CHALKLEY
Baltimore, Md.

Sometimes things don't seem to stay fixed! I had hoped the idea of exhuming the remains of Meriwether Lewis had been laid to rest. But not for John D. W. Guice, and some others, who persist in advancing the idea of exhumation.

There are people who believe that Lewis committed suicide and others who believe he was murdered. Both groups are well intentioned. However, the mystery, the fascination, and the lore of Lewis and Clark and their heroic expedition is that we do not know every detail about them. Nor do we need to know—that's what keeps the story alive.

In 1995, the Headwaters Chapter passed and sent to the superintendent of the Natchez Trace Parkway a formal resolution supporting the preservation of the integrity of the Meriwether Lewis Monument and gravesite and requesting that the site not be disturbed by digging into the bone pile of this great American hero. There is high potential for damage to the monument and gravesite and only a forlorn hope that anything positive can be learned after 190 years. What would exhumation advocates want to do next if their point were not proved?

Let's not dwell on Meriwether Lewis's death. Instead, let us celebrate his life and great accomplishments and let the mystery remain.

ROBERT C. HARADEN
*Former Superintendent (1968-72)
Natchez Trace Parkway & Meriwether
Lewis National Monument
Bozeman, Mont.*

Lewis's bones; Chinook Point

I was struck by letters in the November WPO on the subjects of Meriwether Lewis and the decision at Chinook Point.

John Guice believes the integrity of American scholarship demands a forensic examination of Lewis's remains to determine the cause of death. I suggest he read "Artist Opposes Digging up Lewis Grave," an article by Larry Janoff in the November 1996 WPO. As Janoff explains, there is no body to exhume. Shortly after Lewis's burial, hogs got into the grave and consumed much of the corpse. In 1848, an exhumation of the remains found little more than a few small bones and some buttons.

Regarding the debate over the "vote" at Chinook Point on where to spend the winter of 1805-6, I agree with those who argue that what transpired could not in fact be seen as democracy in action. Clark referred to the event as a "solicitation" of the party, and he recorded his and Lewis's reasons for wanting to winter on the coast rather than up on the Columbia. It would give them a chance to acquire goods from any trading ship that might show up, while camping upriver "would not enhance our journey across the Rocky Mountains." Clark also noted that staying by the sea would allow them to make salt and that they lacked warm clothes for the severe inland climate.

GLEN KIRKPATRICK
Salem, Ore.

Celestial navigation

I enjoyed the three articles about celestial navigation in the November WPO. I discovered, however, several errors in Eileen Starr's article, "Celestial Navigation Basics."

On page 15, the author discusses the equation of time—the difference between apparent time and mean time. She states that the maximum difference is 16 minutes 24 seconds. This is true but does not apply symmetrically to early and late suns. As shown by the diagram on page 16, the sun can be fast by a little over 16 minutes in early November, but at its maximum in February it is slow by only 14 minutes and change. So the range of solar noons given is only half right. While the early time is correct, the late time should be 12:14:16.

In note 2 on page 17, the author describes how the distance between merid-

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.

P.O.B. 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403
406-454-1234 / 1-888-701-3434
Fax: 406-771-9237
www.lewisandclark.org

The mission of the LCTHF is to stimulate public appreciation of the Lewis and Clark Expedition's contributions to America's heritage and to support education, research, development, and preservation of the Lewis and Clark experience.

Officers

President
Jane Henley
Keswick, Va.

President-Elect
Larry Epstein
Cut Bank, Mont.

Vice-President
Ron Laycock
Benson, Minn.

Secretary
Jane Schmoyer-Weber
Great Falls, Mont.

Treasurer
Steven G. Lee
Colton, Wash.

Immediate Past President
Barbara J. Kubik
Vancouver, Wash.

Executive Director
Carol L. Bronson

Directors at large

Tom Davis, Ft. Washington, Penn. •
Beverly Hinds, Sioux City, Iowa • Sue
Hottis, Clarkston, Wash. • Frank Muhly,
Philadelphia, Penn. • Gordon Julich, Blue
Springs, Mo. • Joe Mussulman, Lolo, Mont.
• Jon Stealey, Findlay, Ohio • Hal Stearns,
Wayne, Neb. • Dark Rain Thom,
Bloomington, Ind.

Active Past Presidents

David Borlaug, Washburn, N.D. • Robert K.
Doerk, Jr., Fort Benton, Mont. • James R.
Fazio, Moscow, Id. • Robert E. Gatten, Jr.,
Greensboro, N.C. • Clyde G. "Sid"
Huggins, Covington, La. • H. John
Montague, Portland, Ore. • Cynthia
Orlando, Washington, D.C. • Donald F.
Nell, Bozeman, Mont. • James M. Peterson,
Vermillion, S.D. • William P. Sherman,
Portland, Ore. • L. Edwin Wang, Minneapolis,
Minn. • Wilbur P. Werner, Mesa, Ariz. •
Stuart E. Knapp, Bozeman, Mont.

Incorporated in 1969 under Missouri General Not-
For-Profit Corporation Act. IRS Exemption
Certificate No. 501(c)3, Identification No. 510187715.

ians decreases as you go further north. She illustrates this by giving the length in miles of one degree of longitude at different latitudes. At latitude 45 degrees that distance is, as she states, about 49 miles. The distances given for 46 and 47 degrees of latitude, however, are incorrect. These should be 47.9 miles and 47.1 miles, respectively.

Finally, there are some errors of math in note 9 on page 18. The difference between the two measurements should be 1 degree 25 minutes and 44 seconds. The next-to-last sentence in the note makes no sense. The difference is actually 98.6 miles.

MARC BERNSTEIN
Denver, N.Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We thank the sharp-eyed Mr. Bernstein for pointing out these problems. Two of them—regarding the equation of time discussion on page 15 and note 9 on page 18—resulted from insertions by the editor. The problem with longitude distances in note 2, page 17, resulted from a trigonometric error.

St. Louis L&C statue

It's hard to believe that St. Louis, where the Corps of Discovery began and ended its expedition to the Pacific, does not have a statue honoring Lewis and Clark.

A group of us here in St. Louis is trying to correct this oversight. We have formed a committee and commissioned a prominent local sculptor, R. H. Dick, to create an interpretive bronze titled *Lewis and Clark: A Most Perfect Harmony*. The statue depicts the captains, York, Sacagawea, Pompey, and Seaman. We have found a location for the statue on the grounds of the St. Louis campus of the University of Missouri. The total cost of the statue, including casting, transportation, installation, and artist's fee, is \$600,000. The university is paying half this amount and our committee is raising the balance. More information, including ways to help us in our efforts, can be found on the Website www.lewisandclark-statue.org.

LUCIE HUGER
St. Louis, Mo.

WFO welcomes letters. We may edit them for length, accuracy, clarity, and civility. Send them to us c/o Editor, WFO, 51 N. Main St., Pennington, NJ 08534 (e-mail: wfo@lewisandclark.org).

From the Bicentennial Council

Corps II on wheels; looking toward Lewiston

How quiet the early winter and holidays can seem when actually so much work is underway! We can only imagine that this is how the Lewis and Clark Expedition must have felt during its long, bleak winters at Fort Clatsop and Fort Mandan as well.

Corps of Discovery II, the premier traveling interpretive experience of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, has wheels! In early December, the Freedom Forum/Newsium made formal its donation to the National Council of two trailers that create a 2000-square-foot state-of-the-art pavilion. Formerly used for the Newsium's premier as part of a 50-state traveling show, the trailers are a magnificent gift. Working closely with Gerard Baker, the National Park Service's superintendent of bicentennial affairs, the museum-display firm of Busch Creative is now developing what promises to be a truly exciting experience, one that tribes and communities all along the trail will be able to enjoy as Corps II travels the country between 2003 and 2006.

Workshop preparations

Preparations for the seventh annual planning workshop, to be held April 10-14 in Lewiston, Idaho, are well underway. In addition to business meetings with our state and tribal advisors, we've added a Circle of Conservation Advisors, state tourism directors, and arts and cultural advisers to the line-up. Attendees will also be treated to extensive opportunities to engage with our Nez Perce hosts for the opening reception and to tour the Cultural Heritage Corridor developed by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla. Mobile workshops will feature the Council's priorities on tribal involvement, trail stewardship, Corps II, education, and signature-event planning.

The National Council's merchandise program will also be featured in Lewiston, along with 40 vendors to showcase trail states' attractions and products aligned with the bicentennial. The merchandise program is being managed by Diane Norton of Lewis and Clark Trail.com and features several collections and products such as caps, mugs, and sweatshirts branded with the National Council's mark. Approved products to date include a Harpers Ferry 2003 rifle, a hand-



hewn knife replicating one carried on the expedition, bookends, a food journal, pillows, and many other high-quality items. For more information, check the Council's Website (lewisandclark200.org), which is easier than ever to reach with the AOL keywords Lewis and Clark or Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

The National Council is moving into the implementation phase of its public-relations program with the signing of Metropolitan Group as our agency of record. In the weeks leading up to the annual workshop, Metropolitan Group will be further developing and coordinating our communications, public relations, and fund-raising campaigns. In 2002, we will continue to enjoy the support of Stephen Ambrose, who has agreed to host at least one special fundraiser featuring the wild and scenic Missouri River and possibly a Lolo Trail horsepack trip. There's already a waiting list of would-be expeditioners.

Finally, the National Council is especially excited to congratulate the Foundation on its selection of Carol Bronson as its new executive director and extends its appreciation to all the leadership and members for their continuing support and collaboration.

—David Borlaug
Michelle Bussard

What will be the Foundation's bicentennial legacy?

On New Year's Day I heaved a sigh of relief. At last, those final stressful months of 2001 were behind me. How quickly the mood of a country can change. Patriotism is now in, where once it was not. The trappings of our lives are less important; people and relationships have taken their place.

On September 11 at 9:30 EST I was in a meeting at Monticello to discuss the L&C Bicentennial's events for January 18, 2003. The grave of Thomas Jefferson is just over the hill. A month later, October 11, I was at Grinder's stand on the Natchez Trace, sharing the speaker's platform with Otis Half Moon at the rededication of the Meriwether Lewis Monument, the site of Lewis's grave. The 101st Airborne sent its band to perform for this uplifting day. Instead of focusing on the controversy of Lewis's death I focused my comments on bringing Lewis alive with stories from important people in his life who knew firsthand the personal traits that he contributed to the success of the expedition.

Francis Walker Gilmer, one of Lewis's classmates, wrote the following description of him as a student in Albemarle County:

"He was always remarkable for perseverance, which in the early period of his life seemed nothing more than obstinacy in pursuing the trifles that employ that age; a martial temper; great steadiness of purpose; self-possession; and undaunted courage. His person was stiff and without grace, bow legged, awkward, formal and almost without flexibility. His face was comely and by many considered handsome. It bore to my vision a very strong resemblance to Bonaparte in the figure on horseback, now in my possession."

Obstinate, stiff, awkward, formal, bowlegged. Our hero seems to come up a bit short on sex appeal. However, add to these traits the martial temper, steadiness of purpose, and undaunted courage, and a the man we have come to know begins to emerge. It may not be

a beautiful or perfect picture, but it was that obstinacy, determination, and attention to detail that made the expedition a success. Lewis refused to allow temporary setbacks to get the Corps of Discovery off track. Also, without the good relationships the explorers established among themselves and with Native Americans, the corps would not have survived, and there would be no published journals.

From now until 2007, many of us will be heavily involved in local bicen-



Jane Henley assists at the rededication of Lewis's grave at Grinder's Stand.

ennial activities. Even those of us east of the Missouri are getting into the act. Charlottesville held its first Lewis and Clark festival this past October, and a second is planned for May. We've also recently learned that the National Park Service has designated Monticello as part of the National Historic Lewis and Clark Trail—the first such designation east of the Mississippi. The Philadelphia Chapter has issued a map of Lewis's activities in preparation for the trip. The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, with assistance from the Ohio River Chapter, has published a map of the river trip taken by the keelboat from Pittsburgh to St. Louis. The next two annual meetings—Louisville in 2002 and Philadelphia in 2003—will feature preparations for the trip. Then we return to the western leg of the trail: in 2004 we will be in St. Louis, followed by Bismarck in 2005 and Astoria, Washington, in 2006.

What will be the Foundation's contribution to the legacy of the bicentennial? Already we have donated endless hours reviewing proposed projects for historical accuracy. We had the vision to form the Bicentennial Council. Our trail stewardship activities, including going to bat for protection of threatened places such as Pompeys Pillar, are bringing about significant results. This fall, we issued a statement condemning vandalism at the Smoking Place on the Nee Mee Poo Trail, a place sacred to the Nez Perce. We wrote to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Secretary of Interior emphasizing the contributions of the Chinook people to the success of the expedition and encouraging steps to insure that their history and culture are preserved. Our Website (www.lewisandclark.org) has been revamped to better keep our members and others aware of our activities.

What more to do? For starters, what about new scholarships, a new national award, commemorative plaques at the signature event sites, a brigade in the Rose Bowl Parade in 2003? If you have an idea for a Foundation gift or project, please get in touch with the office in Great Falls, either by phone (406-454-1234) or e-mail (execdir@lewisandclark.org). Or contact me (434-296-5162, MLewisNut@aol.com).

Welcome to Carol Bronson

The Foundation had its own temporary setback with the departure of Cari Karnes as executive director. Cari reluctantly announced her resignation to accompany her husband, an Air Force officer, to his new assignment in California. We wish Cari the best and will miss her. But with Meriwether Lewis and his obstinate nature as my model, I refused to allow her departure to keep us from moving forward during my term as president. So let us proceed on by welcoming Carol Bronson as our promising new executive director.

—Jane Henley
President, LCTHF

Mark your calendars for this year's annual meeting at the Falls of the Ohio

The torch—or bat—for the 2002 Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation's meeting was passed to Louisville last August at the 33rd annual meeting in Pierre, South Dakota.

Using the analogy of the Falls of the Ohio being the foundation of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and of the expedition being like baseball, we invited everyone present to attend the 34th annual meeting in Louisville. Comparing Thomas Jefferson to the team president with the vision, Lewis and Clark as the playing managers, the Nine Young Men from Kentucky as the players on the field, and York as the utility infielder, we dubbed the Corps of Discovery the original "Louisville Sluggers" and presented to the Foundation leadership a Louisville Slugger bat bearing the autographs of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

The Falls "foundation"

The Louisville meeting will take place Sunday, July 28, through Wednesday, July 31. Its theme is "The Falls Foundation." The meeting will begin Sunday afternoon with a new member/first meeting attendee orientation, lectures, and an evening cruise on an elegant vintage riverboat. Scheduled speakers Shane Blackman, Charles Parrish, and Clay Jenkinson will address the foundation theme from different perspectives. Shane and Clay will talk about the men—William Clark and the Nine Young Men from Kentucky, respectively—and Chuck will talk about the history of the Falls of the Ohio. At the historic Louisville wharf, where Lewis and Clark are believed to have met on October 14, 1803, we will board the *Belle of Louisville* for a cruise up the Ohio. Built in 1914, the *Belle* is a National Historic Landmark and the oldest river steamboat still in operation. The rivers it has navigated—the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri—are also the rivers of the Lewis and Clark epic.

Monday will be the first of two days of field trips. Participants will visit the

Filson Historical Society to view a special exhibit of Lewis and Clark material selected from its collection. Among the items will be the horn of a bighorn sheep, a circa-1817 portrait of William Clark, and letters written by the captains during the expedition. A tour of southwestern

Jefferson County will show us the area where the Field Brothers were raised and honed their frontier and hunting skills. Lunch will be at the Kentucky Derby Museum, where we will tour Churchill Downs racetrack. Both Churchill Downs and the Kentucky Derby were founded by Clark's grandson, Meriwether Lewis Clark, Jr. Dinner will be along the banks of the Ohio at Riverside, which dates to circa 1837 and commands a beautiful view of the Ohio.

Tuesday will take us to more Lewis and Clark sites. Mulberry Hill was the home of William Clark and York from 1785 to 1803. Today, it is George Rogers Clark Park. Although the house is gone, the family cemetery and a cypress tree dating from the time William and York lived there remain. We'll drive by Trough Spring, where Jonathan Clark lived. The house—though much altered—still stands. It was here that William sent expedition artifacts and letters and where the captains most likely stayed upon their return in November 1806. William and his wife, Julia, were in residence there whenever they visited Louisville until Jonathan's death, in 1811. Other sites on our agenda will include Floyd's Station, where Sergeant Charles Floyd is believed to have been born about 1782, and Soldier's Retreat, the home of



Jim Holmberg, Barb Kubik, Jane Henley, and Jim Mallory pose with L&C Louisville Slugger at last year's annual meeting in Pierre.

Clark's brother-in-law Richard C. Anderson. William was a frequent visitor and usually spent the night there when he departed the Louisville area for travel eastward. A beautiful stone reconstruction stands on the foundation of the original house, and several of the outbuildings survive.

Historic sites where the captains tread

Two more important Lewis and Clark sites—the Falls of the Ohio and Clarks Point—will be visited that day. After meeting in Louisville, the captains had the keelboat and pirogues piloted through the Falls and tied up near the mouth of Mill Creek and the Clark farm in Clarksville. Over the next 12 days, they went back and forth between Louisville and Clarksville wrapping up affairs, enlisting that critical nucleus of the Corps of Discovery, and saying their goodbyes. On October 26, 1803, the captains, York, and the Nine Young Men from Kentucky set off downriver from Clarksville and into history. Our visit to the Falls of the Ohio will include a stop at the interpretive center with its displays of the Falls' geological and human history. We will also visit Clark's Point, the site of the Clark farm and the corps's base camp. A circa-1830 cabin represents the cabin in which brother George Rogers Clark lived from 1803

to 1809. Steve Knowles, the park property manager, will talk about the cabin, and Dark Rain Thom will tell us about Shawnee food ways and history and offer some goodies for tasting.

A visit to Locust Grove

In 1809, following the loss of his right leg, George Rogers Clark lived with his sister Lucy and her husband William Croghan at Locust Grove near Louisville. It was at Locust Grove on November 8, 1806, that a Clark family celebration was held to welcome home William and his partner in discovery, Meriwether Lewis. This historic home, restored to how it would have appeared 200 years ago, is the only known extant Lewis and Clark structure west of the Appalachians. The estate was visited by various members of the Corps of Discovery and by Indian delegations. It was also where William and Julia Clark stayed when visiting Louisville after 1811.

We will lunch on the grounds of Locust Grove. Our luncheon guest will be Clay Jenkinson in the role of Meriwether Lewis. Many attendees of past annual meetings have enjoyed Clay's Thomas Jefferson presentation. This will be the first annual meeting at which he has portrayed Lewis. That night, back at the Galt House, dinner speaker Tori Murden McClure will address modern-day explorers. She knows of what she speaks, for Tori is the first American and the first woman to row solo across the Atlantic Ocean. Her account of that adventure will surely provide insights into the Corps of Discovery.

Thom to speak on historical fiction

On Wednesday, we will enjoy lectures about Louisville history and writing historical fiction. Louisville historian Tom Owen will present an overview of the River City in the early 19th century. Our luncheon speaker will be au-

thor James Alexander Thom. Jim will discuss writing historical fiction, basing his comments on his own popular books about the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the corps's chief hunter, George Drouillard.

The remainder of the day will be devoted to recognizing York. York's reputation and recognition have been growing. Last year, President Clinton made him an honorary sergeant in the U.S. Army, and he was inducted into the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum's Hall of Great West-erners. The Foundation recently co-published with the University Press of Colorado the revised edition of *In Search of York*. A panel will examine "York in the Arts" and his memor-



The estate of Locust Grove, home of George Rogers Clark

ialization in the sculpture of Ed Hamilton, the paintings of Michael Haynes, the music of Jason Charenski and Bruce Trinkley, and a documentary film by Ron Craig. The artists themselves will be the presenters. Our banquet guest that evening will be no less than York himself, as portrayed by Hasan Davis.

The 2002 meeting will also have an active children's program. We have christened it the "Young Explorers" and are offering reduced registration for children. The kids will begin with a program on Sunday afternoon and then parallel the same schedule as the adults through Tuesday, while sometimes enjoying their own special programs at the site. One highlight will be a visit by expedition member and fiddle player

Pierre Cruzatte (a.k.a. Daniel Slosberg). On Wednesday, the Young Explorers will venture forth to the Louisville Slugger Museum and the Science Center. The children can participate as little or as much as they like, and we encourage their parents to do the same.



L&C sheep horn

Much more will be happening in addition to the field trips and programs. The vendors fair will remain open throughout the meeting. We'll strive to take advantage of every opportunity to keep our guests busy and engaged in Lewis and Clark activities, and we may even spring a few surprises on the group. The pre- and post-meeting trips are listed in the registration packet. Trips to bluegrass horse country, Ohio Shawnee country, upriver to the land of Patrick Gass in Wellsburg, West Virginia, Lewis and Clark sites in Indiana, and William Clark's 1809 route from Louisville to Lexington all promise history, fellowship, and beautiful scenery in the wake of America's greatest explorers.

A memorable gathering

The Filson Historical Society, the Foundation's Ohio River Chapter, and the Falls of the Ohio Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Committee look forward to hosting our fellow Lewis and Clark enthusiasts this summer. We will do everything we can to make the 34th annual meeting a memorable one. It is our pleasure to have you visit the Falls Foundation and learn about the area and its contributions and why it truly is the foundation upon which the most famous exploring venture in U. S. history was built.

—James J. Holmberg
James L. Mallory
Co-chairs, 34th Annual Meeting

Watchwords for the bicentennial: discover, explore, respect

Quick, tell me in 10 words or less how you help a novice trail traveler understand conservation and trail stewardship. Having trouble? You are not alone. Many of us have an understanding of what trail stewardship means. Making sure visitors to the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail share that understanding is the task at hand, and we need your help crafting a succinct message.

Much needs to come together in the next 12 months or less. The first bicentennial signature event is set for the week of January 18, 2003, at Monticello. The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and all its many partners planning for the bicentennial will need to have stewardship messages written, edited tightly, and ready to distribute well before then. We will need brochures, maps, booklets, videos, audiotapes, compact discs, travel planning kits, and other media.

Bring on the media

Speaking of media, we revved up education of the news media in stages. It began several years ago, when Lewis and Clark interest swelled in the wake of Steve Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage* and the Ken Burns/Dayton Duncan book and PBS documentary about the Lewis and Clark Expedition. I visit with reporters every week and know that many of you have done interviews with newspapers and magazines, radio and television. Members of the media flock to Lewis and Clark events across the United States. They are especially drawn to the unique or unusual, such as watching the keelboat and pirogues sailing out of St. Charles. Reporters love to be part of the news and have done so by taking part in such activities as a below-zero winter campout at Fort Mandan and canoe building at Fort Clatsop.

So do you have 10 words in mind, or on paper? I do but I cheated. Last fall, I sat down for a head-scratching session with Larry Epstein, the Foun-

dation president-elect, Sammye Meadows, communications director for the National Council for the L&C Bicentennial, and Hugh Ambrose, a Council board member. We were joined by David Ellenberger of the Sierra Club, Tim Ahern of the Trust for Public Land, and Mark Albers from American Rivers. For two days we talked about conservation messages. You can imagine the variety of suggestions that Sammye (this meeting was her idea and a good one) scribbled on paper.

Three words surfaced in our conversations: discover, explore, respect. Thanks mostly to David and Hugh, we came up with a way to use those action words. I've been trying them out in my day-to-day work along the trail. The phrases have been well received so far. They appear to be a good starting point for any conversation or interviews about trail stewardship.

When we are talking with trail visitors, let's encourage them to:

- Discover their trails
- Explore your history
- Respect our heritage

Those simple directives hopefully lead into conversation about the bicentennial, the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, and the people who live along the trail. Visitors, we hope, will discover the trail traversed by the Corps of Discovery as well as other trails, both physical and cultural. While they are exploring the physical trail, we encourage them to explore American history from different perspectives. Learning about the Corps of Discovery provides a rich opportunity to examine the roots of American democracy and the history of world exploration. Visitors will discover the years of preparation that went into Lewis and Clark's expedition and those of other adventurers who preceded President Jefferson's emissaries.



With the phrase "Respect our heritage" we hope to encourage visitors to gain a new and deeper appreciation for their ancestors and the roads they traveled. This applies to visitors who may be recent immigrants or who can trace their families back to the Founding Fathers or to origination stories thousands of years old. "Respect our heritage" recognizes both our triumphs and failures. We hope that visiting the Lewis and Clark Trail will expand people's horizons and give them a new respect for the nation's rich and varied cultures.

Again, we need your help. Do me a favor, please. Make some photocopies of this column and highlight the words "discover, explore, respect." Put a copy in your pocket. Tape another copy onto your computer at home or at work. Think about the message of stewardship and conservation. When something clicks, write it down and send it to me. There are dozens of people working on messages right now. Our mission will have a much better chance of success when Foundation members—those thousands of you who read this magazine—respond.

—Jeff Olson
Trail Coordinator

Jeff Olson can be reached at trail@lewisandclark.org (P.O. Box 2376, Bismarck, ND 58502; Tel: 701-258-1809 or 701-258-1960).

Canoe Camp expansion

An appropriations bill signed by President Bush in November includes \$1.5 million for the expansion of Canoe Camp, on the Clearwater River west of Orofino, Idaho. Lewis and Clark spent 10 days there in September 1805 constructing dugouts for descending the Columbia. The funds will enable the National Park Service to add several acres to the historic site and its parking lot, which is currently too small to accommodate tour buses. ■

THE ENDURINGLY MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF MERIWETHER LEWIS



No one disputes that Meriwether Lewis died of gunshot wounds on the morning of October 11, 1809, at Grinder's Stand, a lonely outpost on the Natchez Trace in Tennessee. Beyond that simple fact, debate will probably forever rage about who pulled the trigger: Lewis himself, a robber, or possibly an assassin.

Those who argue that Lewis took his own life believe he suffered from clinical depression or some physical ailment (probably malaria, but perhaps tertiary syphilis) that led to mental derangement. The depression theory leans heavily on Thomas Jefferson's statement that "hypochondria" ran in Lewis's family; it also rests on Lewis's seeming inability to get control of his post-expedition life and projects a portrait of a man who was alcoholic, a possible drug addict, deep in debt, and unlucky in love. The murder theory posits that Lewis was the victim of either a highwayman (common on the Natchez Trace); a traveling companion, James Neelly (evidently a man of questionable character); Mr. Grinder (allegedly absent on the night of his death, but who might have been lurking nearby); or Lewis's servant, a free mulatto named Pernier or Pernia, whom he owed money. The assassination theory, proposed by David Leon Chandler in *The Jefferson Conspiracies* (1994) weaves a tale of political intrigue involving the President and the traitorous General James Wilkinson and Aaron Burr.

Whole books and scores of magazine articles have been written on this subject, and after nearly two centuries the truth about Lewis's demise seems murkier than ever. The

following three articles offer some new perspectives on this enduring mystery. In "The 'Ague' Made Him Do It," Thomas Denisi explores the possibility that malaria was the cause of the erratic behavior of Lewis's final days. In "Meriwether Lewis's Personal Finances," the late Ruth Colter Frick attempts to debunk the notion that Lewis's depleted bank account contributed to a mental tailspin. In "Moonlight and Meriwether Lewis," John Guice argues that Mrs. Grinder, whose oral statements were the basis of two oft-cited written reports about Lewis's last night, could not possibly have seen what she claimed because the night was moonless.

Readers who wish to explore this issue at greater length can turn to many sources. The two biographies of Lewis, Richard Dillon's *Meriwether Lewis* (1965) and Stephen Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage* (1996) make the case, respectively, for murder and suicide. Vardis Fisher's *Suicide or Murder?* (1962) is the murder theorists' Bible. This magazine published an extended point-counterpoint in "Rest, Rest Perturbed Spirit," by Paul Russell Cutright (March 1986) and the three-part "How did Meriwether Lewis Die? It Was Murder," by E. G. Chuinard (August 1991, November 1991, and January 1992). John Guice's "A Fatal Rendezvous: The Mysterious Death of Meriwether Lewis" (May 1998) offers a cogent summary of the debate, with particulars about the principal players and their views and how the preponderance of opinion has shifted over the years from murder to suicide. (Back issues of WPO are available by calling 888-701-3434). ■



THE “AGUE” MADE HIM DO IT

*Did Meriwether Lewis shoot himself to exorcise
the demons of that “banefull oppression,” malaria?*

by THOMAS C. DANISI

One of the mysteries of American history concerns the death of Meriwether Lewis. We know he died of gunshot wounds at Grinder’s Stand, in Tennessee, on the morning of October 11, 1809—but was it murder or suicide? In recent years, many students of Lewis and Clark have accepted the conclusion reached by Stephen E. Ambrose in his biography of Lewis, *Undaunted Courage*, that he killed himself, a victim of what Lewis’s contemporaries called “melancholia” and what we today would call clinical depression. Thomas Jefferson and William Clark, two of the people who knew him best, also believed that mental problems drove him to suicide.¹

I accept the view that Lewis shot himself and was not the victim of either robbery or political conspiracy (two theories beyond the scope of this article). I reject, however, the notion that his death was a suicide, at least in the conventional sense of that term. I believe that Meriwether Lewis suffered from untreated malaria, a condition that can lead to the kind of erratic behavior he exhibited in the weeks before his death. Malaria has been known, literally, to drive its victims crazy, causing them

to mutilate and even shoot themselves in a desperate attempt to rid their bodies of pain.

Malaria is a chronic and often fatal disease caused by parasitic protozoa transmitted between humans by mosquitoes of the genus *Anopheles*. It has been known since ancient times in the Old World and was probably carried to the New World by the Spanish, perhaps as early as Columbus’s first voyage, in 1492. Although medical scientists did not discover the links between malaria, the malarial parasite, and mosquitoes until the end of the 19th century, the disease was long associated with the swamps and sultry conditions favorable to mosquito breeding.²

The word malaria derives from the Latin for “bad air,” but in Lewis’s day it was more commonly known as “the ague,” from the French *fièvre ague*, meaning acute fever (in severe cases a victim’s temperature can reach 105 degrees). In various parts of the United States it was known as miasmatic or marsh fever as well as autumnal fever, because it often developed in late summer or early fall, and intermittent or remittent fever, because the fever came and went over days, weeks, or months. (We now know this

results from the life cycle of the *Plasmodia* parasites that cause human malaria.) Symptoms also included violent chills and profuse sweating. Furthermore, for virtually everyone who contracted it, malaria was a long-term disease that in advanced cases could produce anemia, enlarged spleen, and impaired thinking. Physicians categorized different types of malaria by the frequency of the fever's return — quotidian (daily), tertian (every three days), or quartan (every four).³ A primary case could last one or two months before the disease went into remission, but not uncommonly the attacks could resume months or even years later.⁴

While endemic to tropical and subtropical regions, malaria also occurs in temperate climates where conditions are favorable for the breeding of *Anopheles* mosquitoes. By the early 19th century the disease was probably well established in the Ohio and lower Mississippi and Missouri valleys and other parts of the country subject to long hot summers. Thomas Jefferson suffered from “the autumnal fever,” as he called it, and William Clark complained of the “Fall ague” when he was serving in the army in the early 1790s.⁵

Of course, barring our ability to send a clinician back in time to take blood samples, the link between what we call malaria and what Clark and his contemporaries generally called ague must remain circumstantial. But the evidence, in the form of scores of accounts of recognizable symptoms by travelers and sufferers, is strong. In the view of medical historian Eldon D. Chuinard, it is likely that every member of the Corps of Discovery who set off from Camp Dubois in the spring of 1804 was “infected with chronic malaria.”⁶

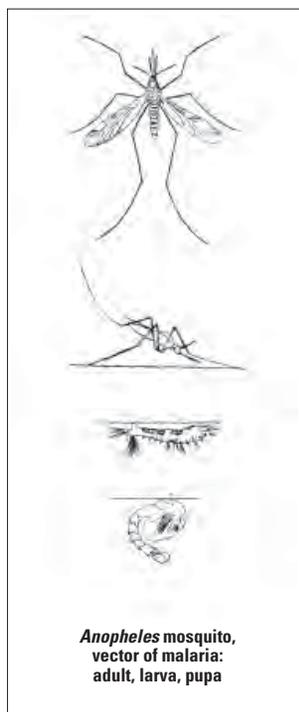
This would have included Lewis, who in his journal entry of November 13, 1803, when he was heading by keelboat down the Ohio after leaving Fort Massac, wrote that he was “sized with a violent ague which continued about four hours and as usual was succeeded by fever which however fortunately abated in some measure by sunrise the next morning.”⁷ (Two months earlier, on September 14, on the Ohio near present Parkersburg, West Virginia, Lewis had observed, “The fever and ague and bilious fevers here commence their banefull oppression

and continue through the whole course of the river with increasing violence as you approach it's mouth.”)

Malaria was treated by various means, most commonly with extract of Peruvian bark, whose active ingredient was quinine, brewed into a medicinal tea.⁸ Lewis had purchased 15 pounds of the bark for the expedition and had the supply with him on the Ohio, but he did not use it. Instead, he took a dose of Dr. Benjamin Rush's pills, a powerful laxative.⁹ Perhaps he chose the pills because they were fast acting. By contrast, brewing bark tea could take 45 minutes or more, and once brewed it had to be mixed in

a quart of claret, port wine, or brandy and drunk at regular intervals for a number of days. Large doses over time could produce serious side effects, including ringing in the ears and in extreme cases deafness.¹⁰

The bark of the wild cherry, or chokecherry [inset], was sometimes substituted for Peruvian bark.¹¹ When Lewis became violently ill on the upper Missouri on June 11, 1805, he drank tea made from the twigs of a chokecherry and reported that the remedy afforded him relief about five hours later—about the same length of time it had taken Rush's pills to ease his symptoms back on November 13, 1803. In both incidents, the attacks began in late afternoon. This is characteristic of the malarial cycle, suggesting that Lewis's relief had more to do with his fever's natural ebbing than with the dubious effectiveness of the medicines he used to treat it.¹²



**Anopheles mosquito,
vector of malaria:
adult, larva, pupa**

THE MADNESS OF MALARIA

Chuinard believed that malaria attacks could have played a role in Lewis's death and noted that at least two other investigators, John Bakeless and Vardis Fisher, also speculated along this line.¹³ But apparently none of these authors was aware of medical testimony about malaria victims behaving in bizarre ways that recall Lewis's “suicidal” actions during the last weeks of his life.

For example, Sir John Pringle, a physician with the British army in the 18th century, described the effects of ague on soldiers: “There were some instances of the head being

MOSQUITO DRAWING: E. LAURENCE PALMER AND H. SEYMOUR FOWLER, *FIELD BOOK OF NATURAL HISTORY* (1881). CHOKECHERRY BASED ON DRAWING BY REBECCA MERRILLS IN C. FRANK BRIDGMAN, *TREES OF NORTH AMERICA* (GOLDEN PRESS, 1968).

so suddenly and violently affected, that without any previous complaint the men ran about in a wild manner, and were believed to be mad, till the solution of the fit by a sweat, and its periodic returns, discovered the true nature of their *delirium*.¹⁴ Pringle reported that ague returned regularly, with devastating results: “the paroxysms,” he wrote, reduced the “strongest men to so low a condition as to disable them from standing. [S]ome became at once delirious ... and would have thrown themselves out of the window, or into the water, if not prevented.”¹⁵

Jean-Louis-Marie Alibert, a French physician who lived about the same time as Lewis and Clark, noted that every paroxysm of intermittent fever was “evidently marked by a derangement of intellectual functions.” A violent delirium could continue the whole day, according to Alibert. He described a patient who at one point snapped out of his delirium and “spoke rationally for a few minutes, but soon relapsed again into such a deep delirium that he could scarcely” be restrained in bed.¹⁶

Jean Senac, a physician to Louis XV, in a book he wrote on intermitting and remitting fevers, noted that victims frequently suffered an excruciating pain above the eye. These attacks tended to return at the same time every day and could leave a patient “so dreadfully tormented ... as to be rendered almost insane.”¹⁷

Or consider the testimony of John Macculloch, a British physician of the early 19th century, describing the ague sufferer’s extremes of self-inflicted injury. The patient, he wrote,

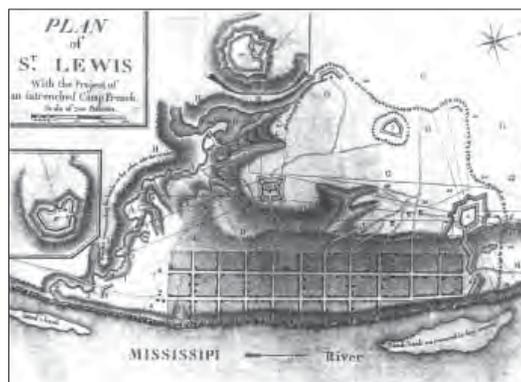
feels a species of antipathy against some peculiar part of his body [and] longs to commit the act [of self-infliction] by wounding that particular point. ... I have been informed by more than one patient ... that there is no conviction ... that death would follow [but instead that] the offending part could be exterminated or cured by the injury, and that the patient would then be well.

Macculloch further observed that patients obsess on

a particular part of the body affected by an uneasy but undefinable sensation, such that the mind constantly reverts to it as a source of suffering ... or ...

absolute pain. ... When, as is not unusual, it is seated in the head, it is even distinguishable by a dull pain, or a confusion, or a sense of “buzzing” ... in one fixed place ... and ... while a pistol would be the only acceptable mode, there would ... be no satisfaction unless that were directed to this actual and only point.¹⁸

In other words, delirious patients were known to fixate on parts of the body where the affliction seemed to reside, and they might even resort to shooting or otherwise “wounding” themselves to be rid of it. When the affliction seemed to reside inside the skull, a patient might even shoot himself in the head with no thought of the consequences.



Lack of drainage and sanitation in towns like St. Louis, shown here in 1796, made fertile breeding grounds for disease-carrying mosquitoes.

THE LAST DAYS OF MERIWETHER LEWIS

Examples such as these give us a new perspective on the final days of Meriwether Lewis. The last five weeks of his life were demanding and strenuous. On September 4, 1809, the 35-year-old governor of Upper Louisiana left St. Louis for Washington, D.C., frantic to meet with the Secretary of War, William Eustis, to obtain approval for the rejected drafts that had sunk his personal

credit. The drafts concerned overages on an expedition to return the Mandan Chief Sheheke (Big White) to his village on the upper Missouri and also dealt with other payments that the War Department had not pre-approved. Lewis had sold off his property to back his signature on several of these drafts, which Eustis now refused to sanction. Behind him, Lewis left an office full of problems and an acting governor, Frederick Bates, who thought him incompetent.¹⁹ Compounding his difficulties, according to the *Missouri Gazette*, Lewis departed on his journey “afflicted with fever.”²⁰

During the first part of his trip, witnesses reported that Lewis tried to kill himself on a boat while en route down the Mississippi to New Madrid. These reports don’t specify whether he tried to shoot himself or jump overboard; if Lewis attempted the latter, his behavior would have been similar to that of the delirious soldiers described by Pringle who “would have thrown themselves ... into the water, if not prevented.” After arriving at Fort

Pickering, at the site of present Memphis, Tennessee, on September 15, he rested under strict watch for several days. Lewis gradually improved over the next 10 or 12 days.²¹ On September 29, Lewis and his party started overland on horseback, covering 100 miles in three days. After reaching the Chickasaw Agency, they rested for several days. The party left the agency on October 6 and arrived at Grinder's Stand at sunset on October 10. According to a report written by ornithologist Alexander Wilson after he visited Grinder's Stand the following spring, Lewis on the last night of his life paced back and forth, "speaking to himself in a violent manner," and shot himself in the early morning of the 11th. He died several hours later, a little after sun-up.²²

Lewis left St. Louis in early September, a time when outbreaks of malaria (a.k.a. "the autumnal fever") often occurred, and we know from the *Gazette* that he was suffering from a fever, if not specifically from "the ague." Details about his behavior aboard the boat to New Madrid are scanty, but a contemporary report by Gilbert C. Russell, the commanding officer at Fort Pickering, said he twice attempted suicide and one time "nearly succeeded."²³ It is possible that Lewis, in the frenzy of a malaria attack, tried to jump overboard or commit some sort of bodily harm in the manner of patients described by Pringle and Macculloch. Russell also reported that Lewis's derangement lasted five days during his stay at Fort Pickering. It then subsided, only to return three or four days after his departure—a waxing and waning strikingly characteristic of advanced malaria.

The accounts of Russell and Wilson of Lewis's last night, albeit second-hand, nonetheless offer intriguing evidence that malaria was the root cause of what Russell called his "mental disease." Although differing in some details, neither account depicts a person suffering from clinical depression. Instead, they convey a stark picture of a man behaving erratically and driven to self-destruction, in Russell's words, by the demons of "his wild imagination." Both accounts state that Lewis shot himself twice, first in the forehead and then in the breast. According to Russell, the shot to the head was a glancing one that did not penetrate, while Wilson states that it blew off a piece of his skull and exposed the brain. The second shot was in the breast, according to Russell, although a contemporary source who was present that night, the Chickasaw agent James Neelly, reported that the shot was "a little below the Breast."²⁴

The point here is that neither the first nor the second shot was immediately fatal. It is hard to imagine that a

Lewis's final journey: A chronology, September 4 - October 11, 1809

September 4: Departs St. Louis by boat, intending to go to Washington, D.C., via New Orleans to meet with War Department officials about questioned expenditures. Twice tries to kill himself while on board.

September 11: Writes his last will and testament.

September 15: Arrives at Fort Pickering (Chickasaw Bluffs, current site of Memphis, Tennessee). Captain Gilbert Russell, the commanding officer, posts a suicide watch.

September 16: Writes President James Madison, informing him he has decided to proceed overland to Washington due to concerns about capture by the British on open seas.

September 22: Writes his friend Major Amos Stoddard, asking him for \$200.

September 29: Starts overland on horseback, accompanied by Major James Neelly, agent to the Chickasaw Nation, on horses lent to him by Russell along with \$100 in cash.

October 2: Arrives at the Chickasaw Agency, about six miles north of present Houston, Mississippi, having traveled approximately 100 miles in three days.

October 6: Departs for Nashville along the Natchez Trace.

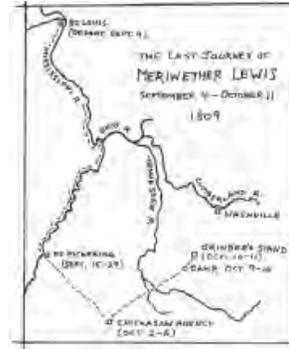
October 9: Crosses Tennessee River and camps near present Collinwood, Tennessee.

October 10: Proceeds on alone to Grinder's Stand, arriving there at sunset, while Neelly stays behind to retrieve two horses that strayed during the night.

October 11: Shoots himself (or is shot by an unknown assailant) in the head and chest during the early morning hours. Dies shortly after sunrise.

— J.I.M.

Source: Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), pp. 461-65.



“He had no person with him who could manage or controul him . . .”

Excerpt from a statement of November 26, 1811, by Gilbert C. Russell, commanding officer of Fort Pickering, where Lewis had stayed two years earlier on his way to Grinder’s Stand.

Governor Lewis left St. Louis late in August, or early in September 1809, intending to go by the route of the Mississippi and the Ocean, to the City of Washington, taking with him all the papers relative to his expedition to the Pacific Ocean, for the purpose of preparing and putting them to the press, and to have some drafts paid which had been drawn by him on the Government and protested. On the morning of the 15th of September, the Boat in which he was a passenger landed him at Fort Pickering in a state of mental derangement, which appeared to have been produced as much by indisposition as other causes. The Subscriber being then the Commanding Officer of the Fort on discovering his situation, and learning from the Crew that he had made two attempts to kill himself, in one of which he had nearly succeeded, resolved at once to take possession of him and his papers, and detain them there untill he recovered, or some friend might arrive in whose hands lie could depart in safety.

In this condition he continued without any material change for about five days, during which time the most proper and efficacious means that could be devised to restore him was administered, and on the sixth or seventh day all symptoms of derangement disappeared and he was completely in his senses and thus continued for ten or twelve days. On the 29th of the same month he left Bluffs, with the Chickasaw agent the interpreter and some of the Chiefs, intending then to proceed the usual route thro’ the Indian Country, Tennessee and Virginia to his place of destination, with his papers well secured and packed on horses. By much severe depletion during his illness he had been considerably reduced and debilitated, from which he had not entirely recov-

ered when he set off, and the weather in that country being yet excessively hot and the exercise of traveling too severe for him; in three or four days he was again affected with the same mental disease. He had no person with him who could manage or controul him in his propensities and he daily grew worse untill he arrived at the house of a Mr. Grinder within the jurisdiction of Tennessee and only Seventy miles from Nashville, where in the apprehension of being destroyed by enemies which had no existence but in his wild imagination, he destroyed himself, in the most cool desperate and Barbarian-like manner, having been left in the house intirely to himself. . . .

After he arrived [at Grinder’s Stand] and refreshed himself with a little Meal & drink he went to bed in a cabin by himself and ordered the servants to go to the stables and take care of the Horses, least they might loose some that night; Some time in the night he got his pistols which he loaded, after every body had retired in a seperate Building and discharged one against his forehead without much effect—the ball not penetrating the skull but only making a furrow over it. He then discharged the other against his breast where the ball entered and passing downward thro’ his body came out low down near his back bone. After some time he got up and went to the house where Mrs. Grinder and her children were lying and asked for water, but her husband being absent and having heard the report of the pistols she was greatly allarmed and made him no answer. He then in returning got his razors from a port folio which happened to contain them and siting up in his bed was found about day light, by one of the servants, busily engaged in cutting himself from head to foot.

Source: Donald Jackson, ed., *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854*, 2 Vols. (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1978), Vol. 2, pp. 573-74.

person bent on killing himself, and as skilled with firearms as Meriwether Lewis, could have botched the job so badly. At literally point-blank range, how could he have missed two large vital organs, the brain and the heart? I believe that Lewis’s self-inflicted wounds were directed, in the words of Macculloch, at “the offending part[s]” of

his body. Adding further credence to this conclusion is Russell’s statement that Lewis, after first shooting himself, then “got his razors” and began “cutting himself from head to foot” in an apparently desperate act of self-mutilation.²⁵ Had Lewis been determined to kill himself, he simply could have slit his wrists or carotid artery.

When Lewis's servant, a free mulatto named John Pernier, rushed to his side after the shooting, the governor asked for water. "I have done the business," said Lewis, and indeed he had. But that "business" was a strange and tragic form of self-surgery, not suicide.²⁶

Foundation member Thomas Danisi lives in St. Louis and is a long-time student of the medical aspects of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

NOTES

1 Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), pp. 465-68, 469, 471.

2 *Encyclopedia Britannica*, on-line version (www.eb.com).

3 Mark F. Boyd, *An Introduction to Malariaology*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930), pp. 21-22. See also Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1818-1865*, (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1986), pp. 8-9.

4 Erwin Ackerknecht, *Malaria in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1760-1900* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1945), pp. 4n, 19. *P. malariae*, one of the four *Plasmodium* species responsible for malaria in humans, has infected a single person as long as 53 years. See Julius P. Kreier, ed., *Malaria*, 3 vols. (New York: Academic Press, 1980), Vol. 1, p. 108; and P. C. Garnham, "The Myth of Quartan Malaria," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, 1981, no. 75, pp. 616-617.

5 Eldon D. Chuinard, *Only One Man Died: The Medical Aspects of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Fairfield, Wash.: Ye Galleon Press, 1979), pp. 118, 170, and 401.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 175n.

7 Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition*, 13 volumes (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984-2001), Vol. 2, p. 86. All quotations or references to journal entries in the ensuing text are from Moulton, by date, unless otherwise indicated.

8 More specifically, the bark was that of the cinchona tree. Quinine became an effective treatment for malaria only after 1823, when it was successfully isolated from cinchona bark. Treating malaria using the bark itself was at best marginally effective and would not have eliminated the disease's chronic nature. W. J. Fitzgerald, "Evolution of the Use of Quinine in the Treatment of Malaria," *New York State Journal of Medicine*, 1968, p. 801.

9 Donald Jackson, ed., *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854*, 2 Vols. (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1978), Vol. 1, p. 80.

10 Robert Desowitz, *The Malaria Capers* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), p. 202.

11 Robert Beverley, in a history of Virginia written in 1705, praised this remedy. See Wyndham Blanton, *Medicine in Virginia in the 17th Century* (Richmond: The William Byrd Press, 1930), p. 113.

12 A malaria attack typically begins around 4 P.M. See Boyd, p. 24.

13 Chuinard, p. 176. His reference is to Bakeless's *Lewis & Clark:*

Partners in Discovery (New York: William Morrow, 1947), p. 413, and Fisher's *Suicide or Murder* (Denver: Swallow Press, 1962).

14 Sir John Pringle, *Observations on the Diseases of the Army* (Philadelphia: Fry and Kammerer, 1810), pp. 156-57.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 157.

16 Jean-Louis-Marie Alibert, *A Treatise on Malignant Intermittents* (Philadelphia: Fry and Kammerer, 1807), pp. 40 and 44.

17 Jean Senac, *A Treatise on the Hidden Nature and the Treatment of Intermittent and Remitting Fevers* (Philadelphia: Kimber & Conrad & Co., 1805), pp. 81-82.

18 John Macculloch, *An Essay on the Remittent and Intermittent Diseases*, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1828), Vol. 1, pp. 250, 252-53.

19 Thomas M. Marshall, ed., *The Life and Papers of Frederick Bates*, 2 vols. (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society, 1926), Vol. 2, p. 64. Bates was the territorial secretary and served as acting governor in Lewis's absence.

20 *Missouri Gazette*, November 2, 1809, p. 3, col. 3.

21 Jackson, p. 573.

22 Alexander Wilson, "Particulars of the Death of Meriwether Lewis," *The Port folio*, January 1812, pp. 36-37.

23 Jackson, p. 573.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 468. See also John Brahan's letter to Thomas Jefferson, October 18, 1809, National Archives, Record Group 107, Microfilm M221, Roll 18, B-589, frames 5632-33. Brahan, a captain in the 2nd Infantry, told Jefferson that the wound was "a little below his breast."

25 *Ibid.*, p. 574.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 468. The author wishes to thank Dr. Jan Fitzgerald for her help on the original version of this article and Jim Merritt, WPO's editor, for the clarity and focus he brought to the final version. He also thanks Lilla Vekerdy, Jim Curley, and Polly Cummings of the Washington University School of Medicine, Bernard Becker Medical Library, Rare Book Department. This article could not have been written without Ms. Vekerdy's thoughtful searches and the Becker Library's extensive holdings.



Historical marker at Grinder's Stand. In the background, in the form of a broken column, is the memorial over Lewis's grave.



MERIWETHER LEWIS'S PERSONAL FINANCES

*The governor of Upper Louisiana was land rich but
cash poor when he left on his last, fateful journey*

by L. RUTH COLTER FRICK

EDITOR'S NOTE: Those who argue that Meriwether Lewis died by his own hand portray a man overwhelmed by problems: depression, alcohol and drug addiction, failure to find a wife, an inability to cope with the administrative and political pressures of his new position as governor of Upper Louisiana, and personal debt. The late Ruth Colter Frick was in the camp of those who believe that Lewis did not commit suicide. She examined the question of Lewis's debts and presented her findings in a paper entitled "The Myth of Insolvency: The Financial Affairs of Governor Meriwether Lewis at the Time of His Death." Delivered at a conference in South Dakota in May 1999, six months before the author's own untimely death, the paper concluded that Lewis's finances were basically sound and should not have been cause for despair.¹

Frick submitted her paper to WPO for possible publication. She did not footnote her paper but supplied a bibliography found in the endnotes of the version published here. All notes are the editor's. Frick uncovered new information about Lewis's finances in various archival sources, in particular the Grace Lewis Miller Collection, housed at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, in St. Louis. Most of the documents she cites, including letters written by Lewis, are not found in published primary sources such as Donald Jackson's two-volume *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*.² We present this article both for the insights it offers into Lewis's finances and to encourage scholars to examine the author's sources for other discoveries they may hold.³

The families of Meriwether Lewis's father and mother both owned large estates in Virginia and were highly respected in their community. As the firstborn son of William and Lucy Meriwether Lewis, the future leader of the Corps of Discovery inherited some of the family wealth after his father died, in 1779, when Meriwether was five years old. His inheritance included some 2,000 acres of land and 19 slaves as well as farm

animals, crops, and cash. His guardian and uncle, William D. Meriwether, managed the orphan's business.

Six months after the death of William Lewis, Lucy remarried and moved with her new husband, Captain John Marks, to Georgia. In 1791, she became a widow for the second time. Four years later, Meriwether Lewis took possession of his inheritance and exercised his duties as head of the household. He accepted the responsibility



Lewis's memorandum book details his expenses for April and May 1807, including payment of \$150 to John Ordway for his journals.

of managing the affairs of his mother, brother Reuben, and sister Jane Anderson as well as those of his half siblings, John Hastings Marks and Mary Marks.⁴

After entering the army, Lewis paid an overseer to manage the family plantation, Locust Hill, located in Albemarle County, Virginia, about seven miles west of Charlottesville. When his mother decided to return to Virginia, he arranged a furlough to help her make the move. With a carriage and two wagons he brought Lucy and the other family members who had stayed in Georgia, along with their slaves and livestock, home to Locust Hill.⁵

Lewis's father had owned 2,650 acres of land on Miller Creek in Kentucky in addition to his property in Virginia. Meriwether secured title to this land by paying the taxes on it, and he shared in its inheritance. In addition, he acquired John Marks's warrant for 4,000 acres in the North-

west Territories. As a young army officer he also bought 799 acres in Kentucky from James Vaughn and 180 acres on Brush Creek, north of the Ohio River.

Some of the sources of Lewis's assets are not clear. On October 25, 1807, he received \$50 his mother had collected for him in Georgia from an unknown source. The fact that Lewis paid John Marks \$200 on October 28, 1807, "for value received" suggests that he may have bought some of the Marks landholdings. A notation from one Alex Garrett states that on November 1, 1807, a deed from H. Marks to Governor Meriwether Lewis was signed by one witness rather than the three required by law. This deed may have represented one of several unidentified assets.

In the two years that he acted as Thomas Jefferson's secretary, Lewis received an annual salary of \$500, an amount comparable to what he earned as a captain of in-

fantry, the rank he held before and after his service in the Executive Mansion.⁶ He continued to receive a captain's salary from the spring of 1803, when he returned to active duty, until his appointment, in March 1807, as governor of the Upper Louisiana Territory. Congress doubled the pay of Lewis and all other members of the Corps of Discovery for their period of service during the expedition. As governor he received an annual salary of \$2,000, paid quarterly until his death, in October 1809.⁷

Based on all of the above, we know that when Lewis assumed the governorship he had assets in Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, and possibly Georgia. For his service on the expedition Congress also approved a bonus of 1,600 acres of land.⁸ So for 30 years—from his father's death, in 1779, to his own, in 1809—Lewis enjoyed a steady income from his plantation, military service (including detached duty as secretary to the President), and governorship.

The Northwest Ordinance, parts of which applied to Upper Louisiana, required that the governor own a freehold estate of 1,000 acres in the territory. Pierre Chouteau, a local fur merchant, sold Lewis four parcels of land in the district of St. Louis. The agreed-upon price for approximately 5,700 acres was \$1 per acre. He planned to develop the land for residential, commercial, and agricultural purposes. The first and smallest parcel, of 42 acres, adjoined the town of St. Louis and included several Indian mounds. The second parcel, of 3,000 acres, where Lewis planned to build a home for his mother, was about six miles from town, the third 12 miles, and the fourth 16 miles.

Correspondence between Lewis and Frederick Bates, the territorial secretary, reveals that Lewis shipped some personal property to St. Louis. In a letter dated January 28, 1808, Bates informed the governor, "Three cases containing your furniture have arrived. They appear to be in good order. I have stored them." Lewis wrote to his mother on February 15, 1808, telling her that his brother, Reuben, was traveling down the Ohio in a flat-bottomed boat with Meriwether's carriage and baggage.

Lewis went about house-hunting in a frugal manner. In a letter to Clark dated May 29, 1808, he described the house he had found which he planned to share with Clark and his bride, Julia Hancock. The rent was \$250 a year. Lewis explained that he had decided against renting the house that had been his first choice because the \$500 rent was too high. (By then, Clark had been named a brigadier general of militia and territorial Indian agent. When Clark and Julia moved to St. Louis after their wedding in Virginia, Lewis sent two keelboats and a 25-man detail to the

mouth of the Ohio to escort them to their new home.)

To paraphrase the slogan of a modern investment firm, Lewis was bullish on St. Louis and its environs. On July 25, 1808, he wrote to his friend William Preston that the area offered more advantages than any portion of the United States to the farmer, mechanic, inland merchant, or honest adventurer who could muster some capital.⁹

In a letter to his mother dated December 1, 1808, Lewis described his land purchases and the plans he had for her and other members of the family who might join her in St. Louis. He wrote that he had paid \$3,000 for the land and that \$1,500 more would be due by May 1809 and \$1,200 by May 1810.¹⁰ Lewis said that it would be necessary to sell at least a part of one of his parcels (at a place called Ivy Creek) to meet the obligations. The 1,000 acres that he proposed for his mother was a mix of prairie, meadows, and woodlands and had three springs a short distance from the house.

Three of his parcels were farmland he rented to Alexander Eastwood until December 25, 1809. Lewis gave Eastwood specific instructions about tapping the trees in the sugar orchard, the amount of timber that could be cut for cordwood, and the construction of fences. The terms of the rental required Eastwood to pay Lewis 20 barrels of corn on November 1, 1809.

PROBLEMS IN WASHINGTON

When James Madison succeeded Jefferson as President, William Eustis replaced Henry Dearborn as Secretary of War. Eustis cared far more for fiscal policy than for pacification of the Missouri frontier. Consequently, in the summer of 1809, the War Department informed Governor Lewis that it would not honor two of his bills of exchange: one in the amount of \$18.70 for transcribing territorial laws and another of \$81 for building a furnace to test minerals. The new administration subsequently questioned much larger bills of exchange he had issued. These concerned expenses associated with a treaty with the Osage Indians, the return of the Mandan chief Big White to his village on the upper Missouri, and the printing of territorial laws. So Lewis made the fateful decision to travel to Washington to explain his expenditures.

Lewis at the time was far from insolvent, but he surely had a cash-flow problem. Some of the reasons for this can be found in his memorandum book, in the collection of the Missouri Historical Society. The book dates from April 1807, when Lewis began keeping track of expenses related to the planned publication of his and Clark's expedition journals. It tells us that he paid Sergeant John Ordway

\$150 for the journal he had kept during the expedition. Other expenses included \$30 for the printing and distribution of a prospectus, \$83.50 for Indian portraits by the artist C. B. J. de Saint-Mémin, and \$100 to mathematician Ferdinand Hassler for calculating longitudes based on the captains' celestial data. Lewis also gave botanist Frederick Pursh \$40 for cataloguing plant specimens and engraver John James Barralet \$40 for drawing the Falls of the Missouri. In total, Lewis expended at least \$633 toward the journals' publication.¹¹

Lewis saw the necessity of having the laws of the territory published, as well as licenses, commissions, and other documents. He also realized the desirability of establishing a newspaper that would serve as a medium for his official pronouncements. He therefore recruited Joseph Charless, a printer from Kentucky, to publish both the territorial laws and the *Missouri Gazette*. This precipitated a row between Lewis and his nominal subordinate, Frederick Bates, who refused to use money from the contingency fund he controlled to pay for transcribing and printing the laws. The bills submitted by Charless were some of the protested expenditures that Lewis wanted to explain in Washington.

In his capacity as Indian agent, William Clark was ordered to return Big White to his village in 1807. While attempting to do so, the escort of Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor and his men was attacked by the Arikara Indians, and the mission failed. In 1809, Big White and his party were still in St. Louis. Lewis contracted with the Saint Louis Missouri Fur Company to return the chief and his party for \$7,000. Pierre Chouteau, the leader of the expedition, requested additional ammunition and gifts for the Indians in the form of tobacco and vermilion to insure their safe passage up the Missouri. This too became a protested bill that needed explaining.

On May 13, 1809, Lewis gave a bill of exchange—in effect, a government check—to Chouteau for the requested ammunition, tobacco, and vermilion. The total cost of these goods came to \$940—\$700 for gun powder, \$100 for lead, \$50 for vermilion, and \$90 for tobacco.¹² When the War Department refused to honor this bill of

exchange, it became Lewis's personal debt. His temporary inability to pay off this debt led to Chouteau's decision to call in the notes Lewis owed him, including one for 3,000 acres of land.¹³ Lewis returned the land to Chouteau with the provision that, if he paid Chouteau the cash owed to him by May 1810, title would revert to Lewis.

The War Department also refused to honor payments by Lewis to James McFarlane for expenses related to escorting a party of Osage Indians to St. Louis and exploring for saltpeter. Lewis accepted personal responsibility for these and all other bills of exchange refused by the government. He believed that he could clear up these dis-

putes and reverse the decision once he had talked to the authorities in Washington.

Dealing with these pressing matters by mail was not an option because delivering a letter between St. Louis and Washington could take a month or longer. Other territorial governors, it should be noted, had similar problems with the War Department's refusal to honor their obligations. The federal government eventually paid most of the protested bills to Lewis's estate.

On August 19, 1809, approximately two weeks before he left for Washington, Lewis took a number of actions related to his personal finances. He borrowed money from Alexander Stuart and put up some or all of his remaining St. Louis property as collateral. The conditional deed he and Stuart signed included a

promissory note for \$750, with interest payable to October 1, 1810; the deed stipulated that the land would be returned to Lewis if the note were paid.¹⁴ He also sold a 40-arpent lot to William C. Carr for \$160 and gave power of attorney to Stuart, Clark, and Carr, authorizing them to discharge all demands and debts and to receive any payments due him during his absence.

Lewis's memorandum book shows that two days later, he and Clark did an accounting of how much each owed the other. Debts owed to Clark by Lewis included \$1 borrowed during a card game. Clark also owed \$125 in rent for the house they shared, and he agreed to pay Lewis for half the expenses incurred to date relating to publication of the journals. The total of all debts owed to Lewis came to \$554.43. The two settled their affairs by signing a state-



Big White, the Mandan chief. Lewis's financial crisis was precipitated by the government's refusal to honor payments related to the expedition to return him to the upper Missouri.

PAINTING OF BIG WHITE BY CHARLES B. J. DE SAINT-MÉMIN. COURTESY AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

ment saying that this was exactly the amount each owed the other.

Clark also kept a memorandum book. A copy of it resides in the library of the Missouri State Historical Society, in Columbia, Missouri. Beginning September 21, 1809, Clark recorded his expenses during a trip from St. Louis to Louisville to Fincastle, Virginia, and ultimately Washington. Like Lewis, he was headed there to deal with bills the government refused to pay. Clark listed his debts and assets and also those of Lewis. Clark's debts came to \$5,900 and his accounts receivable to \$1,445. Lewis's personal debts, according to Clark, were \$2,750.72, and his protested bills amounted to \$1,958.50. Thus, by Clark's reckoning, Lewis's total indebtedness was \$4,709.22. Clark listed the total value of Lewis's territorial land assets as \$2,065.50. He also noted that Reuben Lewis owed his brother \$300, so Lewis's total assets amounted to \$2,365.50

The difference between Lewis's total debt (\$4,709.22) and total assets (\$2,365.50) came to \$2,343.72. Subtracting the protested bills of \$1,958.50 yields a net worth of minus \$385.22. While Lewis would surely have preferred to be in the black, being in the red by less than \$400 (even allowing for the far greater value of a dollar in those days) hardly seems reason to commit suicide. We know from other documents that Major Amos Stoddard owed Lewis \$200 and that he still had coming to him the 1,600-acre land grant promised by Congress. If you add these to the credit side of Lewis's ledger and throw in the value of his Virginia land holdings, it is clear that the governor of Upper Louisiana was a man of some means, even if he may have been short of cash.¹⁵

NOTES

1 Frick's paper was delivered on May 28, 1999, at the 31st Annual Dakota Conference, held at Augustana College, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

2 Donald Jackson, ed., *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854*, 2 Vols. (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

3 Ruth Colter Frick died on November 9, 1999, in Washington, Missouri. She was a descendant of John Colter, a member of the Corps of Discovery, and the author of *Courageous Colter and His Companions* (1997), a biography of her ancestor. Frick was working on a biography of Meriwether Lewis at the time of her death. Her obituary appears on page 6 of the February 2000 WPO. The editor thanks John D. W. Guice for his editing of an earlier version of this article. A copy of the author's original paper is available from the editor, Jim Merritt, at 51 N. Main St., Pennington, NJ 08534 (wpo@lewisandclark.org).

4 Standard information of this sort can be found in the two biographies of Lewis: Richard Dillon, *Meriwether Lewis: A Biography* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1965), and Stephen E.

Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). Dillon argues that Lewis was a victim of murder, while Ambrose makes the case for suicide. The author's archival sources are the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial archives, St. Louis, Mo. (Grace Lewis Miller Collection); St. Louis court records (common pleas, probate, and deeds); the Missouri Historical Society (the *Missouri Gazette* and the papers of Lewis, Clark, and Frederick Bates); Missouri State Historical Society, Columbia, Mo. (Clark Memorandum Book); Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City, Mo. (land records); Virginia State Archives, Richmond, Va. (county records); Virginia State Historical Society, Charlottesville, Va. (Lewis papers); and the National Archives, Washington, D.C. (records of the Secretary of War, Secretary of Treasury, General Accounting Office, and Bureau of Indian Affairs).

5 For more on this phase of Lewis's life, see James P. Hendrix, Jr., "Meriwether Lewis's Georgia Boyhood," WPO, August 2001, pp. 25-28.

6 Ambrose, p. 59.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 414.

8 *Ibid.*

9 Preston Family Papers, Taylor Collection, The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Ky.

10 Frick implies that the \$3,000 was in cash, although she later states it was in the form of a promissory note.

11 See Jackson, pp. 462-63. Frick also notes that Lewis paid John Garrison \$10 "for the first part of his work," but she does not specify the nature of this work or identify Garrison. In her original paper Frick stated that the payment to Pursh was \$70, but examination of the original document by staff of the Missouri Historical Society reveals that the correct figure is \$40.

12 Lewis had "protected the bill" with a bond of \$940 signed by Chouteau on June 9, 1809. The bond guaranteed either the distribution of merchandise to the Indians or the return of the merchandise to the United States. It also stipulated that if Chouteau used the merchandise for his own purposes it would be charged to him.

13 See Note 9, above.

14 Frick refers to Alexander "Stuart," but Jackson, p. 729, refers to Alexander "Steward" (Clark's spelling) and notes that elsewhere he is called "Judge Seward."

15 Frick also discusses the assets and liabilities of Lewis's estate as recorded by his half-brother, John Marks, sometime in 1811. Frick evidently examined this document, which is part of the Lewis-Marks Papers at the library of the University of Virginia. A transcript of the document appears in Jackson, pp. 728-31. Not all of the figures recorded by Frick appear to agree with those recorded by Jackson. For example, she states that Marks's tally of Lewis's debts came to \$4,195.12, while Jackson lists a figure of \$4,196.12 1/2. She lists \$1,518.50 in protested bills, while Jackson lists \$2,760.50. She records Lewis's St. Louis assets as \$4,590, while Jackson lists assets ("Effects & Crds.," or effects and credits) of \$5,700. According to Frick, Marks calculated that Lewis's assets at the time of his death exceeded his debts by \$393.88, but Jackson's numbers tell a different story: Lewis had debts and protested "Draughts," or bills, totalling \$6,956.62 1/2. According to Jackson's figures, Lewis's liabilities exceeded his assets by approximately \$1,256.



MOONLIGHT AND MERIWETHER LEWIS

*How could Mrs. Grinder have seen what
she claimed on that pitch-black night?*

by JOHN D. W. GUICE

Meriwether Lewis died of two pistol wounds at a log cabin homestead known as Grinder's Stand on the Natchez Trace, some 70 miles southwest of Nashville, Tennessee. Who held the weapon or weapons remains the subject of considerable historical controversy after at least a century and a half of debate.

About a year ago, after speaking to the Rotary Club of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, on the mysteries surrounding his death, I was asked by a geologist in the audience if I knew the phase of the moon on that fateful night of October 10-11, 1809. I allowed that I did not, and then I asked him to explain the relevance of the moon to the question of the suicide or murder of Meriwether Lewis. If there was a new moon, he assured me, it would have been pitch black in the Tennessee wilderness, and unless there was a candle or lamp in the guest cabin, an assailant would have a hard time finding his mark. Furthermore, unless Lewis had been carrying a lantern or a fire had been burning outside the cabin, there is no way Mrs. Robert Grinder could have seen the wounded Lewis stumbling around as she described.¹

I have been researching the history of the Natchez Trace

for 15 years and the death of Lewis for 10. As a speaker at academic meetings from coast to coast, I have read papers on his demise at Grinder's Stand. In the course of my research and writing about the Trace I have thought about its natural conditions and creatures: flowers and trees, thunder and rain, streams and rivers, birds and insects, snakes and rodents, buffalo and deer, and all kinds of predators. I have also thought about its human denizens and travelers—good and evil, rich and poor, weak and strong, powerful and powerless, indigenous and alien. But until my geologist friend asked me that question, I had never thought about moonlight on the Natchez Trace or how it might relate to Lewis's death.

A check of the Website of the Astronomical Applications Department of the U.S. Naval Observatory revealed the following data for Nashville. There had been a new moon on October 9, 1809, at 1:30 A.M. Central Standard Time. When Lewis arrived at Grinder's Stand the evening of Tuesday, October 10, 1809, the phase of the moon was a "waxing crescent with 3% of the Moon's visible disk illuminated." Moonset that night was at 6:21 P.M.²

In other words, after darkness fell at 6:21, and surely

by the middle of the night, when Mrs. Grinder claims to have heard two pistol shots, it would have been difficult for her to have seen her hand in front of her face. This raises an obvious question: How is the total absence of moonlight relevant to the arguments offered that Lewis killed himself? Expressed in another way, what bearing does the phase of the moon have on the credibility of Mrs. Grinder's statement about what transpired that night?

MRS. GRINDER'S VARIOUS ACCOUNTS

At the core of the case that Lewis committed suicide are the accounts of events that tragic night attributed to Mrs. Grinder. We use the plural because over a number of years she offered several different versions.³ And they are central to the issue, because the letter from Major James Neelly to President Thomas Jefferson in which he reported that Lewis had taken his own life, as well as letters on this matter written by others, are all based on Mrs. Grinder's word.

Alexander Wilson, a noted ornithologist and a friend of Lewis's, wrote the most often quoted account given by Mrs. Grinder, one based on notes taken when he visited Grinder's Stand in 1811.⁴ It is presented here in its entirety [page 24.]. Reading it, one is immediately struck by the many details Mrs. Grinder offers in this highly descriptive account. But nowhere does she mention lamps or candles in either the guest cabin or the kitchen cabin. Nor does she refer to an outside fire or to Lewis's carrying a lantern or a candle. Given the wounds that Lewis suffered, it is highly unlikely that he would have been able to carry them even if they were in his cabin.⁵ But Mrs. Grinder describes to Wilson at length how the fatally wounded Lewis perambulated around her premises and how he found an empty water bucket and scraped the empty vessel with a gourd dipper. How, one may fairly ask, without even a hint of moonlight could she have seen these things even had they occurred?

The absence of moonlight also raises new questions regarding Major James Neelly, the Chickasaw Indian agent who was traveling with Lewis from Fort Pickering at Chickasaw Bluffs on the Mississippi—the site of present-day Memphis. Neelly, who remained behind to search for horses that had disappeared while they slept the night before, was not with Lewis at Grinder's Stand. He arrived the next morning, according to his letter to Jefferson. Though Neelly was not an actual witness to the death of Lewis, he becomes the chief witness of those who argue that Lewis did commit suicide. Sometime after the burial of Lewis, how long we do not know, Neelly proceeded to



This speculative reconstruction of the main cabin at Grinder's Stand was completed in 1935. The original was probably less

Nashville, where on October 18 he wrote a lengthy letter describing Lewis's death. The letter [page 25] was addressed to Thomas Jefferson and delivered to Monticello by John Pernier, Lewis's free mulatto valet and servant.⁶

A careful reading of Neelly's account shows that it differs in at least one important way from Wilson's: Neelly has Mrs. Grinder alone, while Wilson puts her with her children. But that inconsistency has nothing to do with the moon. However, if Mrs. Grinder did relate to Neelly the same account that she did to Wilson, especially regarding the manner in which Lewis roamed around outside after she heard the shots, then Neelly definitely should have become suspicious. For he was well aware that there was no moonlight by which Mrs. Grinder could have seen Lewis stumbling around between the two cabins. If we believe Wilson's version, then we have to wonder why Neelly raised no questions. If we believe Wilson's version, then we must be inclined to agree with Vardis Fisher's rather derisive description of Neelly in his exhaustively researched book, *Suicide or Murder: The Strange Death of Governor Meriwether Lewis*.⁷

Some historians take Fisher to task for questioning the character of Neelly.⁸ But Neelly's character is important, not just because he was the author of the letter to Jefferson in which he announced the suicide of Lewis, but because newspapers published his verbal reports to eager readers, often in exaggerated forms, and because other letters regarding the alleged suicide were based on Neelly's word. In addition, the oft-quoted statement attributed to Major Gilbert C. Russell, commanding officer of Fort Pickering at Chickasaw Bluffs, regarding the manner of



COURTESY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

alative reconstruction of the main cabin at Grinder's Stand was completed in 1935. The original was probably less finely built.

Lewis's death must have been based on Neelly's report.⁹

In sum, anything that casts doubt on the veracity of Neelly automatically weakens the arguments for suicide. And the absence of moonlight on the fatal night does, indeed, raise serious questions, if one assumes that Mrs. Grinder's account to Neelly matched that given to Alexander Wilson.

OVERLOOKING THE OBVIOUS

How could historians overlook something as bright as moonlight or as dark as the Natchez Trace without it?

Doubtless, some readers will suggest that persons who are accustomed to living in the wilderness can see fairly well by starlight in the absence of moonlight, and that surely may apply in some regions when the sky is not overcast. While the stars actually do not shine brighter in some areas of the country than others, they indeed appear brighter in places where the atmosphere has fewer particles suspended in the air—particles that would dim the penetrating starlight. Hence the familiar refrain, "The stars at night are big and bright—deep in the heart of Texas." Indeed, when this Mississippian first traveled across the Great Plains and into the Rockies, he noticed that the stars appeared brighter in some regions than they did in his native state. But residents and travelers deep in the Piney Woods report that in the region through which the Natchez Trace runs utter darkness does prevail in the wilderness when the moon is brand new—especially if the sky is overcast. The Natchez Trace traverses regions where it is not unusual for the humidity—water particles in the atmosphere—to run as high as the temperature and where

the horizon is obscured by forests and hills. Then one must consider the dew point. So many conditions could alter the presence of starlight.

Yes, Mrs. Grinder reported to Alexander Wilson that Lewis did remark, "Madam this is a very pleasant evening," and a bit later he "observed what a sweet evening it was." Considering the heat that often prevails in the region well into October, Lewis could have been referring to a cool evening—one that easily could have been cloud-covered, overcast, or cooled by a gentle breeze. Historians will never know how much starlight there was, but we know there was no moonlight. Inside the cabin where he slept the stars were not shining, and in a heavily forested area it is not likely that Mrs. Grinder could have witnessed the actions of Lewis through the cracks of her log cabin with the door bolted shut.

John Guice is a professor of history emeritus at the University of Southern Mississippi. He incorporated the ideas in this article in a paper entitled "Why Not Homicide?: Historians and Their Case for Suicide," delivered at the Foundation's 2001 annual meeting, in Pierre, South Dakota. He invites responses and can be reached at 2340 North Seventh Ave., Laurel, MS 39440 (guice@c-gate.net; 601-649-1118).

NOTES

1 For a lengthy discussion of the death of Lewis see John D. W. Guice, "A Fatal Rendezvous: The Mysterious Death of Meriwether Lewis," *WPO* (May 1998), pp. 4-12. The name was actually Griner, but because it is spelled Grinder in most historical accounts, Grinder is used here.

2 U. S. Naval Observatory, Astronomical Applications Department, Sun and Moon Data for One Day, Tuesday, October 10, 1809, (http://mach.usno.navy.mil/cgi-hin/aa_pap.pl).

3 Vardis Fisher, *Suicide or Murder? The Strange Death of Governor Meriwether Lewis* (1962, reprint ed., Athens, Oh., 1993), pp. 127-70.

4 Published in Philadelphia in the *Port Folio*, 7 (Jan., 1812), pp. 34-47.

5 The caliber of the so-called "horse pistols" of the type that Lewis carried ranged from 54 to 69.

6 Pernier is sometime spelled Pernia.

7 Fisher, pp. 127-138.

8 For a commentary on reactions to Fisher's book on the death of Lewis, see John D. W. Guice, "Fisher and Meriwether Lewis," in Joseph M. Flora, ed., *Rediscovering Vardis Fisher: Centennial Essays*, (Moscow, Id., 2000), pp. 147-63.

9 Statement of Major Gilbert C. Russell, November 26, 1811, Donald Jackson, *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854*, 2 vols. (Urbana: University of Illinois press, 1978), Vol. 2, pp. 573-75. While the statement is dated, its place of origin is not indicated.

Alexander Wilson's report on Lewis's death

In the same room where he expired, I took down from Mrs. Grinder the particulars of that melancholy event, which affected me extremely. The house or cabin is seventy-two miles from Nashville, and is the last white man's as you enter the Indian country. Governor Lewis, she said, came hither [to Grinder's stand] about sunset, alone, and inquired if he could stay for the night; and alighting, brought his saddle into the house. He was dressed in a loose gown, white striped with blue. On being asked if he came alone, he replied that there were two servants behind, who would be up. He called for some spirits, and drank a very little. When the servants arrived, one of whom was a negro, he inquired for his powder, saying he was sure he had some in a cannister. The servant gave no distinct reply, and Lewis, in the meanwhile, walked backwards and forwards before the door, talking to himself.

Sometimes, she said, he would seem as if he were walking up to her, and would suddenly wheel around and walk back as fast as he could. Supper being ready he sat down, but had eaten only a few mouthfuls, when he started up, speaking to himself in a violent manner. At these times, she says, she observed his face to flush as if it had come on him in a fit. He lighted his pipe, and drawing a chair to the door, sat down saying to Mrs. Grinder, in a kind tone of voice, Madam this is a very pleasant evening. He smoked for some time, but quitted his seat and traversed the yard as before. He again sat down to his pipe, seemed again composed, and casting his eyes wistfully toward the west, observed what a sweet evening it was. Mrs. Grinder was preparing a bed for him but he said he would sleep on the floor, and desired the servant to bring his bear skins and buffalo robes, which was immediately spread out for him; and it now being now dusk the woman went off to the kitchen and the two men to the barn, which stands about 200 yards off.

The kitchen is only a few paces from the room where Lewis was, and the woman being considerably alarmed by the behavior of her guest could not sleep; but listened to his walking backwards and forwards, she thinks, for several hours, and talking aloud, "like a lawyer." She then heard the report of a pistol, and something fell heavily to the floor, and the words "O Lord!" Immediately afterwards she heard another pistol, and in a few minutes she heard him calling out: "O madam! give me some water, and heal my wounds!"

The logs being open, and unplastered, she saw him stagger back and fall against a stump that stands between the kitchen and the room. He crawled for some distance, raised himself by the side of a tree, where he sat about a minute. He once more got to the room; afterwards he came to the kitchen door, but did not speak; she then heard him scraping the bucket with a gourd for water; but it appears that this cooling element was denied the dying man.

As soon as day broke, and not before, the terror of the woman having permitted him to remain two hours in the most deplorable situation, she sent two of her children to the barn, her husband not being home, to bring the servants; and on going in they found him lying on the bed. He uncovered his side, and showed them where the bullet had entered; a piece of his forehead was blown off, and had exposed his brains, without having bled much.

He begged they would take his rifle and blow out his brains, and he would give them all the money he had in his trunk. He often said, "I am no coward, but I am so strong, so hard to die." He begg'd the servant not to be afraid of him, for that he would not hurt him. He expired in about two hours, or just as the sun rose above the trees. ... ■



COURTESY AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Alexander Wilson, a Scottish immigrant and America's first ornithologist, as painted by Rembrandt Peale. During a bird-collecting trip on the frontier in 1811, Wilson visited Grinder's Stand. This account of Lewis's death was based on his interview with Mrs. Grinder.

He begged they would take his rifle and blow out his brains He often said, "I am no coward, but I am so strong, so hard to die."

Source: *Port Folio*, 7 (Jan. 1812), pp. 34-47.

James Neelly's letter to Thomas Jefferson

Nashville Tennessee 18th Octr. 1809

Sir,

It is with extreme pain that I have to inform you of the death of His Excellency Meriwether Lewis, Governor of upper Louisiana who died on the morning of the 11th Instant and I am sorry to say by Suicide.

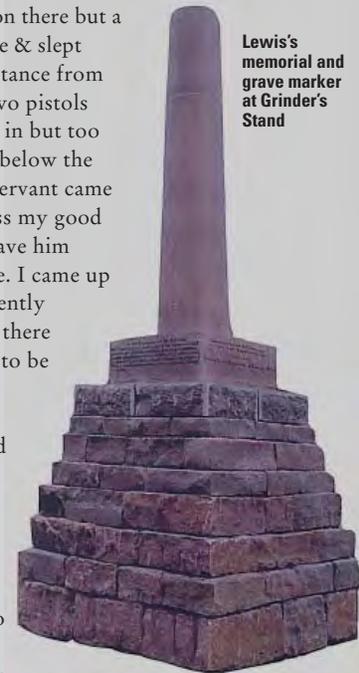
I arrived at the Chickasaw Bluffs on or about the 18th of September, where I found the Governor (who had reached there two days before me from St. Louis) in very bad health. It appears that his first intention was to go by water to the City of Washington: but his thinking a war with England probable, & that his valuable papers might be in danger of falling into the hands of the British, he was thereby induced to Change his route, and to come through the Chickasaw nation by land; I furnished him with a horse to pack his trunks &c. on, and a man to attend to them; having recovered his health in some digree at the Chickasaw Bluffs, we set out together. And on our arrival at the Chickasaw nation I discovered that he appeared at times deranged in mind. We rested there two days & came on. One days Journey after crossing Tennessee River & where we encamped we lost two of our horses. I remained behind to hunt them & the Governor proceeded on, with a promise to wait for me at the first houses he came to that was inhabited by white people; he reached the house of a Mr. Grinder, about sun set, the man of the house being from home, and no person there but a woman who discovering the governor to be deranged, gave him up the house & slept herself in one near it. His servant and mine slept in the stable loft some distance from the other houses. The woman reports that about three o'clock she heard two pistols fire off in the Governors Room: the servants being awakened by her, came in but too late to save him. He had shot himself in the head with one pistol & a little below the

"The woman reports that . . . she heard two pistols fire off in the Governors Room: the servants being awakened by her, came in but too late to save him."

Breast with the other—when his servant came in he says: I have done the business my good Servant give me some water. He gave him water, he survived but a short time. I came up some time after, & had him as decently Buried as I could in that place—if there is any thing wished by his friends to be done to his grave I will attend to those Instructions.

I have got in my possession his two trunks of papers (amongst which is said to be his travels to the pacific Ocean) and probably some Vouchers for expenditures of Public Money for a Bill which he said had been protested by the Secy. of War; and of which act to his death, he repeatedly complained. I have also in my Care his Rifle, Silver watch, Brace of Pistols, dirk & tomahawk; one of the Governors horses was lost in the wilderness which I will endeavour to regain, the other I have sent on by his servant who expressed a desire to go to the governors Mothers & to Montic[e]llo: I have furnished him with fifteen Dollar to Defray his expences to Charlottesville. Some days previous to the Governors death, he requested of me in case any accident happened to him, to send his trunks with the papers therein to the President, but I think it very probable he meant to you. I wish to be informed what arraignments may be considered best in sending on his trunks &c. I have the honor to be with Great respect Yr Ob. Svt.

James Neelly
U.S. agent to the Chickasaw Nation



Lewis's memorial and grave marker at Grinder's Stand

COURTESY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Source: Donald Jackson, *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854*, 2 vols. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), Vol. 2, pp. 467-68.



161

NAMING THE ANIMALS

The captains' nomenclature for species they discovered can both clarify and confuse

BY KENNETH C. WALCHECK

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark have been called linguistic pioneers for their inventive use of the English language. Over the course of their 28-month expedition to the Pacific and back, the captains and other journal keepers coined more than a thousand words to describe what they saw. Many of their linguistic innovations were applied to animals.¹

The adaptability of a language relates to its versatility, and few languages are more versatile than English, which over many centuries has added and discarded many thousands of words. Adding a new word requires a need for it, a creative person to come up with it, and a willingness on the part of others to use it. The need usually arises in response to something new in the culture or environment. The Corps of Discovery passed through a variety of habitats teeming with mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish unknown to science. Lewis and his fellow explorers were scrupulous about following Thomas Jef-

erson's instructions to note "the animals of the country generally, & especially those not known in the U.S."²

Because language evolves, many of their animal descriptions sound quaint or downright mysterious to today's readers. We scratch our heads at terms like "ternspit dog" and "Brister blue shot," but in using them to describe, respectively, a badger and a species of ground squirrel Lewis was confident that most readers of his day would know what he was talking about. Ditto for "Louservia," "moonax," "braro," and "dommanicker"—his terms, respectively, for a bobcat, marmot, badger, and breed of domestic fowl. The often inconsistent and garbled spelling of such terms makes deciphering them a challenge, but it also adds a certain seasoning to the journals that can make for delightful reading. Those up to the challenge should come prepared with a good dictionary and scholarly texts. Footnotes in publications such as editor Gary M. Moulton's 13-volume *Journals of the Lewis & Clark*

Expedition and Paul Russell Cutright's *Lewis and Clark: Pioneering Naturalists* can ease but not entirely eliminate the burden of linguistic sleuthing.³

Such efforts enrich our experience of Lewis and Clark and are well worth the effort. As scholar and essayist Albert Furtwangler suggests, the names applied by Lewis and Clark to what they saw was part of the unique language of discovery.⁴ Embracing their language makes it easier for us to see that lost world through their eyes.

The captains sometimes based animal names on a creature's color or anatomy or its call or behavior. They often borrowed or adapted existing names from French, Spanish, and Indian languages. Although Lewis wasn't classically educated, he occasionally slipped a Latin word into his descriptions.

Surprisingly, Lewis often described a specimen at length—his anatomical notes can go on for pages—but declined to name it. Perhaps he figured that an accurate field description sufficed and to avoid possible confusion decided to leave the naming to professional taxonomists. (Or maybe he felt too close to the subject. Sometimes you need some distance. I recall one of my favorite geysers in Yellowstone National Park. Looking into the caldron from the observation platform, you can see, smell, and hear a pulsating pool that at regular intervals erupts in sulfur-laden steam. The cavernous crater with its algae-green rocks and flashing tongue of steam is called the Dragon's Mouth. The name is perfect, but it's not one that I, immersed in the details of this scene of excitement and wonder, could likely have coined—at least not on the spot, when seeing it for the first time.)

Lewis was a “natural” when it came to describing the natural world, and he took to the task with enthusiasm. His pre-expedition crash course in natural science under Benjamin Smith Barton, Caspar Wistar, and others sharpened his observational skills and acquainted him with the system of Latin-based binomial classification developed in 1758 by Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus. He was also familiar with Jefferson's extensive library on natural history and carried with him on the expedition a number of scientific references that employed the Linnaean system.⁵ It is perplexing, therefore, why Lewis didn't make use of Latin binomials and relied instead on common or colloquial names. His reluctance to adopt Linnaeus may reflect the fact that at the time, few naturalists in the United States fully endorsed the system's advantages.⁶

Following is a sampling of some of the names Lewis and Clark applied to the animals—mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, and fishes—found along the trail.

MAMMALS



Moonax, moonox, monax — Most likely the yellow-bellied marmot, *Marmota flaviventris*, as the species observation falls into the geographic range for the observation dates mentioned in the journals. The term monax is a variant of a Virginia Algonquian word and also the binomial species name for the related woodchuck, *Marmota monax*.⁷

- Lewis, April 24, 1806: “Saw ... a Moonax which the natives had tamed.” Observed by Lewis above the mouth of the John Day River, Klickitat County, Washington.
- Lewis, August 20, 1805: “I have also observed some robes among them of ... Moonox.” Noted by Lewis among the Shoshone Indians on the Lemhi River, in eastern Idaho.



Braroe, brarow, brar, cho-car-tooch — badger, *Taxidea taxus*.

- Clark at Fort Mandan, January 19, 1805: “2 of our hunters came in — had killed 4 deer, 4 wolves, and one brarow[.] 2 men who belonged to the n.w. Company that trades with the grossvanntares [Gros Ventres] villages came to our fort this day—they told us that these animals we called Brarows are a Specie of Badgers, which are common in Europe.”
- Lewis at Fort Clatsop, February 26, 1806: “the *Braro* so called by the French engages is an animal of the civit ge-

nus and much resembles the common badger. this is an inhabitant of the open plains of the Columbia as they are of those of the Missouri but are sometimes also found in the woody country. ... the forelegs [are] remarkably large and muscular and are formed like the ternspit dog.”

“Brarow” is from the French *blaireau* and the Pawnee word *chhkatu*.⁸ Lewis’s reference to a “ternspit dog” is at first puzzling. You won’t find this term listed in the dictionary without correcting Lewis’s spelling. A *turnspit* dog was a small dog placed on a treadmill to turn a spit for roasting meat. Lewis used the same term in his description of the fisher (a.k.a. “black fox”) on February 21, 1806. Its legs, he noted, were “short and formed something like the ter-spit dog.”

Louservia, loucirvia, tyger cat — bobcat, *Lynx rufus*.

• Clark at Fort Mandan, December 12, 1804: “I line my gloves and have a cap made of the Skin of the Louservia.”⁹

• Lewis at Fort Clatsop, February 21, 1806: “The tyger cat is found on the borders of the plains and in the woody country lying along the Pacific Ocean.”

In *The Natural History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, Raymond Burroughs mentions that “Louservia” was a “corruption” of *loup cervier*, the French name for a related species, the Canadian lynx, *Lynx canadensis*.¹⁰

Ibex, bighorn animal, anamale with circular horns, argalia — Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, *Ovis canadensis*.

• Clark, July 4, 1806: “On the side of the Hill near the place where we dined [we] saw a gangue of Ibex or bighorn Animals[.] I shot at them running and missed.”

Goat, cabrie, antelope — pronghorn, *Antilocapra americana*.

• Clark, September 20, 1804: “R. Fields killed a Deer & 2 goats ... None of these goats has any beard, they are all keenly made, and is butifull.”

Coronado and other early explorers called pronghorns

goats, and the same term was commonly used by trappers and hunters after the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Lewis preferred the term antelope, and Clark most commonly used goat or cabrie in his journal entries.



Seweel — aplodontia or mountain beaver, *Aplodontia rufa*.

• Lewis, February 26, 1806: “Seweel is the Chinook and Clatsop name for a small animal in the timbered country on the coast.”

Lewis and Clark did not directly observe any mountain beaver, a species unrelated to the common beaver, *Castor canadensis*. Lewis’s description was based on brief observations made by other expedition members and from the examination of dressed skins obtained from the Indians.¹¹

The aplodontia is considered the most primitive of living rodents. The term “seweel” is from the Chinookian word *swalál*, “robe of mountain beaver skins.”¹²



Whistling squirrel, burrowing squirrel — Columbian ground squirrel, *Spermophilus columbianus*.

• Clark, May 23, 1806: “Labeich also brought a whistling squirrel which he had killed.”

• Lewis, May 27, 1806: “there is a species of Burrowing squirrel common in these plains.”

Barking squirrel, ground rat, burrowing squirrel — Black-tailed prairie dog, *Cynomys ludovicianus*.

• Clark, September 11, 1804: “saw a village of Barking squriel.”

• Clark, September 7, 1804: “Killed a Dark rattle Snake near with a ground rat in him.”

• Lewis, June 5, 1805: “we saw the largest collection of the burrowing or barking squirrels that we have ever yet seen.”



Black fox, pekan — fisher, *Martes pennanti*.

• Lewis, February 21, 1806: “Drewyer say a fisher, black

fox, but it escaped from him among the fallen timber.”

Notwithstanding Lewis's term “fox,” the fisher is a member of the weasel family. In his list of animals involved in the Sioux-British fur trade Clark uses the term “pekan,” which derives from an Indian name.¹³



Rat — bushy-tailed woodrat, *Neotoma cinerea* [pictured, top of page 26].

• Lewis, February, 26, 1806: “the Rat in the rocky mountains on its west side are like those on the upper part of the Missouri in and near these Mountains and ... [possesses] a tail covered with hair like the other parts of the body.”

Brister blue shot — 13-lined ground squirrel, *Spermophilus tridecemlineatus*.

• Lewis, July 8, 1805, at the Great Falls of the Missouri: “the men also brought me a living ground squirrel which is something larger than those of the U’ States or those of that kind which are also common here. this is a much hadsome anamal ... marked longitudinally with a much greater number of black or dark bro[w]n stripes; the spaces between which is marked by ranges of pure white circular spots, about the size of a brister blue shot.”



The term “brister blue shot” refers to the kind of shell shot that we would call BB shot. The word “brister” possibly refers to Bristol, England, which was known for its metallurgical industries.¹⁴

BIRDS

Duchanmallard, duckanmallard — mallard duck, *Anas platyrhynchos*.

• Lewis, July, 29, 1805: “the duckanmallard were first seen on the 20th inst. And I forgot to note it.”

Leather-winged bat, goatsucker

— common night-hawk, *Chordeiles minor*.

• Lewis, June 30, 1805: “I have not seen the leather-



winged bat for some time nor is there any of the small goatsuckers in this quarter of the country.”

“Goatsucker” is a European folklore name for birds of the nightjar (*Caprimulgidae*) family. It originates from an erroneous belief that the birds were thought to suck at the udders of goats, causing them to go blind.

Calumet eagle, calumet bird — golden eagle, *Aquila chrysaetos*.

• Lewis, March 11, 1806:

“I have some reasons to believe that the Calumet eagle is sometimes found on this side of the Rocky Mountains from the information of the Indians in whose possession I have seen their plumage.”



The term calumet refers to a full-grown but immature golden eagle (i.e., not yet in adult plumage). The tail feathers near the rump end are white and display a broad dark terminal band. Adult tail feathers, in contrast, are brown and banded throughout. The immature feathers were used to decorate Indian calumets, or ceremonial pipes.

Buffalo-pecker, buffalo picker — brown-headed cowbird, *Molothrus ater*.

• Lewis, July 13, 1806: “killed a buffaloe picker a beautifull bird.”

The explorers undoubtedly observed cowbirds alighting on the backs of bison to pick ticks or other insects infesting their hides. This is presumably the bird Lewis refers to here, although few observers besides Lewis would think of a cowbird, a drab black-and-brown species, as beautiful.



Cock of the plains, mountain cock, heath cock, prairie cock — sage grouse, *Centrocercus urophasianus*.

• Lewis, March 2, 1806: “the Cock of the Plains is found in the plains of the Columbia and are in Great abundance from the entrance of the S.E. fork of the Columbia to that of Clark’s river.”

As the name suggests, sage grouse are found in sagebrush country. They live in the foothills in summer and

on the plains in winter. During courtship displays the strutting males reveal a pair of large yellow breast patches.

The explorers also encountered three other grouse species—the spruce, blue, and ruffed grouse. When describing them they indiscriminately used the term “pheasant.” The ring-necked pheasant, *Phasianus colchicus*, is an Asian species imported to Europe and then to United States; both Lewis and Clark were familiar with it. Americans on the Eastern Seaboard also referred to the ruffed grouse as a pheasant.

Lewis’s journal entry of March 3, 1806, written at Fort Clatsop, provides a lengthy description of the spruce grouse. For comparative purposes he uses the terms “dunghill fowl” and “dommanicker.” The dunghill fowl was a typical barnyard rooster and the dommanicker refers to a breed of domestic fowl with a red comb, yellow legs, and grayish barred plumage. The birds were bred on the French West Indies island of Dominique.

Log cock — pileated woodpecker, *Dryocopus pileatus*

• Lewis, March 4, 1806: “large woodpecker or log cock ... are the same with those of the Atlantic states and are found exclusively in the timbered country.”

Except for the probably extinct ivory-billed woodpecker, the pileated woodpecker is North America’s largest woodpecker. It is about the size of a crow, with a large crest (red in the males), and is found in mixed or deciduous forests throughout the East and in the Pacific Northwest.



REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

Reptiles and amphibians received little attention from the expedition members. One exception was the rattlesnake. The “rattle Snake” (Clark’s spelling) is mentioned

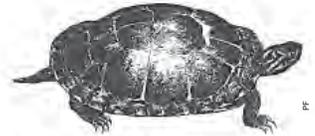
in 28 journal entries. The captains also described the hog-nosed snake, *Heterodon nasicus*, and a garter snake (in the genus *Thamnophis*) but did not assign them names. Lewis applied descriptive names to the “horned lizard” (now known as the short-horned lizard, *Phrynosoma douglassii*); the “water lizard” (California newt, *Taricha torosa*); and a “water terrapin” they observed in the Great Falls area on July 25, 1805. It was most likely a painted turtle, *Chrysemys picta*.



hog-nosed snake



short-horned lizard



painted turtle

FISHES

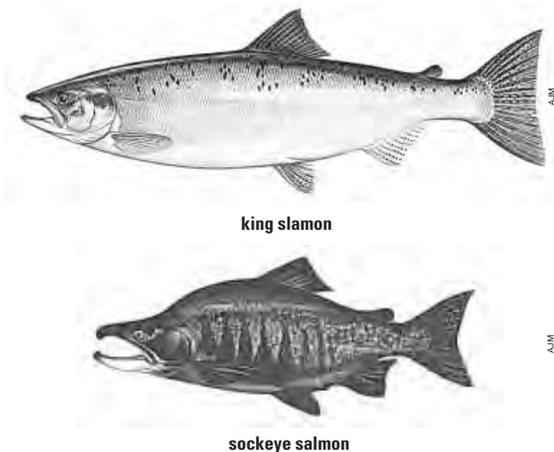
Lewis wrote a number of detailed descriptions of fishes that were new to science. Sometimes he assigned a name and other times he left that for the professional naturalists who would be poring over his descriptions after the expedition’s return. He did not assign names to two species well known to Rocky Mountain anglers today, the cutthroat trout, *Oncorhynchus clarki* (later named for William Clark), and the Arctic grayling, *Thymallus arcticus*. The captains described three of the five North American species of Pacific salmon and the closely related steelhead trout, which like salmon breeds in fresh water but spends most of its life in the ocean.

Common salmon — king salmon, Chinook salmon, *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*.

Red charr — sockeye salmon, *Oncorhynchus nerka*.

• Lewis, March 13, 1806: “the common salmon and red charr are the inhabitants of both the sea and rivers. the former is usually largest and weighs from 5 to 15 lbs. ... The red Charr are rather broader in proportion to their length than the common salmon. ... some of them are almost entirely red on the belly and sides; others are much more white than the salmon and none of them are variegated with the dark spots which [mark] the body of the other.”

The king salmon is the largest of the Pacific salmon, reaching 40 pounds or more. As Lewis noted, the smaller sockeye salmon turns bright red on its spawning run.



king salmon

sockeye salmon

White salmon trout — silver salmon, coho salmon, *Oncorhynchus kisutch*.

- Lewis, March 16, 1806: “the white Salmon trout which we had previously seen only at the great falls of the Columbia has now made it’s appearance.”

The silver or coho salmon is the second-largest Pacific salmon and may reach 20 pounds or more. Its spawning run occurs about a month later than the king salmon’s.

Salmon trout — steelhead trout, *Oncorhynchus mykiss*.

- Lewis, March 13, 1806: “the Salmon Trout are seldom more than two feet in length they are narrow in proportion to their length, at least much more so than the Salmon or red charr.”

The steelhead is closely related to the rainbow trout; they are both native to the Pacific watersheds of North America from Alaska to central California. Their spawning runs occur in summer, fall, or winter, depending on rivers and particular subspecies. Lewis’s description notwithstanding, some rivers produce steelhead 36 or more inches in length. Steelhead are also found on the Kamchatka Peninsula, in Siberia.

Bottlenose — longnose or northern sucker, *Catostomus catostomus*.

- Lewis, August 3, 1805, : “The fish of this part of the river are trout and a species of scale fish of a while [white] colour and a remarkable small long mouth which one of

our men inform us are the same with the species called in the Eastern states *bottlenose*.”

Lewis wrote this description while ascending the Beaverhead River in present Madison County, Montana. In his journal entry for August 19, 1805, he describes catching cutthroat trout and suckers in a seine he and several of the men fashioned from willow brush. This time he refers to the sucker as a “mullet” and notes that its taste “is by no means as good as the trout.”

Foundation member Ken Walcheck, a wildlife biologist and outdoorsman, lives in Bozeman, Montana. Now retired, he spent 21 years with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

NOTES

1 Elijah H. Criswell, “Lewis and Clark: Linguistic Pioneers,” *University of Missouri Studies*, 1940, Vol. 15, No. 2, p. 32.

2 Donald Jackson, ed., *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854*, 2 Vols. (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1978), “Jefferson’s Instructions to Lewis,” June 20, 1803, Vol. 1, p. 63.

3 Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition*, 13 volumes (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984-2001); all quotations or references to journal entries in the ensuing text are from Moulton, by date, unless otherwise indicated. Paul Russell Cutright, *Lewis and Clark: Pioneering Naturalists* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969).

4 Albert Furtwangler, *Acts of Discovery: Visions of America in the Lewis and Clark Journals* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), p. 170.

5 Cutright, p. 25. The volumes in Lewis’s field library included *An Illustration of the Termini Botanici of Linnaeus*, *Elements of Botany*; *Elements of Botany and Outlines of Natural History of Vegetables*; *A New and Complete Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences*; and *An Illustration of the Sexual System of Linnaeus*.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 386.

7 Moulton, Vol. 5, p. 131n.

8 *Ibid.*, Vol. 8, p. 203n.

9 It is possible that by “Louservia” Lewis meant the Canadian lynx, although that species is not known to inhabit North Dakota today.

10 Raymond Darwin Burroughs, ed., *The Natural History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1961), p. 92.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 118-19.

12 Moulton, Vol. 6, p. 355n.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 73.

14 Moulton, Vol. 4, p. 368n, and personal communication with the author.

Key to illustration credits:
A.J.M.: A.J. McClane, *McClane’s New Fishing Encyclopedia and International Angling Guide* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974)
J.G.I.: James Gordon Irving, from Herbert S. Zim and Donald F. Hoffmeister, *Mammals: A Guide to Familiar American Species* (Golden Press, 1955)
J.J.A.: John James Audubon
P.F.: Laurence Palmer and Seymour Fowler, *Fieldbook of Natural History* (McGraw-Hill, 1949)
S.Z.S.: Su Zen Noguichi Swain, from Herbert S. Zim, *The Rocky Mountains* (Golden Press, 1964)

Vardis Fisher: Meriwether Lewis's contentious partisan

Rediscovering Vardis Fisher: Centennial Essays

Joseph M. Flora (ed.)
University of Idaho Press
254 pages / \$34.95 hardcover

Vardis Fisher was a historical novelist best known for his tales of the American West. His books include *Tale of Valor* (1958), a novel about the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He also wrote the nonfiction book *Suicide or Murder? The Strange Death of Meriwether Lewis* (1962), an exhaustive analysis of the testimony surrounding Lewis's demise, at Grinder's Stand, on October 11, 1809.

Rediscovering Vardis Fisher: Centennial Essays is a collection of 12 articles on the life and art of the man called by its editor, Joseph M. Flora, "Idaho's most important writer." Readers of *WPO* will be most interested in the essay by John D.W. Guice, "Fisher and Meriwether Lewis." Guice, who is represented in this issue of *WPO* ("Meriwether Lewis and Moonlight," pp. 21-25), champions the view that Lewis was probably murdered—a conclusion that Fisher also reached and defended tenaciously.

In the first part of his essay Guice focuses on *Tale of Valor*. Because Fisher "did not frame this book around a contrived plot" but stuck to the facts as revealed in the Lewis and Clark journals, he considers it "the first successful novelization" of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, comparable "in its mastery of the sources and insights into the characters" of Ethel Hueston's *Star of the West* (1935) and superior to two other predecessors, Emerson Hough's *The Magnificent Adventure* (1916) and Donald Culross Peattie's *Forward the Nation* (1942). He points out that Fisher's much-criticized treatment of Indians—paternalistic at best and racist at worst—accurately reflected the views of the captains themselves.



Vardis Fisher

Most of Guice's essay concerns *Suicide or Murder?*, and whether you believe Lewis took his own life or was the victim of murder or assassination, it is a thorough review of Fisher's arguments. It is also a useful reminder (especially to those, like this reviewer, who believe that the preponderance of evidence supports suicide) that the case is complex and probably unresolvable—Fisher himself admitted that "in all fairness to the evidence ... we still don't know how he died." That qualification notwithstanding, Fisher appears to have had little doubt that the man he regarded "the greatest American of his breed" was a victim of foul play. Guice believes that Fisher's research "was the most thorough ever done on the topic and that he was, indeed, scrupulous in every sense of the word." Fisher examined and found wanting the arguments that Lewis was unable to deal with the pressures of his job as governor of Louisiana, that his finances were any more precarious than those of other people in similar positions of author-

ity at the time, or that he suffered from emotional exhaustion. He cast a hard light on the conflict between Lewis and his willful subordinate, Frederick Bates, and questioned the character of James Neelly, the Indian agent who accompanied Lewis on his overland route and was the first to report on his death. Fisher placed more stock than most historians do in the view, supported by oral histories of the Natchez Trace, that Lewis was murdered by either Neelly or the Grinders.

Fisher was particularly critical of Thomas Jefferson's assertion that Lewis killed himself, and he wasn't afraid to tangle with historians loath to question any statement by the Sage of Monticello. Guice thinks the root of Fisher's problem was his challenge of preeminent scholars such as Julian Boyd, whom he charged with having "an idolatrous attitude toward Jefferson," and the esteemed Donald Jackson, the editor of the two-volume *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (1978). Guice recounts these tête-à-têtes in considerable detail and asserts that Fisher's lack of standing as a historian (he held a Ph.D., but it was in literature) prejudiced later scholars against him. A bigger problem may have been Fisher's contentious nature—Flora suggests that in his later years he became "a curmudgeon increasingly out of touch with the realities of the twentieth century." It is clear that he was a gadfly who enjoyed pricking egos.

Finally, Guice offers a thorough summary of the controversial efforts by James E. Starrs, a professor at George Washington University, to exhume Lewis's remains. He notes that Starrs has been rebuffed so far by the National Park Service, which has jurisdiction over Grinder's Stand, and may yet take the matter in court. "If he prevails," writes Guice, "and if skeletal remains exist as predicted, Fisher's question may well be answered [and] Vardis Fisher will have had the last laugh."

—J. I. Merritt

Explorations that are also moral tales rich in ambiguity and complexity

Finding the West: Explorations with Lewis and Clark

James P. Ronda

University of New Mexico Press
160 pages / \$22.95 hardcover

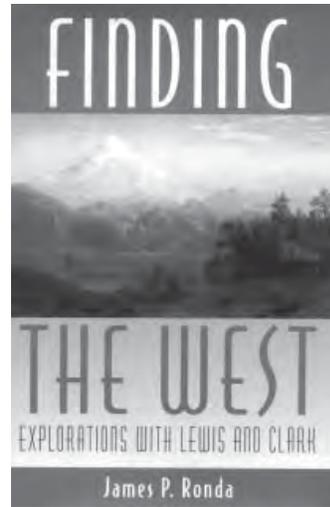
In his new collection of essays, *Finding the West: Explorations with Lewis and Clark* (New Mexico), James Ronda quotes the Italian novelist Italo Calvino's remark that "a classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say."

The journey of Lewis and Clark is such a book, and no one has gleaned more insight and meaning from it than Ronda himself. His *Lewis and Clark among the Indians* (Nebraska, 1984) is a contemporary classic. More recently, Ronda has edited two collections of essays—*Thomas Jefferson and the Changing West* (Missouri Historical Society, 1997), *Voyages of Discovery: Essays on the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Montana, 1998)—and written a monograph, *Jefferson's West* (Monticello, 2000), that continue to bring his uniquely fresh vision to a story that is nearly 200 years old.

The seven essays in this slender volume return to some of Ronda's familiar themes: the misconceptions Jefferson held about the West, an insistence on equal footing for Native American stories, and a vision of the country Lewis and Clark traveled not as an empty wilderness but as a place crowded with peoples and politics.

Three essays previously published elsewhere have been brought into this collection, and we should be glad for it. In "A Moment in Time: The West—September, 1806" Ronda brilliantly details the activities of the many change agents of empire jostling for power in what happened to be the same month of the expedition's return to St. Louis. Here are dreamers and schemers like Burr, Wilkinson, Pike, Astor, Lisa—as well as stories of less-

Ronda is no sentimentalist, describing Lewis as a "brash, brooding and often quite unpleasant young man."



familiar expeditions led by the doomed Russian explorer Nikolai Rezanov and the mysterious American trader John McClellan.

In "The Promise of Rivers" we meet a myopic Thomas Jefferson who imagines western rivers must be broad navigable thoroughfares of commerce like the James, Potomac, and Delaware and cannot imagine the great freestone streams like the Yellowstone, Snake, and Colorado. Ronda argues that Jefferson must have similarly envisioned the Rockies as nonthreatening western versions of his beloved Blue Ridge, offering no obstacles to a traveler worse than a single day's portage. (Left unsaid are what lessons Jefferson may have drawn from reading Alexander Mackenzie's account of his voyage through the Canadian Rockies or, for that matter, Jefferson's own ascent of

the Alps over the 7000-foot Col de Tende in 1787.) And "Cowboy's Tale" gives both poignancy and pathos to the loyal Clatsop chief who assisted Lewis and Clark at the mouth of the Columbia, only to find his people brushed aside by the captains and then by history.

Ronda is no sentimentalist, describing Meriwether Lewis as a "brash, brooding and often quite unpleasant young man" and objecting to those who characterize the Voyage of Discovery as a "manly adventure" of triumphant nationalism. The stories Ronda tells here—and asks us to contemplate—are moral tales, often disturbing and rich in ambiguity and complexity. Ronda's achievement is that, once you have read him, you will never look at Lewis and Clark the same way—or even one way—again.

—Landon Y. Jones

Folk-country blend captures L&C spirit

"We proceeded on" was first a phrase, then a magazine, and now a music CD. And, a wonderful CD it is, created by a couple of friends who have an obvious chemistry. Dan Thomasma and Terry Yazzolino have a lot in common. They are both interested in history and Native American culture, teachers by profession, natural storytellers, and musically talented.

The origin of their CD goes back to before the U.S. Mint released the new Sacagawea coin. Readers may recognize Dan's last name—he is the son of Kenneth Thomasma, who was a teacher himself and is the author of *The Truth about Sacajawea*. Ken was involved with the mint's design-selection process for the Sacagawea coin. Dan shares his father's interests in Sacagawea and wrote a song entitled *Ballad of Sacajawea*. To debut the song and celebrate the release of the new coin, Terry and

Dan organized a big event at Kelly Elementary School in Grand Teton National Park. They invited students, the U.S. Mint, and representatives from local tribes to a large pow-wow. After this successful venture, Terry and Dan decided to write a suite of Lewis and Clark-related songs, with Dan concentrating on the music and Terry on the lyrics. They wanted their songs to be educational and entertaining, but rather than writing about dates and details, they strove to capture the spirit of the adventure, the awe of experiencing the vastness of America, and the shared amazement in the encounters between the disparate European and Native American cultures.

There are 10 songs on the CD, all easy listening, mostly folk and (non-twangy) country, but they include a nice variety of tunes that give the whole compilation a pleasing texture. The first song, *Ballad of Sacajawea*, features Dan's talents with the harmonica, some nice vocal harmonies, and the fiddle work of Shelley Clark Rubrecht, a previous winner of the Women's National Fiddle Championship. The next song, *Walk in Beauty*, is a lullaby for Pomp. It is a lilting tune featuring the sweet voice of Judith Edelman, a Nashville recording artist. The third song is entitled *Rough and Tumble Lads* and reminds us of what it took to be a member of the Corps of Discovery.

This is followed by *John Colter*, a tribute to one of the corps's best men, whose future exploits would make him a legend of the early fur trade. This fourth song features Ben Winship on the mandolin. Ben also recorded, mixed, and mastered all the tracks on the CD at his studio in Victor, Idaho. Dan's daughter, Melissa, wrote *Dog Song* at age 14. You can tell this whole extended family knows, loves, and lives the story of Lewis and Clark. The CD derives its name from the chorus of the



sixth song, *River of the Setting Sun*, which repeats the words "We proceeded on, Down the river of the setting sun."

The seventh song, *Coyote's American Dream*, tells a mythical creation story and features a jazzy interlude. It is followed by the album's only all-instrumental piece. It is titled *O the Joy! Ocean in Sight*. To me, rather than portraying the initial excitement of reaching the Pacific, it better depicts the quieter, reflective moments that must have followed almost immediately. Lewis and Clark led the way to the opening of the West, and the ninth song, *Teton Waltz*, is a tribute to the history of the awesomely beautiful area in which Dan and Terry are fortunate enough to live. The final song, *Spirit of Adventure*, speaks to the future and lets us all know that adventures can still happen.

This CD is obviously a labor of love. Dan and Terry have performed these tunes locally and are hopeful that they can make presentations along more of the trail during the bicentennial years.

—Jay Rasmussen

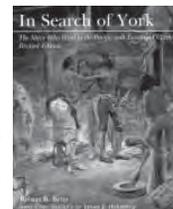
The CD *We Proceeded On* is available in various museum and interpretive center gift shops along the trail for about \$15. It can also be ordered from Grandview Publishing, P.O. Box 2863, Jackson, WY 83001, 800-525-7344.

In Brief: York, Philly, Middle Mo, Sacagawea

• *In Search of York: The Slave Who Went to the Pacific with Lewis and Clark, Revised Edition*, by Robert B. Betts, with a new epilogue by James J. Holmberg. First published in 1985 and long out of print, this is the only full-length scholarly biography of the sole African-American member of the Corps of Discovery. York, William Clark's manservant, proved a valuable hand on the expedition and added to the explorers' ethnic mix—something no one would have thought about at the time, of course, but to modern readers

one of the most appealing features of the Lewis and Clark saga. This new edition, copublished by the University Press of Colorado and the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, is as splendidly handsome as the first, with the same appealing layout and wealth of illustrations, both black-and-white and color, but it is the 19-page epilogue by James Holmberg which makes it an essential publication for any serious student of western exploration. Holmberg brings Betts's scholarship up to date with information culled from letters, discovered in the early 1990s, between William Clark and his brother Jonathan relating to York's post-expedition life. That sad story—of Clark's ill treatment of his faithful servant and his reluctance to grant him freedom—is well known to readers of WPO and Stephen Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage*, and it belongs in any definitive study of York's life. [\$39.95. Available through book stores. Listed at \$27.96 on Amazon.com.]

• *Contributions of Philadelphia to Lewis and Clark History*, by Paul Russell Cutright, with site maps by Frank Muhly. This recent booklet, edited and published by the Philadelphia Chapter of the LCTHF, reviews the critical role played by the City of Brotherly Love in the fulfillment of Thomas Jefferson's continental vision. Philadelphia was the young republic's center of learning when Meriwether Lewis visited it in the spring of 1803 for his pre-expedition crash course in medicine, natural history, and celestial navigation, and it became the repository of most of the natural-history specimens and journals. It was in the nearby estate of Andalusia, too, that young Nicholas Biddle wrote the de facto official history of the expedition. The booklet, which updates one of the LCTHF's special publications, comes with an insert map showing Lewis and



Clark sites in Philadelphia. This is an invaluable publication for anyone planning to attend the Foundation's meeting in Philadelphia in August 2003. [\$17.94, pp. Available from the Philadelphia Chapter, LCTHF, 6010 Cannon Hill Rd., Fort Washington, PA 1902; www.lewisandclarkphila.org.]

• *Lewis and Clark on the Middle Missouri*, by Gary E. Moulton. The text by the editor of the 13-volume *Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition* is adapted from an article he initially wrote for *Nebraska History*. Published by the National Park Service, this 40-page booklet tells the Corps of Discovery's story between Floyds Bluff and the Niobrara River. Black-and-white photographs and maps. [\$4.95 plus postage. Available from Museum Store, NSHS, POB 82554, Lincoln, NE 68501; 402-472-3447.]

• *Bird Woman: Sacagawea's Own Story*, by James Willard Schultz. Schultz was a popular western writer of the early 20th century, and this is a modern edition of what, for practical purposes, was his novel about the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Schultz claimed the story was all fact as taken

from an old Mandan woman who as a child had known Sacagawea and listened to her tales about her great adventure to the



"Western sea." This edition begs for an introduction that summarizes contemporary scholarship about Sacagawea and provides a biographical sketch of Schultz (for that, check the introduction to Schultz's *Recently Discovered Tales of Life Among the Indians*, published in 1988 by Mountain Press).

Of course, Sacagawea's story long ago took on a life of its own. As a character in director John Ford's classic *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* put it, "This is the West, sir. When the fact becomes legend, print the legend." [\$11.95, paper. Available through book stores or from Mountain Meadow Press, 208-926-7579.]

—J.I.M.

Washington State
University Press
1/3rd square

FABULOUS POST-MEETING TOUR

AUGUST 1 - 4, 2002

PATRICK GASS ⌘ HIS LIFE IN WELLSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA
MERIWETHER LEWIS ⌘ DOWN THE OHIO RIVER IN 1803

Four days of great fun and great scholarship on the Ohio River

Led by Patrick Gass editor Carol Lynn MacGregor, we will spend a day touring recently-identified sites important to the old sergeant's long life in his hometown of Wellsburg. Then over two days we will return to Louisville along the historic Ohio River and learn the story of the voyage bringing men, equipment, and supplies down from Pittsburgh. Never before have LCTHF members been offered a trip to interpret these significant parts of the Lewis and Clark story.

Please join us immediately after the 2002 Louisville meeting for the Lewis and Clark trip of a lifetime! Cost is only \$475 per person double occupancy. Make your reservations now!

For more information and for reservations please see the flyer accompanying this issue of *We Proceeded On*. Or phone Tom Williams at 734-847-3042



FUTURE GIVING:

THE TIME IS NOW!

The dreadful events of “Nine Eleven” have prompted us to review our priorities and look closely at what we cherish. Naturally, we see first our families and personal contacts, but beyond that we cherish our great national heritage.

The Corps of Discovery is a significant part of that heritage. Not only was it a great voyage of exploration, it was also a great human drama. Recognition of its historical significance led to the establishment of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

We want to keep the story of Lewis and Clark alive and be good stewards of the Trail. For that, we need a strong Foundation — and a future gift is one way to keep our organization strong.

One advantage of a future gift is that it is made after all the needs of our lives have been met, when we’ve taken care of our loved ones and ourselves, and we can look beyond to the organization that does so much to protect a priceless heritage.

But future gifts need to be planned in advance. They come in many forms — some simple, like the bequest by will, and some complex, like the charitable trusts. In between are gifts of life insurance and charitable gift annuities. Many are tax-advantageous. We can select the kind that is best for us, but the time to act is now.

Do you have questions? Please contact the new LCTHF Executive Director, Carol Bronson, at 888-701-3434, or anyone on the Foundation’s Development Team. Let your future gift help us all be “Keepers of the Story, Stewards of the Trail”!

L&C Roundup

Bronson joins Foundation; Lewis memorial

All of us at the Foundation welcome Carol Bronson of Great Falls, Montana, as the new executive director of the LCTHF. Raised in Billings and a 1980 graduate in the humanities of the University of Oregon’s Honors College in Eugene, Oregon, she has been interested in the Lewis and Clark Expedition since visiting Pompeys Pillar as a child. She has been a member of the Foundation and the Portage Route Chapter since 1993.



Carol Bronson

Bronson has been active with a number of other citizen organizations, including the Montana Preservation Alliance and the Great Falls/Cascade County Historic Preservation Commission, which she serves as president. She has worked as a paralegal in Billings and Great Falls since 1982. She and her attorney husband, Bill, have two sons, Ben and Matt, ages 10 and five. Bronson replaces Cari Karns, who left at the end of December after her husband, an Air Force officer, was transferred to California.

LEWIS MONUMENT REDEDICATED

In ceremonies on a rainy October 11, 2001, the National Park Service rededicated the Meriwether Lewis National Monument on the Natchez Trace Parkway near Hohenwald, Tennessee. The Lewis grave marker, erected in 1848, was recently restored for the upcoming Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. Events of the day—the 192nd anniversary of the explorer’s death—included a rifle salute, the laying of a memorial wreath, and patriotic music, all courtesy of units of the 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Among the featured speakers were LCTHF President Jane



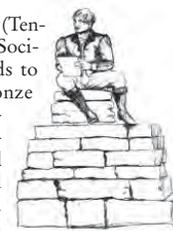
Monument during refurbishment

PEGGY SCHREIBER/ALU

Henley, a collateral descendant of Lewis, and Wendell Simpson, the Natchez Trace Parkway superintendent, who praised Lewis for his life and contributions to history. Otis Half Moon of Nez Perce National Park in Spalding, Idaho, reminded those present of the expedition’s impact on Native Americans and the critical role played by Indians in the expedition’s success. He called for a time of healing while also praising the beauty of the Tennessee countryside and the hospitality enjoyed on his visit: “It’s the first time I’ve ever eaten brains and eggs and it’s also the first time I’ve seen a bologna sandwich on a menu.”

LEWIS STATUE

The Lewis County (Tennessee) Historical Society is raising funds to commission a bronze statue of Meriwether Lewis [inset] to be placed atop the original stones that covered his grave from 1848 until its refurbishment in 2000, when the stones were removed and reassembled in their original position on the grounds of the Lewis County Museum. The sculptor will be Richard Hallier of Booneville, North Carolina. His work will depict Lewis writing in his journal while gazing westward. To inquire further, write to the Lewis County Historical Society, P.O. Box 703, Hohenwald, TN 38462.



MONTICELLO TRAIL SITE

Monticello is now an official site on the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. A plaque designating Thomas Jefferson’s hilltop home near Charlottesville, Virginia, as part of the trail was presented by the National Park Service to Daniel P. Jordan, president of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Monticello’s owner, in ceremonies there on January 16. “Monticello is the place where Jefferson’s dream of exploring the West began. To recognize his home as an official site is long overdue,” said Gerard Baker, the National Park Service official who oversees the trail. Of more than 80 official sites

AMBROSE TOURS
1 PAGE

L&C TRAIL
ADVENTURES
1/3rd square

WPO DISPLAY ADS

Inside front or back cover:
Black & white, \$650; color, \$750
Outside back cover:
Black & white, \$800; color, \$900

Inside pages (black & white only):
Full page: 7¹/₄ X 9¹/₂ \$600
2/3rd vertical: 4³/₄ X 9¹/₂ \$400
1/2 horizontal: 7¹/₄ X 4³/₈ \$300
1/3rd square: 4³/₄ X 4³/₈ \$200
1/3rd vertical: 2¹/₄ X 9¹/₂ \$200
1/6th vertical: 2¹/₄ X 4³/₈ \$100
1/12th: 2¹/₄ X 2³/₁₆ \$50

Address inquiries to Rebecca Young,
P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, MT
59403. 406-454-1234/fax:406-771-
9237 membership@lewisandclark.org.

Fine Art Prints
L&C Expedition

Prints of the Lewis and Clark Expedition
(see cover) and other scenes of wildlife,
Western Americana, and aviation
subjects by Montana artist Larry Janoff.
Call 406-837-1122, e-mail yjanoff
@cyberport.net, or write 9055 Hwy. 35,
Bigfork, MT 59911.

CLASSIFIEDS

MISSOURI HEADWATERS. Float the
Jefferson River to the headwaters of the
Missouri. Using the journals and maps
of Lewis and Clark, we follow the river
routes and observe the landscape and
wildlife that the Corps of Discovery ex-
perienced. This non-whitewater float is
suitable for all ages and tailored to your
interests. Led by a professional interpre-
tive guide, we focus on natural and cul-
tural history. Yellowstone Safari Com-
pany, POB 42, Bozeman, MT 59771.
Toll-free: 866-586-1155. E-mail: info@
beyondyellowstone.com. Website:
www.yellowstonesafari.com.

BOOK: *The Mystery of Lost Trail Pass.*
\$12, \$2 shipping. Send check or money
order to: Lost Trail Book, POB 3434,
Great Falls, MT 59403; or call 1-888-
701-3434 with credit-card information.

CLASSIFIED RATES: 50 cents per word for
Foundation members, 75 cents for non-
members, \$10 min. Address = one
word. Send ads with payment to Jim
Merritt, Editor, WPO, 51 N. Main St.,
Pennington, NJ 08534.

L&C Roundup (cont.)

along the trail, Monticello is one of only
three—the other two are at Wood River,
Illinois, and the Falls of the Ohio—east
of the Mississippi.

RESTORATION OF SPIRIT MOUND

Spirit Mound, a 320-acre Lewis and Clark
site on the Missouri River sacred to Na-
tive Americans, was recently purchased
by the state of South Dakota and is now
being replanted with 24 species of prairie
grasses and wildflowers. Last spring a
farm at the base of the mound was re-
moved, and during the summer some 224
acres of former corn and soybean fields
were sown with seedlings of native flora.
Funds for the state's purchase came from
money raised by the Spirit Mound-Lewis
and Clark Trust and the National Park
Service. According to Tim Bjork, direc-
tor of the North Dakota Game, Fish and
Parks Foundation, the development of
the site will be "minimal," with a small
parking lot and a trail to the top of the
mound but no visitor center. The Corps
of Discovery passed what Clark called
this "place of Deavels" while going up-
river on August 24, 1804.

FORT MANDAN VISITOR CENTER

Various energy-related companies in
North Dakota are funding construction
of a visitor center at the replica of Fort
Mandan near Washburn, North Dakota.
According to Kristie Frieze, executive
director of the North Dakota Lewis &
Clark Bicentennial Foundation, the
building's design by the Salt Lake City
firm of Lloyd E. Platt and Associates is
inspired by a Mandan earth lodge and will
fit nicely into the fort's cottonwood set-
ting. Supporters of the project include the
Lignite Energy council, the MDU Re-
sources Group, Great River Energy, Ba-
sin Electric Power Cooperative, and Ot-
ter Tail Power Company. Construction
began last year and is scheduled for
completion in June.

L&C IN OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Scholar Albert Furtwangler provides a
fresh and somewhat skeptical perspec-
tive on the post-expedition life of
Pompey—Jean Baptiste Charbonneau—
in "Sacagawea's Son as a Symbol" and
"Sacagawea's Son: New Evidence from
Germany," articles published in the Fall
and Winter 2001 issues of *Oregon His-
torical Quarterly*. The first assays

St. Joseph ad

Advertisement

WASHINGTON
STATE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
1/3rd square

L&C Roundup (cont.)

Pomp's role in evolving cultural and historical interpretations of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, examining Jean Baptiste as "a person whose life story paints a moral or whose image serves mainly to focus feelings or attitudes about other subjects or ideas." The author reviews his subject's long and remarkable life, from Pomp's journey to the Pacific as an infant and toddler to his boyhood in St. Louis as a ward of William Clark to his later years as a traveling companion of Prince Paul of Württemberg, mountain man and guide, *alcalde* at San Luis Rey, and prospector. Furtwangler's look at the documentary evidence debunks the romantic assumptions of Grace Hebard, Ann and Leroy Hafen, and other writers drawn to such a storied and seemingly colorful figure. He concludes, for example, that Jean Baptiste's half-Indian heritage prevented both Clark and Prince Paul from treating him as an equal: Clark indeed saw to Pomp's education but never thought of him as an adopted son (the boy lived apart from the Clark family), while the Prince almost certainly looked upon him more as a valet than a friend. (*OHQ* back-issue sales: orhist@ohs.org; 503-306-5233).

L&C ON THE WEB

Readers should check out the LCTHF's revamped and expanded Website (www.lewisandclark.org), where they will find the latest on chapter doings, membership, merchandise, trail stewardship, the library, and how to order back issues of *WPO* and any of the Foundation's special publications. Trying to recall that article you read once in *WPO*? The site includes a listing by authors of all the magazine's articles; it can be downloaded and searched by topic.

The Website Discovering Lewis & Clark (www.lewis-clark.org) has begun a 12-part episode about Clark on the Yellowstone. A recent installment focuses on François-Antoine Larocque, a young Canadian who encountered the explorers at Fort Mandan. Viewers who click on the "Music on the Trail" button can compare video clips of Thomas Jefferson's violin playing with the fiddling of Pierre Cruzatte. There are also new items on the Douglas fir and Lewis's mysterious "artillery of the Rocky Mountains."

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

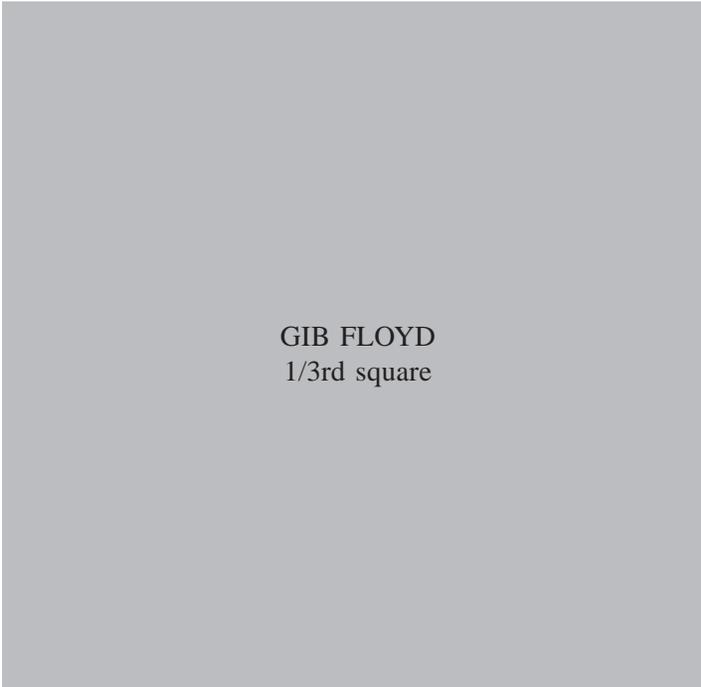
It's time for nominations for the annual LCTHF awards. They are:

- Award of Meritorious Achievement, for outstanding contributions in bringing to the country at large a greater awareness and appreciation of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.
- Distinguished Service Award, for outstanding contributions toward furthering the purpose and objectives of the LCTHF.
- Appreciation Award, in recognition of gracious support (deed, word, or funds) given to the Foundation in its endeavor to preserve and perpetuate the lasting historical legacy of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.
- Youth Achievement Award, in recognition of a person or group of persons under the age of 21 who have increased knowledge of the Lewis and Clark Expedition through outstanding composition, art, drama, photography, site preservation and enhancement, or other significant contributions.

The Distinguished Service Award may only be presented to a member of the Foundation. Nominations should include names and addresses and sufficient background information to assist the Awards Committee in its selection. They should be sent to Beverly Hinds, 3121 Grandview Blvd., Sioux City, IA 51104 (712-252-2364; bjhinds@pionet.net). Nominations for the Youth Achievement Award will be forwarded to the chairman of the Young Adults Committee. Nominations must be submitted by April 19.

FOR THE RECORD

Readers have brought our attention to three minor errors in the November 2001 WPO. The "Library of Congress on line" letter on pages 3-4 left out the hash marks in the Web address for the library's American Memory Collection (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammenmdbquery.html>). On page 14, the photo of the chronometer was incorrectly attributed to the Smithsonian Institution instead of to its actual owner, Dana J. Blackwell. On page 25, the last paragraph of endnote 1 of Robert Bergantino's article about Fort Mandan's longitude should have said that the publisher of Martin Plamondon's *Lewis and Clark Trail Maps* is Washington State University Press ■



GIB FLOYD
1/3rd square

Advertisement

Glen Bishop, builder of L&C replica keelboat and pirogues

Glen Bishop, who built replicas of Lewis and Clark's keelboat and pirogues, died last October 24 at his home in St. Charles, Missouri. He was 76 and had been suffering from cancer.

A long-time Lewis and Clark enthusiast and a skilled carpenter, Bishop built a scale model of the keelboat 20 years ago and in 1986 began construction of a full-scale version of the vessel that helped transport the Corps of Discovery from Camp Dubois to the Mandan villages in 1804. He spent a decade on the project, working first in the basement of his home and then in his back yard.

Bishop and members of the Discovery Expedition, the group of St. Charles-based Lewis and Clark re-enactors he founded, launched the 55-foot *Discovery* in 1996. Less than a year later the boat was destroyed in a fire. "Without hesitation, he said, 'We'll do it again and do it better,' " his friend Darold Jackson

told the *St. Charles Journal*. Bishop and his Discovery Expedition colleagues built a second keelboat as well as replicas of the Corps of Discovery's red and white pirogues. The new keelboat was completed last year and made an appearance at the Foundation's annual meeting in Pierre, South Dakota.

At Bishop's funeral, the trailered keelboat bore his body from the church to the cemetery. Bishop is survived by his wife of 52 years, Joanne, three daughters, a son, a brother, 11 grandchildren, and a great-grandson.



Glen Bishop (inset) and the *Discovery* last summer in Pierre.

JEFF OLSON

Memorial contributions can be made to the Discovery Expedition of St. Charles, 314 South Main, St. Charles, MO 63301. ■

Advertisement

New Sacagawea center going up in Idaho



Lemhi Shoshone bless the center's grounds.

Last October 22, surrounded by snow-capped peaks and autumn foliage, more than 250 visitors participated in a dedication and ground-blessing ceremony for the Sacajawea Interpretive, Cultural, and Education Center in Salmon, Idaho.

Members of the Lemhi-Shoshone tribe played a key role in the quest for a center to honor their most famous daughter. "It took us five years to pursue this struggle," said Rozina George, her great-great-great grand-niece. Elders chose the site, a 71-acre ranch along the Salmon River with a panoramic view of the Lemhi Range, and a \$997,800 HUD grant funded land acquisition and construction.

The shrill of an eagle-bone whistle began the day's events. A 15-star flag of the Lewis and Clark era was unfurled and saluted to fiddle music. Rose Ann Abrahamson, a member of the state's Lewis and Clark bicentennial committee, introduced special guests, including descendants of William Clark, Patrick Gass, and Sacagawea, the youngest just four months old. Following speeches, Alfred Navo said a prayer in the Lemhi dialect while elders smudged the ground and touched the earth. The ceremonies ended with dancing and drumming, followed by a feast of roasted buffalo, smoked salmon, and chokecherry pudding.

The center, which will open in August, will interpret the expedition in Lemhi County. It will be landscaped with trees, shrubs, and plants identified by the expedition and will include a tipi village with traditional stick huts.

Our nation celebrated the Lewis and Clark centennial a century ago. Of the many tribes who assisted in the survival of Lewis and Clark, none at the time were invited to participate. Now this one will have the opportunity to tell its stories.

—Angel Wynn

LCIA
1/3rd square

FT. WALLA WALLA
1/3rd square

Patrick Gass, chief carpenter: on the trail with Lewis & Clark

1

In his long vest of moosehide
the warrior would be impervious

to arrows, moosehide his armor,
and I think of him as I work with others

to maintain this porous structure,
clay mixed thickly with water

to discourage the relentless weaponry
of weather. It seems to be a fact:

If it can't bring you down with a bullet,
it will drench you, bite you, freeze you,

blow you away, burn you, puncture you
until you are bled to the point

of emptiness. Ah, but that young warrior
in his armor of moosehide! How stately!

How beautifully indestructible! O where
is the arrow sufficient to bring him down?

O who is the one with sufficient strength
to release it?

2

Who knows who will inhabit that structure
we finally have little control over?

In Wellsburg, Virginia, I wielded
jack plane and hammer
until Traveler's Rest
stood solid and clean—until,
thanks to time and chance,
it came to house a type of activity
I'd rather not claim.

I'll be honest: I'd almost prefer to
burn Fort Clatsop to the ground
than give it over to the natives. But
giving it over—lock, stock, and
barrel—is the official plan.

And—again I'll be honest—this fort
is not without its flaws. Even so,
until tomorrow it is ours,
assembled with timber felled
by our own fallible hands.

Last night, securing my gear
for the long journey home,
I inhaled what I thought to be
the first hint of Spring—as if a woman
from back East had entered the hut,
her face at my touch aromatic as cedar,
and as smooth, when you go with the grain.



3

At certain moments (sometimes too few, sometimes I think
too many, no animals to hunt, oars to whittle, skins
to dress, stores or provisions or baggage to air), those
several and various levels of affection compel me.

How I outright love the feel
of the close-toothed saw, and
its product, wood-dust, aromatic
beyond anyone's deepest inhalation.

How Cruzatte cradles his fiddle
with a fondness perhaps only
Sacagawea with her Jean Baptiste
might humanly understand.



How Ordway and Drouillard take
to cleaning and polishing
their guns, or York, at times, takes
to the dance. Even Charbonneau,
that splendid misfit, must have his
own brief moments, if nothing more
than touching lightly the almond face
of his small son's mother.

And the Captains: Clark at his maps,
Lewis, having labeled his flora and fauna,
threatening the thieving Chinooks not
to harm one hair on the body
of Seaman, to return him at once
or with powder enough for a regiment
he'll blow them to kingdom come.

4

Bless O Lord the natives who
in their own ways
take from us as we in ours
take from them, theft
coming in one of two
varieties—short term or long haul.

Bless O Lord these freshly-traded-for
ponies that deliver us
from one channel to another, these
fish and tubers, bless them, this
corn, these misbegotten dogs, half wolf,
half canine, bless them, that sustain us.

And bless O Lord this fine April morning,
dew on the foliage, hunters
with grouse and elk
in their grass-green eyes—and the sun,
sun that at this moment belongs,
at least until further notice, to everyone.

—William Kloefkorn

*William Kloefkorn teaches and writes in Lincoln, Nebraska.
His most recent collection of poetry is Loup River Psalter.*