

NOVEMBER 2020 VOL 46 NO 4

We Proceeded On

LEWIS AND CLARK TRAIL HERITAGE FOUNDATION



William Clark at 250

- Jay Buckley on Clark and the Fur Trade
- James Holmberg on Clark's Personal Life
- William Foley on the Gubernatorial Election of 1820
- Steven Blake on Clark's Two Wives

The Burden of Being Clark

There are so many things that are admirable about William Clark. Sometimes I shudder to think what the great expedition would have been if Clark had declined Lewis' offer to share in what Clark called "the dangers, difficulties, and fatigues" of the journey. Without wishing to denigrate the possible contributions of Moses Hooke, I believe that the expedition would have been a much less successful enterprise if Clark had remained at the Falls of the Ohio when Lewis ventured into the unknown in 1803.

Clark was an outstanding cartographer. The historian and geographer John Logan Allen has said that only a small percentage of people can see an unfolding landscape as if from high above. It is not so much a skill as a natural gift. Clark had that gift. Clark was also a superb practical commander of men. While Lewis was more likely to lead by the book—and throw that book at wayward members of the Corps of Discovery—Clark developed a pragmatic and tolerant view of the men of the expedition, and managed their daily lives on the trail with an understanding of human foibles that Lewis never really mastered. Lewis carried some of Jefferson's visionary elan, and he was easily the best writer of the Corps, but for some reason he lacked the steadiness and personal discipline of "that estimable man William Clark." Clark was also a much more reliable journal keeper than his more-gifted friend.

When I think about William Clark, I try to make sense of the many burdens he carried through life, especially these three:

His first great burden was to try to help sort out the hopelessly tangled legal and financial affairs of his famous brother George Rogers Clark. After resigning from the army in 1796, he traveled thousands of miles to seek out his brother's creditors and to negotiate with them to resolve their disputes with the hero of the Revolution in the West. This tedious and delicate work helped prepare him for a lifetime of professional diplomacy, with the polyglot population of St. Louis, with fur traders, with nitpicking U.S. government clerks, and with scores of Native American tribes, some of whom he negotiated with to dispossess them of their sovereign lands. It did not help that George Rogers Clark had descended into self-pity and alcoholism. Anyone who has had to learn to tiptoe around a serious alcoholic in the family knows the burden Clark took on as a loyal younger brother.

Clark's second great burden was managing the mercurial Lewis, whom he loved and respected, but who required nearly continuous brotherly management. A careful examination of the journals reveals a significant number of occasions when Clark found Lewis frustrating, as, for example, when Lewis' iron-framed boat, the *Experiment*, proved to be a time-consuming failure, or when Lewis repeatedly insisted on going on ahead to make the great discoveries of the expedition. Or when Lewis lost his temper with some of the men or with the Native Americans who served as their hosts along the way. A 28-month camping trip is likely to bring out the latent tensions in any human relationship. It's a monument to both captains that they appear to have managed a 7,689-mile journey without any serious breach of their friendship. After the expedition, when Lewis finally made his appearance in St. Louis to serve as territorial governor

(March 8, 1808), Clark found himself caught up in Lewis' affair of honor with secretary Frederick Bates, and then with Lewis' increasingly tangled relations with the War Department back in Washington. When Lewis finally left on his final and fatal journey on September 3, 1809, Clark wrote, "I have not Spent Such a day as yesterday for maney years...his Creditors all flocking in near the time of his Setting out distressed him much, which he expressed to me in Such terms as to Cause a Cempothy which is not yet off." The words "maney years" probably hearken back to Clark's efforts to help his older brother George extricate himself from the chaos of his post-Revolution years.

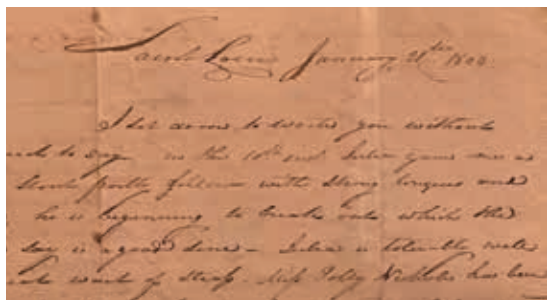
Clark's third great burden was pressed upon him by former President Jefferson following Lewis' death on October 11, 1809. Jefferson made it clear that Clark must pick up the pieces of the expedition's publication project. So far as historians have been able to ascertain, Clark knew very little about the status of the project at the time of Lewis' death, partly because Lewis had made it abundantly clear, including in print, that the report was to be his work, based on what he called "my late tour" of the West. When we try to imagine the steps Clark had to take in Philadelphia to sort things out, we immediately realize how unpleasant that task must have been: to meet with the publisher, figure out what, if anything, Lewis had written before his death, the whereabouts of the plant, animal, and mineral specimens, who had been commissioned to produce drawings of birds, mammals, plants, and natural features of the landscape, and what moneys, if any, had already been distributed to these contributors. Moreover, because he did not trust himself to produce the report, Clark had to find a suitable ghost writer or "man of letters" to produce the paraphrase narrative of the journey. Once he had hired Nicholas Biddle (of a distinguished Federalist family), Clark answered by mail a wide range of queries about incidents and passages in the journals, and eventually sent George Shannon (now disabled) to spend as much time in Philadelphia as Biddle needed to finish the task. Had Clark known from the start (October 15, 1803) that he would be responsible for producing the expedition narrative, he would have been prepared to undertake that work with more confidence and dispatch.

There were other burdens, of course. Clark accepted the role of paterfamilias for a large family of blood relatives and in-laws. This included his eight children (by two wives), his second wife Harriet's three previous children, nieces, nephews, cousins, not to mention Clark's property in enslaved persons, including the famous York. In addition to all of that, Clark served as a paternal (and paternalistic) figure in the lives of a number of Native American tribes and individuals—so much so, that in the gubernatorial contest of 1820, he was regarded by many in Missouri as being too "pro-Indian."

Clark had his faults, of course, but it is hard to think of anyone so consistently able and admirable in the history of the American frontier.


Clay Jenkinson

In this Issue:



The personal world of William Clark p 5

The Burden of Being Clark..... *Inside Front Cover*

By Clay Jenkinson

Message from the President 3

The Man Behind the Icon:
The Personal World of William Clark 5

By James J. Holmberg



The fur trade and Indian affairs p 14

William Clark, the Fur Trade, and Indian Affairs..... 14

By Jay H. Buckley

After the Applause:
Clark's Failed 1820 Gubernatorial Campaign 31

By William E. Foley



After the applause p 31

Julia Hancock and Harriet Kennerly Radford:
Some Thoughts on the Two Mrs. Clarks..... 40

By Steven Blake

Review:
Dreams of El Dorado: A History of the American West. 46

Reviewed by Jay H. Buckley

W. Raymond Wood..... *Inside Back Cover*



The two Mrs. Clarks p 40

Covers

Front: William Clark poses in his militia uniform sometime after 1820. Artist unknown. Courtesy Missouri Historical Society.

Back: Traveling by flatboat before the Age of Steam. Wood engraving by Alfred Waud. First published in *Century Magazine*, 1916. Courtesy the Historic New Orleans Collection.

We Proceeded On welcomes submissions of articles, proposals, inquiries, and letters. Writer's guidelines are available by request and can be found on our website, lewisandclark.org. Submissions should be sent to Clay S. Jenkinson, 1324 Golden Eagle Lane, Bismarck, North Dakota 58503, or by email to Clayjenkinson2010@gmail.com. 701-202-6751.



November 2020 Volume 46, Number 4

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. © 2020

E. G. Chuinard, M.D.,
Founder, *We Proceeded On*
ISSN 02275-6706

Editor

Clay S. Jenkinson
Bismarck, North Dakota

Assistant Editor

Catherine Jenkinson
Oxford University, Oxford, Great Britain

Transcription Services

Russ Eagle
Salisbury, North Carolina

Publisher

Washington State University Press
Pullman, Washington

Editorial Advisory Committee

Philippa Newfield
San Francisco, CA

Jerry Wilson
Versailles, IN

Jay H. Buckley
Orem, UT

Gary E. Moulton
Lincoln, NE

Barbara Kubik
Vancouver, WA

Mark Jordan
Walnut Creek, CA

Arend Flick
Pasadena, CA

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; P. O. Box 3434; Great Falls, MT 59403 or on our website, lewisandclark.org.

We Proceeded On, the quarterly journal of the Foundation, is mailed to current members in February, May, August, and November. Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in Historical Abstracts and America: History and Life.

Annual Membership Categories:

Student: \$30

Basic: \$49

Basic 3-Year: \$133

Family: \$65

Heritage: \$100

Explorer: \$150

Jefferson: \$250

Discovery: \$500

Lifetime:

Steward: \$995

Captain: \$2,500

President: \$5,000

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. is a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation. A portion of your dues may be tax deductible. Donations are fully deductible.

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.

P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403
406-454-1234 / 1-888-701-3434
Fax: 406-727-3158
www.lewisandclark.org

OUR MISSION:

As Keepers of the Story-Stewards of the Trail, the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc., provides national leadership in maintaining the integrity of the Trail and its story through stewardship, scholarship, education, partnership, and cultural inclusiveness.

OFFICERS

President

Louis N. Ritten, La Grange Park, IL

Vice-President

Jim Sayce, Seaview, WA

Secretary

Yvonne Kean, Kansas City, MO

Treasurer

Rob Barg, La Grange Park, IL

Immediate Past-President

Philippa Newfield, San Francisco, CA

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Bill Bronson, Great Falls, MT

Lee Ebeling, Great Falls, MT

Karen Goering, St. Louis, MO

Gary Kimsey, Independence, MO

Barb Kubik, Vancouver, WA

Wayne Madry, Statesville, NC

Collette Sorgel, Three Lakes, WI

Luann Waters, Wynnewood, OK

Jerry Wilson, Versailles, IN

STAFF

Sarah Cawley, Executive Director

Chris Maillet, Admin. Assistant

Lora Helman, Accountant

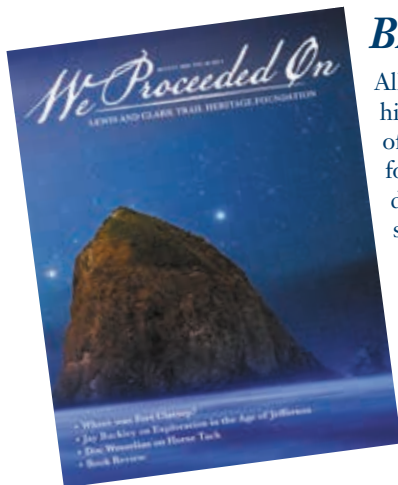
Della Yeager, Library Technician

The views and opinions expressed in articles and features published in *We Proceeded On* are those of the authors and contributors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, its officers and Board, or staff.

We Proceeded On is published four times a year in February, May, August, and November for the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, 4201 Giant Springs Road, Great Falls, MT 59405. Current issue: November 2020, Volume 46, No. 4, ISSN 02275-6706.

Postmaster: Send address changes to PO Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403. Periodical postage paid at Great Falls, MT, and additional offices.

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



BACK ISSUES (1974–current)

All back issues from 1974 to current of our quarterly historic journal are available as hard copies. Some of the older issues are copier reproductions. Orders for a collection of all back issues receive a 30 percent discount. Order your missing issues to complete your set today. Call 1-888-701-3434 or mail your request to LCTHF; P.O. Box 3434; Great Falls, MT 59403. You may order online at info@lewisandclark.org. Issues older than one year are also available and searchable at <http://www.lewisandclark.org/wpo>.

\$10 originals or CDs

\$4 shipping and handling

A Message from the President



LCTHF President Louis Ritten

As the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation (LCTHF) concludes its fiftieth anniversary celebration, it has been some year, hasn't it? Another national presidential election has riled up the usual jagged edges. Forest fires have devastated vast areas of the west and damaging hurricanes have struck the southern portion of the U.S. Violent protests erupted over long-festering societal problems. The nation's physical health and economic vitality were ravaged by the scourge of the Covid-19 virus. Customary avenues for relaxation and enjoyment were curtailed as sports seasons, restaurants, bars, theaters, places of worship, and other venues and occasions for gathering together were closed entirely or severely restricted. Most LCTHF chapter activities were cancelled or held at a distance through technological means and we were forced to hold our 2020 Annual Meeting virtually.

In grappling with these difficult circumstances, we have experienced loss, heartache, and dislocations. Yet we as a nation and within the LCTHF have also persevered and discovered reserves of strength that we may not

have realized were there. In the case of the LCTHF, we were fortunate to have brought Sarah Cawley aboard as our executive director at the beginning of the year. Her professionalism, resourcefulness, enthusiasm, and can-do attitude have played a vital role in weathering the storm. She has worked very effectively with our staff, volunteers, and partners. Once normal social interaction resumes, we expect Sarah will play an even larger role in fulfilling our mission and in promoting our foundation.

Our 2020 Annual Meeting was held virtually and, despite a modicum of hiccups, all in all it was a smashing success. During the meeting, we announced results of the member vote in favor of all three bylaw changes and in the election of Bill Bronson of Montana, Gary Kimsey of Missouri, and Jane Knox of Connecticut as LCTHF directors. Following Jane's very untimely passing, Luann Waters of Oklahoma was selected to fill the vacancy. Rob Barg of Illinois will become treasurer, while Yvonne Kean of the Kansas City area will assume the secretary position. Please join me in thanking outgoing Board members Bud Clark of Michigan and Lucy Ednie and Margaret Gorski, both Montanans, for their fine service. We hope they will continue to lend their talents to the LCTHF in other capacities.

Let us also give three well deserved huzzahs to our good friends and partners Alexandria Searls and Malou Stark of the Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center in Charlottesville, Virginia, and to Sally Thomas, president

of the LCTHF Homefront Chapter, who together with the help of Sarah Cawley, did such a magnificent job, on very short notice, of pulling off our meeting through virtual means. And they did all this while a hurricane was passing through Charlottesville. Imagine what might have occurred had our usual in-person meeting taken place instead! Could this be another example of "Lewis and Clark luck?"

I belong to three other organizations similar to ours that hold an annual conference, and all of them simply canceled for this year and pushed their gatherings ahead to 2021. While I don't fault them for their decisions, I am grateful and proud we were able to stage our LCTHF meeting under such challenging circumstances. We encountered a major obstacle, found a way to work around it, and continued to move forward. We managed to overcome a learning curve and the inevitable bumps we experienced in that effort, and we are the better for it. Our ingenuity, adaptability, and perseverance would have done Lewis and Clark proud. But, come to think of it, they would have expected nothing less. In all honesty, neither should we, who honor their accomplishments and strive to follow their example, have expected anything less from ourselves. Three huzzahs are also in order for the fellow travelers of the meeting planners who took the plunge as attendees as we proceeded on as one into uncharted territory.

We have learned much from the experience that will benefit us going forward. We attracted approximately 170

attendees to the virtual meeting. This was on the order of fifty percent more participants than we estimated would attend the meeting in person. While we do not anticipate that electronic means will completely supplant in-person meetings on a regular basis, this experience points the way toward the possibility of enhancing our meetings virtually and expanding the number of people who can attend them in one form or another. Expect our meetings of any sort to change somewhat in the future to accommodate new realities.

With regard to upcoming LCTHF Annual Meetings, we have had to shift gears somewhat. The current plan is that we will hold a stripped down meeting in early August 2021 in the Clarkston, Washington - Lewiston, Idaho, area. Past LCTHF President Steve Lee, the principal planner, is taking into account the latest guidance concerning Covid-19 so that the meeting will be much more informal than has been typical. We may have to limit the overall number of attendees; there will be no large meals together; group sizes will be restricted; and attendees will need to provide their own transportation. We will incorporate virtual aspects that will enable us to have a meeting even under severe or total limitations on gathering in person. We fully intend to carry on in a manner that makes sense under the prevailing conditions at the time. I hope you will attend.

The 2022 Annual Meeting is

scheduled to be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from August 7 to 10. As envisioned today, this will be a more traditional meeting, one in the style to which we are more accustomed. Of course, much depends on how the Covid-19 situation plays out by then, so things could change. We intend the 2023 Annual Meeting to be hosted by the Travelers Rest Chapter in the Lolo-Missoula, Montana, area sometime in the summer or fall. The risk of forest fires plays a major role in establishing a firm date. Given so many uncertainties, the details of this meeting are still to be determined. We have no choice but to remain flexible and creative in our approach to our gatherings.

Speaking more broadly, we have also closely examined how the LCTHF and our chapters are organized and interact with the public. We are developing what we feel will be more attractive ways of drawing more people into the story and into our organization. If you have ideas along these lines, please pass them along. We are adapting to the challenging conditions we face and I ask you for your goodwill and patience as these changes are implemented in the near future. Thank you in advance.

I am heartened and my spirits lifted by the loyalty and steadfastness of you, our members, who make manifest these traits by supporting the LCTHF through generous donations of your time, passion, and monetary gifts. “Reimagining America: The Maps of

Lewis and Clark,” our new traveling exhibit funded almost exclusively by member donations, will soon be on display at a series of locations throughout the country. Sites have been clamoring for exciting new programming, and the exhibit is already reserved into 2022.

Whether you personally contributed to the map exhibit or not, please consider making a donation to the LCTHF in 2020 as we approach the year’s end. A provision in the CARES Act allows for up to a \$300 deduction for charitable donations this year whether you itemize or not. We are most grateful for the sacrifices you make on behalf of the LCTHF. We can all take comfort from the fact that we are sticking together, with enough historical perspective to realize that this maddening time, too, shall pass.

As we look back on the year 2020, it is my fervent hope that we will have glimpsed the future, taken its measure, and begun action to confront the challenges we face and to exploit new opportunities we now find available to us. I’m glad you have chosen to be a part of the adventure. I wish you and yours continued health and happiness as we enter the holiday season and make our way toward a brighter future. ■

Proceeding on together,

Lou Ritten, President

Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

Attention Lewis and Clark Trail Stewards!



The LCTHF has three Grant Programs:

- The Lewis and Clark Trail Stewardship Endowment
- The Burroughs-Holland/Bicentennial Education Fund
- The Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Sign Maintenance Fund

For criteria, deadlines, and applications, visit lewisandclark.org and click on “What We Do.”

Additional info: call (888)701-3434, e-mail us at grants@lewisandclark.org, or ask any LCTHF Board member.



The Man Behind the Icon: The Personal World of William Clark

By James J. Holmberg

William Clark's letter of January 2, 1809, announcing the birth of his son Meriwether Lewis Clark. Courtesy of the Filson Club of Louisville, Kentucky.

It often is difficult to know the personal from the public person. His accomplishments and fame are what one knows. The person himself remains relatively unknown. This is largely true of William Clark. Soldier, explorer, and territorial administrator are what come to mind. Despite plenty of source material and being the subject of articles and biographies, the man himself remains something of a mystery. What motivated him? What factors in his life shaped the way he perceived his world and the people in it? What was the person himself like, as a son, brother, uncle, husband, father, friend, and master, beneath the iconic exterior?

We all, in part, are products of our upbringing. The influence of family and the society in which a person is raised plays an important role in forming an individual's personality and beliefs. It is true today and it was true 250 years ago when William Clark was born in Caroline County, Virginia,

on August 1, 1770. His family and society significantly affected how he perceived the world and the people in it.

William Clark was the ninth of ten children born to John and Ann Rogers Clark. He was the youngest of six sons. His oldest sibling, Jonathan, was twenty years older. Brother George was eighteen years older. Growing up, brothers that much older were more models for behavior than close siblings. And in Jonathan's case, after the passing of their father in 1799, somewhat of a father figure for William. His father and brothers were indeed role models and, in the case of the famous George Rogers Clark, the personification



Posthumous portrait of George Rogers Clark by Matthew H. Jouett, ca. 1825. Courtesy of the Filson Club of Louisville, Kentucky.

of a fate to be avoided. Their examples were embraced by William as an adult and he relished the role of mentor and even that of surrogate father to several nephews and a niece.

The Clarks were a close-knit family with a wide circle of relatives and associates. They were solidly in the well-respected and successful middle class of Virginia society and played an active role in the life of the community. To be considered a family of good name was important. To be respected on personal, civic, and professional levels was something to strive toward, for your own sake and for the sake of the family name. Consequently, positions of responsibility and leadership often devolved upon a family member who answered the call for family, community, and country.

A new nation called the Clarks to duty in 1775 and for the next decade young William was influenced by the service and sacrifice of his brothers. All five of his brothers served as officers during the Revolution in either the Virginia Continental Line or the Virginia militia. Two of them, John, Jr., and Rich-

ard, died as a result of that service. Brother George became famous for his exploits against the British and Indians in the West. His successful Illinois Campaign contributed to the ceding of the Northwest Territory to the United States at the end of the war, doubling the size of the new nation.

Following his brothers' example of service to their nation, William joined the army in March 1792. He already had military experience. He might have accompanied his brother George on his campaign against the Wabash tribes in 1786 but he definitely served in campaigns against the Wabash tribes in 1789 and 1791 as a member of the Kentucky militia and was described as being "as brave as Caesar."¹ In March 1792 William was commissioned a second lieutenant in the army. He acquitted himself well, earning the respect and compliments of his fellow officers and General Anthony Wayne. During his militia and regular army service William continued a Clark tradition of keeping a record of events, priceless documentation of his early military career and life.



Map of William Clark's World. Cartography by Megan Rytting and Brent Beck. Courtesy of Jay H. Buckley.

Frustrated by the slow rate of promotion, William resigned from the army as a first lieutenant in July 1796 as he wanted to seek better economic opportunities and assist with family affairs (including his brother George's tangled legal and financial matters). In May 1800 he was commissioned a captain of a troop of cavalry in the Kentucky militia (thus he was a captain at the time of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and was routinely referred to as Captain Clark).² Bureaucracy prevented him from receiving a captain's commission in the army for the expedition and afterwards as a lieutenant colonel. But he had the last laugh in being commissioned a brigadier general in the Louisiana Territory militia, becoming the third Clark brother, joining Jonathan and George, to hold the rank of general. William did the family proud in his professional life as a soldier, explorer, and territorial administrator.

William's upbringing and life experience guided him toward this success before he reached adulthood. He felt the burden of responsibility to live up to the example set by his brothers' service to their country and to the family name. A solid foundation initiated on the family farm in Virginia was augmented when the Clarks settled in Kentucky in 1785. William was fourteen. The family farm Mulberry Hill was a few miles distant from the frontier village of Louisville, founded by brother George in 1778. To his prior training, William now added a frontier education. He learned all the skills necessary to survive and thrive on the frontier. He assisted surveyors and became a skilled cartographer, a talent that proved indispensable on the expedition, just as knowing how to handle horses, boats, and men did. Added to this was the experience he gained regarding Native Americans both militarily and diplomatically.

William also traveled extensively before the "western trip," as he referred to it, while in the army and as a civilian. From 1797 to 1802, William went to Kaskaskia, St. Louis, New Orleans, then by sea around Florida to the mid-Atlantic, and twice east to Virginia and Washington, D.C., on business, in aiding George's affairs, and helping to move Jonathan's household to Louisville. William traveled thousands of miles on these trips and also ruined his personal finances. In a later legal case, he stated that he impoverished himself in the service of George.³ As a result, he sold Mulberry Hill and moved across the Ohio to Clarksville in search of a fresh start. It was in that situation that Meriwether Lewis's letter of invitation to join him on the expedition arrived in July of 1803.

Part of achieving this success and desired place in society was connected to education. All ten Clark siblings received

educations through local neighborhood schools or tutors. And there is evidence that William actually had returned east to Virginia in 1791 or 1792 to attend an institution of higher learning.⁴ Whether he was referring to this academic endeavor or schooling received before the family moved to Kentucky, William documented having previously received formal education while on his trip east in 1809 to 1810. On December 10, 1809, he spent the night with family friend and relative Richard Tompkins between Louisa Court House and Richmond, Virginia, where he "met Several old school-mates who appered very Glad to See me and had old talk."⁵

A review of Clark family papers and records reveals that learning was a life-long endeavor. Surviving letters, journals, ledgers, and other records document not only William's, George's, and Jonathan's personal interest in learning more about the world around them but also in the importance of education. Even before becoming a father, William was active in organizing schools in his neighborhood. On March 2, 1802, he reported to Jonathan that family friend and relative George Tompkins would "Commence School in a few days[.] I found no deficulty in raising a School, I believe 60 in Stud [instead] of 25 Scholars Could be maid up for him if we would Suffer him to recve them." The school was on William's farm. When he sold the mill tract of Mulberry Hill to his brother Edmund one acre was reserved for the schoolhouse.⁶

William was determined that not only his children, but also nephews and a niece receive a good education. He paid for at least part, and possibly all, of his nephews John and Benjamin O'Fallon's education and had an active role in Charles and Ann Thruston's schooling. They were the children of his sister Fanny, the youngest of the ten Clark siblings, who had already had been widowed twice by 1801 and had not yet married again.

Fanny and her children lived with William and George at Mulberry Hill and perhaps also for a time when they moved across the river to Clarksville. William was a loving uncle and also surrogate father. He played an active role in their lives, including seeing that they received a good education. This is demonstrated through family correspondence and documents and especially in William's reference to his nephews as his sons. In a letter to nephew John O'Fallon



Portrait of Benjamin O'Fallon by Chester Harding. Courtesy Missouri Historical Society.

on November 22, 1808, he instructed John to “purchase the Authers necessary for your scientific Studies, Such as na[t]ural & moral philosophy & c. make use of your money with economey and take care of all your books they will do for my other Sons hereafter.”⁷

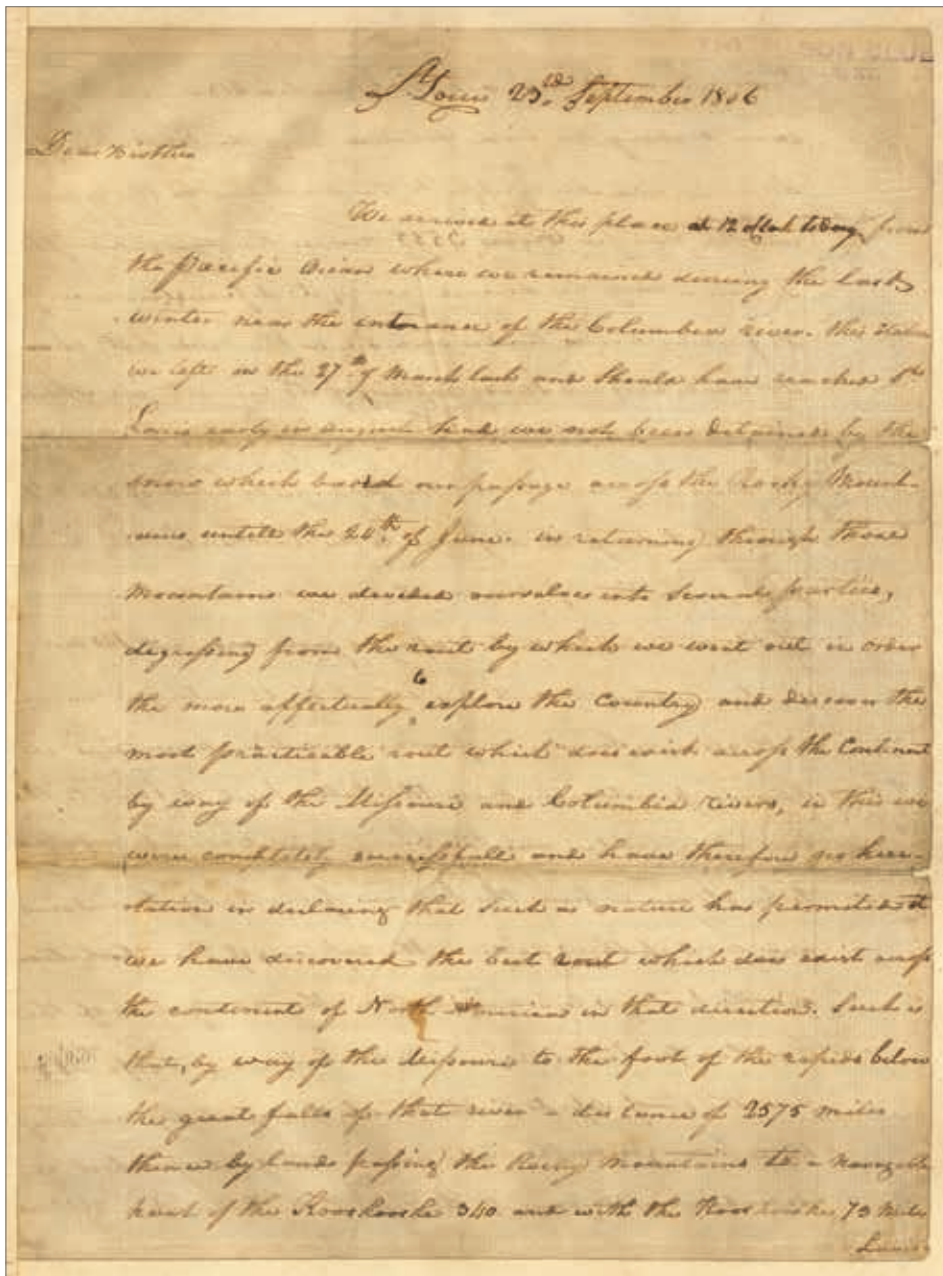
William Clark was intelligent and for the day educated. Although he didn’t have the benefit of a college education (or at least a complete one if the comment about William’s returning from college in Virginia in 1792 is correct), his skills were excellent for the day. But William apparently doubted that. It is a fact that he was a creative speller. He

often misspelled words—even the same word—with regularity, sometimes in the same letter or journal entry. Spelling then was more flexible, however. Even the brilliant Thomas Jefferson erred on occasion, but William was a master. He never met a word he couldn’t misspell. With him throughout his life, and one reason he was so adamant about the importance of education for family members and others, was the insecurity he harbored about his own abilities. What he perceived to be his lack of learning bothered him. It didn’t keep him from putting down the events of the day and his thoughts and concerns on paper, fortunately, but he could

confess to trusted confidants like Jonathan the unease it gave him. From doubts about his writing abilities to his opinion on people and events, his letters to his esteemed oldest brother truly open a window to the man himself.

William’s letters to Jonathan over almost twenty years are extremely revealing and important in understanding the personal William Clark. In them William reveals his doubts and insecurities, turning regularly to Jonathan for his counsel on issues and decisions troubling him. It was also to Jonathan that he could complain, whether it be about people, events, or his health. All this peels back more layers of the famous explorer to the essential man. “I am fearfull nature intended me for the Sport of fortune,” William wrote Jonathan on August 13, 1801, on his return from a trip east to Virginia and Washington, D.C. “I never went from home any time, but before I returned was informed of Some loss or misfortune.” An unexplained fire had destroyed William’s mill and its contents which was a “verry Serious Stroke” to him.⁸

When the Corps of Discovery established its winter camp at Wood River, William wrote his first update home, beginning his letter by expressing his “great disappointment”



Clark’s letter to his brother Jonathan on the day of the expedition’s arrival in St. Louis, September 23, 1806. Courtesy of the Filson Club of Louisville, Kentucky.

in not finding a “Single letter from any one of my friends” and hoping the next post would rectify that.⁹ Some five years later, settled in St. Louis and married with a family, William still longed to hear from Jonathan and his old home. When stretches of time passed with no letters, he worried he might have written or done something to offend his brother or someone else. “I have not heard from you for a long time, and have been trying to recollect what I could have written, _ I can’t recollect of any thing that I have Said to you out of the way.” That same unease of having offended in some way or being forgotten by his and his wife Julia’s family and friends persisted over the years. William wrote Jonathan in early 1811 that they had not heard from him “for a long time, indeed I fear our friends are begining to forget us as they do not write.”¹⁰

Perhaps it was that fear, in part, that kept William writing Jonathan; but it definitely was his need to stay connected to his revered brother. Not only did he wish to keep him well informed, but by doing so he could profit from his advice. It’s a stated sentiment he writes often in his letters to Jonathan. Recently returned from the “western trip,” William was confronted by situations and decisions he hadn’t necessarily anticipated, which caused him a good deal of concern. His instinct was to turn to Jonathan. “I wished I had 20 minits Conversation with you on Some points which I am much at a loss,” he wrote him from Washington on January 22, 1807, and feared what some thought might be his “timidity” regarding those situations. Wise words from Jonathan always were welcome. “As I have in all cases Sought your advice and good Councils, words cannot express the pleasure which I feel in receving it unasked.”

But William also cautioned Jonathan not always to share his letters with others. He worried not only about what he believed were his grammatical shortcomings, but also about the content. “Our long letters ought not to [be] much examined. I write without reserve, and Some people might not be fond of my Stile &c.”¹¹ And often being in a hurry with activity swirling around him and in a rush to get his news and thoughts on paper, William confessed that “you must not expect either Connection grammar & good Spelling in my lettrs as I write you without Reserve & at Such tims as I can find leasure.” And the family knew it. In one of those wonderful vignettes William creates in his letters, one can imagine the scene there in St. Louis in the Clark home. William at his desk writing Jonathan when Julia enters, circles around behind him, and reads the letter over his shoulder.

With perhaps a smile and a shake of her head, she teases him about his orthographic shortcomings which he takes good-naturedly and passes along in closing the letter. “Julia Sais to Nancy . . . to learn fron her how to Spell.”¹²

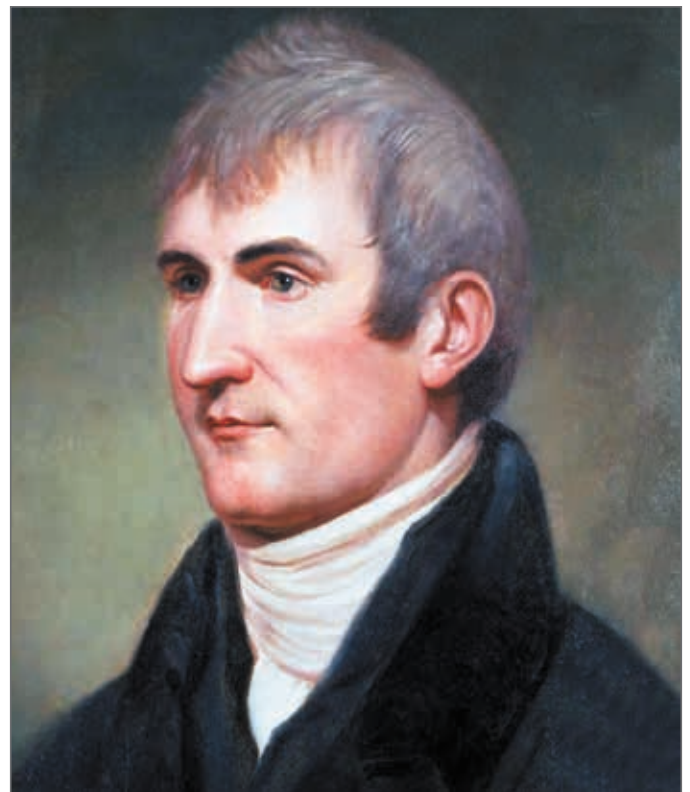
This of course is what makes his correspondence with Jonathan so important in understanding William Clark the man. He wrote on a more personal and revealing level in these letters to his cherished eldest brother than he did in any other known source. He routinely went beyond confessions of his orthographic and grammatical shortcomings to discussing people and news of interest and concern. Were it not for these letters, much less would be known about York’s post-expedition life, Meriwether Lewis’ death, and so much more, in addition to revealing the man himself. Others also thought he didn’t give himself enough credit. Charles Willson Peale remarked in a letter to his son Rembrandt that rather than finding someone else to write the official expedition history following Lewis’ death, Clark should have done it himself and he would have done a fine job. “I would rather Clark had undertaken to have wrote the whole [journal] himself and then have put it into the hands of some person of talents to brush it up, but I found that the General was too diffident of his abilities. I would rather see a single narrative with such observations as I am sure Clark would have made.”¹³ William remained insecure his entire life about his skill and ability regarding the written word but history has benefitted greatly from his determination to “drive on” in spite of his perceived shortcomings and misgivings.

Just as William was happy to receive Jonathan’s advice, he emulated his older brother and sought to be a mentor to others, passing along the benefit of his experience, knowledge, and even resources. Sister Fanny had remarried by the time William returned from the expedition, but he still played a role in three of his nephews’ and a niece’s education. Surviving letters to his nephew John O’Fallon contain William’s advice on life, reputation, and choosing with whom you associate—all important considerations in how one is judged by others. In August 1807, soon after John arrived for school in Lexington, Uncle William dispensed important advice.

be Cautious in the Choice of your friends, let them be Charactors Souted to do you both justice & honor. You are now of an age to look forward to a future day, and estimate the value of your reputable friends; and a good education... A Shall See you [in September] and have Some Conversation on the Subject of your education.¹⁴

More than a year later, Uncle William still monitored John's progress and conduct. "I must recommend to you to Court the Company of men of learning," he wrote John on November 22, 1808. "Sober, Sedate and respectable Characters, you will not only gain information from them but respectability and influence. be frugal, but deasent in all your transactions." He thought law was the preferable profession to pursue, and recommended John study under Kentucky lawyer and statesman Henry Clay. After doing that he could come live with him in St. Louis and learn French which would be of "emence Service" in Louisiana. As for finances, "always keep a little money that you may not be put to the blush for want of it." And in closing, he instructed his surrogate son to "write me every two months,... tell me how you are fixed and your progress, and inform me what you have learnt, and everything respecting yourself."¹⁵

The advice received and life lessons learned were taken to heart by William and he sought to give to others the benefit of this wisdom. Jonathan had counseled him to "beleve that there might be a raney day," and to save funds accordingly. "Clouds Seem to fly thicker than they use to do," William observed after moving to St. Louis, "and I think there will be a raney day." A month earlier he'd confessed to Jonathan that "I assure you that the married State makes me look about my Self and extcies a disposition to accoumilate a little for a future day . . . can this be a good or bad disposition in a man who is pore and ambitious to live." But his government jobs as chief Indian agent, brigadier general of militia, and others he was appointed to through the years made increasing his personal wealth difficult. It was hard to find the time to conduct his private affairs. On October 5, 1808, he confessed this frustration to Jonathan, writing the "multiplicity of buseness which has been heeped, upon me has employed and Still Continues to employ So great a po[r]tion of my time that I have not leasure to attend to my private affairs." William endeavored to save and make money but he was a realist and would make the best of the situation, for it was "too late to repint . . . when thing[s] are going badly. it is then time to Scuffle and try to get out of the dificuelty."¹⁶ What could one do but "drive on." William Clark truly acted on those beliefs until late in life when declining health impaired his physical and mental abilities. Whether it was financial or business concerns, government business, getting the expedition history written, family tragedy, or other issues, William Clark met his affairs head on and tried to deal with them to the best of his ability.



Portrait of Meriwether Lewis by Charles Willson Peale, Philadelphia, 1807. Courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

Not all the advice William dispensed was completely serious. To nephew John Hite Clark, Jonathan's oldest son, William offered a mixture of opinion and humor in counseling him about being in love. "I know whin a man is in that way his mind is bent on the Object of his admoration and he thinks every attention he Can pay to the fair Object, is Scerce Sufficient to Shew the Arder of his passion," he observed in October 1810, "man in that State of Mind desirves not only the pity but the applause of his friend[s]."¹⁷

One of the great benefits of this writing "without reserve" is that William confessed true feelings about family, friends, and others that often he wished Jonathan to keep to himself. He was the administrator for his sister Fanny's second husband Charles Thruston's estate. Property, including slaves, was involved and some heirs questioned William's handling of the estate. William was hurt that family could think him capable of unethical or dishonest actions in such matters. But he would "bear the Snears of the ungreatful a little," and "attribute their errorr to either peevisshness, disappointment or a missconseption of facts."¹⁸ As compensation for helping brother George with his legal and financial affairs—by which William impoverished himself—George deeded land to William, including some 70,000 acres in present-day McCracken

County, Kentucky. Some family members disputed that transaction and the property eventually was divided among George's heirs. William understandably felt unappreciated and somewhat taken advantage of.

Much more serious were opinions about people that could harm his career or even place him on the field of honor. Following Meriwether Lewis' death in 1809, there was speculation that William would be named governor of Upper Louisiana in his place. William thought himself unprepared for such a responsibility. Not only did he believe the burdens of the office had been partly responsible for his friend's downfall, but he also felt "to have a green pompous new englandr imedeately over my head will not do for me _ ! _" And to refer to territorial secretary Frederick Bates as a "little animale whome I had mistaken as my friend" could find you facing a pistol on the dueling ground. William even went so far as to complain in November 1808 about his partner in discovery, confessing to Jonathan his frustration concerning Lewis' procrastination in writing the expedition history and their likely financial loss because of it. "Govr. Lewis is here and talks of going to philadelphia to finish our books this winter, he has put it off So long that I fear they will [not] bring[?] us much."¹⁹

A year later, William was writing to Jonathan about Lewis' death. In no other known written source did Clark confess his worry about Lewis and his belief that he'd taken his own life. As Lewis' life spiraled downward in the summer of 1809 Clark became increasingly concerned. In late August, when William believed Lewis had left for the east to settle accounts and differences with the government and write the expedition history, he expressed that concern to Jonathan. "Govr. L I may Say is ~~r~~d by Some of his Bills being protested for a Considerable Sum... his Crediters all flocking in near the time of his Setting out distressed him much. which he expressed to me in Such terms as to Cause a Cempothy which is not yet off." Continuing, William defended his friend and his actions but confessed he was quite worried. "If his mind had been at ease I should have parted Cherefully."

Two months later, William Clark picked up a newspaper in Shelbyville, Kentucky, while traveling east to visit Julia's family and to settle some of his own financial issues with the government, and read that Lewis had killed himself in Tennessee. That evening he wrote to Jonathan to express his distress at the report, and sadly concluded, "I fear O! I fear the waight of his mind has over come him." And how it must have distressed William even more, when a month later, he

received updates about Lewis' death, including a report that "on his way to nashvill, he would frequently 'Concept [conceive] that he herd me Coming on, and Said that he was certain [I would] over take him, that I had herd of his Situation and would Come to his releaf."²⁰ Even at the end of his life, in his fragile mental state, Lewis believed he could depend on his good friend Clark to help him. While there are mentions of Clark's discussing Lewis with Jefferson and a few others, there are no details. It is his letters to Jonathan that provide important details—details passed along as he learned them. As is clear from his, Jefferson's, Madison's, and others' comments, they all believed Lewis had committed suicide. It was an understandably painful topic for William and one he apparently rarely discussed afterward and isn't known to have written about.

A topic he frequently did write about to Jonathan was his frustrations and actions as a slaveholder. William Clark the master must be included in any study of him as a person. His actions today would be considered cruel; in the early nineteenth century they were not universally perceived as cruel. In fact, the Clarks were considered to be "good" masters. To be a "bad" master, cruel or unfair to your slaves, was wrong. But to us, William's actions, documented in his own words, are troubling and do not reflect well on him, especially in today's social and political climate. It is too important a subject to dispense with in a couple of paragraphs. It is worthy of an article devoted entirely to it, and therefore will be addressed in a future issue of WPO.

William Clark expressed a wide range of emotions in his letters and journals. One of those emotions is his affection for loved ones. Family meant a great deal to him. William's love and affection for them are evidenced in his writings. His own words prove his strong ties to Jonathan as the archetypal "big brother" and father figure, brother George as revered military hero who had fallen on hard times, nephew John O'Fallon whom he sought to guide to honorable manhood, John Hite Clark to whom he dispensed romantic advice, his wives Julia and Harriet, and his children whom he cherished and doted on. One of the reasons William resigned from the army in 1796 was to help George with his legal and financial problems. He helped him to such an extent that he ruined his own finances, sold the family farm outside Louisville he had inherited in 1799, and moved across the river to Clarksville for a fresh start. George continued to live at Point of Rocks after William left on the expedition and later relocated to St. Louis. In 1807 William undertook a fossil dig at Big Bone

Lick at Thomas Jefferson's request. George accompanied him, but got in his cups. This was a burden with which the family, and especially William in this instance, had to deal. William reported from the dig that "Bro. G. _____ D _____ and has given me Some uneaseness but he appears to be more thoughtfull to day." After William permanently moved to St. Louis in June 1808, he worried about George and wanted to make sure he had basic supplies. "Bro. G . . . has not been fortunate in maney of his plans," he wrote Jonathan in November 1808, "I wish [to]... leave a little money in my bro: hands to purchase a little Coffee & Sugar, flour &c."²¹

William didn't marry until he was thirty-seven. But that didn't mean he wasn't interested in seeing the ladies and enjoying their company. While in the army in the 1790s he corresponded with sister Fanny. One of their topics was Louisville social life and romantic affairs. "Love was a favourable Subject with me at the time I wrote. . . . inform me . . . how the Ladies of your nabeuringhood are." A "Brother Soldier" had been cruelly rejected by a Louisville lady. He hoped he would "meet his fate like a valuent Soldur . . . God forbid my fate Should ever be So Determond, let my attacks be at what time they may I hope to be allowed Some terms of Recapitulations."²² In William's letter to his nephew, fifteen years later and now married, he still shared his thoughts on love.

His love and affection for his wife Julia Hancock are obvious in his letters to Jonathan. From January 1807, when he states he has an "object in view," meaning marriage to Julia, she is mentioned regularly in his letters. She formed an affectionate bond with William's family and he routinely passed along her comments, requests, and worries. These comments are an important source for learning what Julia's experience was as a young bride and mother. William can be no clearer about how he feels than when he refers to Julia as his "angel" in his 1809 memorandum book.²³ Her death in June of 1820 was a terrible blow. He married Julia's cousin Harriet Kennerly Radford in November 1821. By all accounts it was a good marriage. They had children together, and he suffered another loss when she died in 1831.

To these sad events must be added the death of children. Three of William's children predeceased him. He was a loving and doting father. This is clear not only in his letters to his children, but also in comments to Jonathan and others, such as his nephew John O'Fallon. "I Set down to write you without haveing much to say," William wrote Jonathan on January 21, 1809. He actually had much to report and quickly got to it. "On the the 10th inst: Julia gave me a fine Son, a

Stout portly fellow with Strong longues and well formed, he is beginning to break out, which the old womin [the mid-wife] Say is a good Sine ___ Julia is tolerably well tho' feels great want of Sleep." Updates regarding his son regularly followed. Describing a delightful domestic scene, William wrote in May 1809 that Julia "wants to Shew her Boy to Sister verry much, he is a fine fellow, just getting well of the Cow pox ___ we had him Soused in a tub of water this morning, which is a piece of amusement he is fond of provided he is washed with whiskey after he Coms out. I think the little man is yet nomely [gnomely, homely?] his head gets reader, we have named him M. Lewis." Another son arrived in 1811 and William was eager to trumpet the news to family back in Kentucky. "I cant Conclude without mentioning to you that I have another Son, a great rough red headed fellow who is now four days old."²⁴

When William had sons of his own, he routinely passed along family news, expressed concern for their health, his confidence in them, and dispensed advice. "You are now of an age to reflect maturally and capable of consulting your own inclinations," he wrote his son Lewis in 1829 while he was a cadet at West Point. In 1832, son George Rogers Hancock was in school in Lexington, Kentucky, and he confessed to him that "my children are my first consideration . . . not to be equaled by any other events."²⁵

This love and devotion to his children apparently caused trouble as the years passed. John O'Fallon believed that his Uncle William spoiled his children in his efforts to educate, support, and indulge them, especially Lewis; so much so that he endangered himself financially. Also, some of his claims for government expenses were protested and reimbursement was delayed or denied. William owned a great deal of land but didn't want to sell it. In his world land holdings helped determine social standing and success and provided security, and he took comfort in knowing he owned land. He didn't like to discuss his finances and apparently was sensitive about them. O'Fallon and others believed the Clark pride was to blame for some of his difficulties, especially the financial ones. He had a valuable estate, which included slaves, but not much ready money. In William's later years, as he declined both physically and mentally, these worries exacerbated both conditions. O'Fallon helped as best he could, but he reported he had to tread carefully to avoid hurting his uncle's feelings. In 1834 he wrote to his half-brother Charles Thruston that "Uncle William I fear is much in debt... Uncle is proud and most touchy on the subject of his pecuniary affairs any allusion to which wounds his feelings most sensibly."

In March 1835 he worried that William would not live much longer than a year “unless his mind becomes more tranquilized and relieved.” And in January 1837 he reported that William had been quite ill for several months because “whenever his mind is disquieted by any disagreeable occurrence a relapse is occasioned.”²⁶ The result of this decline was of course inevitable.

William’s life, both personal and professional, was full but touched by disappointment and bereavement. The loss of family and friends through death—Meriwether Lewis in 1809, brothers Jonathan in 1811, Edmund in 1815, and George in 1818, Julia in 1820, daughter Mary Margaret in 1821, sister Fanny in 1825, sons Edmund in 1827 and John Julius in 1831, and Harriett in 1831—were all occasions for mourning and took their toll on him.

William Clark died September 1, 1838, in the 69th year of his life. Gone not only was the public man, but also the private man—the devoted son, brother, uncle, husband, father, and friend who derived great comfort and joy from family and friends. William Clark was human and had his weaknesses and failings. He was a product of his society and the time in which he lived. Both played a significant part in shaping who he was—the positive and negative—and those must be taken into account in judging William Clark the man. But we are fortunate that sources, especially his letters to his “Dear Brother” Jonathan, have survived that open a window to William Clark the man and his world, there to be opened by us. ■

James J. Holmberg is the Curator of Collections at the Filson Historical Society in Louisville, Kentucky. He was the editor of Dear Brother: Letters of William Clark to Jonathan Clark, published by Yale University Press in 2002. Holmberg has written entries for The Kentucky Encyclopedia, Dictionary of Virginia Biography, African American National Biography, The Encyclopedia of the New American Nation, and The Encyclopedia of Louisville. He is a frequent contributor to WPO.

Notes

1. James O’Fallon to Jonathan Clark, May 30, 1791, Draper Manuscripts, 2L28, State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
2. G. Glenn Clift, ed. *The “Corn Stalk” Militia of Kentucky 1792-1811* (Frankfort: Kentucky Historical Society, 1957), 104.
3. *John Thruston’s Executor v. William Clark et al.*, Jefferson County, Kentucky, Chancery Court Records, case no. 1845, Kentucky Department for Library and Archives, Frankfort, Kentucky.
4. James Taylor, Reminiscences, 1775-1834, written 1846, Filson Historical Society [hereafter FHS]. Filson collection has a typescript of it. Taylor recalls that Clark was a fellow traveler returning to Kentucky from Virginia in the spring of 1792 where he had been attending college but he now was in the army. In the William Clark Papers (a section of the large Clark Family Papers collection) at the Missouri Historical Society (hereafter MHS) there is a notebook dating from 1792 containing notes on grammar, history, and natural

philosophy (box 11, fl. 2) that would support Taylor’s recollection.

5. William Clark entry, December 10, 1809, William Clark and Meriwether Lewis Memorandum Book, 1809, 25, State Historical Society of Missouri [hereafter SHSM]. The transcript has it as “also talk” but I interpret it as “old talk.”
6. William Clark to Jonathan Clark March 2, 1802, in James J. Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother: Letters of William Clark to Jonathan Clark* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 45, 240; William Clark to Edmund Clark, deed, May 2, 1803, Edmund Clark Papers, fl. 6, FHS. George and Richard Tompkins were brothers or cousins. The Tompkins family purchased part of the Clark farm in Caroline County, Virginia, when the Clarks moved to Kentucky.
7. William Clark to John O’Fallon, November 22, 1808, John O’Fallon Collection, MHS.
8. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, August 13, 1801, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 30. Discovered in an attic in Louisville in 1988 by descendants of Jonathan and later donated to the FHS, the “Dear Brother” letters were published in 2002.
9. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, December 16, 1803, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 60.
10. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, ca. March 1, 1809, and January 31, 1811, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 196, 254.
11. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, January 22, 1807, and November 22, 24, 1808, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 119, 122, 173-174.
12. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, October 5, 1808, and December 14, 1810, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 156, 252. Nancy was Jonathan’s daughter Ann.
13. Charles Willson Peale to Rembrandt Peale, February 3, 1810, in Donald Jackson, ed., *The Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents 1783-1854*, 2 vols. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), 2:493-494; William Clark to Jonathan Clark, November 22, 24, 1808, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 171.
14. William Clark to John O’Fallon, August 25, 1807, John O’Fallon Collection, MHS.
15. William Clark to John O’Fallon, November 22, 1808, John O’Fallon Collection, MHS.
16. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, December 10, 1808, November 9, 1808, and October 5, 1808, respectively, and July 16, 1810, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 184, 161, 154, 248.
17. William Clark to John Hite Clark, October 27, 1810, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 290.
18. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, November 22, 24, 1808, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 169-170.
19. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, November 8, 1809, July 16, 1810, and November 22, 24, 1808, respectively, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 226, 248, 172. William Eustis was the Secretary of War in the Madison administration.
20. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, August 26, 1809, October 28, 1809, and November 26, 1809, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 210, 218, 228.
21. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, September 9, 1807, and November 22, 24, 1808, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 126, 171. Point of Rocks was later renamed Clarks Point.
22. William Clark to Fanny Clark O’Fallon, June 1, 1795, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 273.
23. William Clark, December 18, 1809, Clark and Lewis Memorandum Book, 30, SHSM.
24. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, January 21, 1809, May 28, 1809, and September 14, 1811, Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 193, 201, 264. Sister refers to Jonathan’s wife Sarah Hite Clark. Julia refers to her as her Kentucky mother. This son was named William Preston Clark.
25. William Clark to Meriwether Lewis Clark, April 26, 1829, Meriwether Lewis Clark Papers of Clark Family Papers collection, box 8, fl. 5, and William Clark to George Rogers Hancock Clark, December 2, 1832, George Rogers Hancock Clark Papers of Clark Family Papers collection, box 6, fl. 2, MHS.
26. John O’Fallon to Charles Thruston, March 8, 1834, March 7, 1835, and January 10, 1837, John O’Fallon Papers, FHS. O’Fallon’s letters to Thruston provide important details about the elderly William Clark and his sons. William’s son William Preston verified at least the education part of O’Fallon’s belief. In writing to his brother George on February 27, 1833, he warned him not to expect a fortune from their father’s estate because he was spending a great deal of his wealth on educating them and their siblings (George Rogers Hancock Clark Papers, box 6, fl. 40, MHS).

William Clark, the Fur Trade, and Indian Affairs

By Jay H. Buckley

George Caleb Bingham's haunting painting of fur traders and a cat descending the Missouri River, 1845. Public domain.

William Clark's amazing adventure with Meriwether Lewis and the Corps of Discovery represents one of the foundational narratives of America's past. Their odyssey to the Pacific Ocean and back from 1803 to 1806 marks an epic adventure from sea to shining sea. This voyage helped legitimize American sovereignty over the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase and strengthened American claims to the Pacific Northwest. While this story is well known, Clark's lifelong dealings with the Spanish and later the Mexicans, as well as his role in helping advance the overland trade with Mexico along the Santa Fe Trail, are more obscure.¹

Clark's contacts with Spaniards and Mexicans coalesce three major episodes of his life: (1) his military service, private fur trading venture, and continental exploration from

1791 to 1806; (2) his career as an Indian agent and Missouri territorial governor from 1807 to 1820; and (3) his tenure as superintendent of Indian affairs at St. Louis from 1821 to 1838. During each of these episodes, Clark made decisions that brought him and his colleagues into dealings with Spaniards and Mexicans, during which interactions he exhibited his influence upon the Santa Fe Trail and the southern Plains fur trade.

Clark's military service, private ventures, and continental exploration from 1791 to 1806

When Clark moved west from Virginia in the mid-1780s, his family relocated to the Falls of the Ohio River in Louisville. Because the Ohio River was the major eastern tributary



of the Mississippi, this relocation brought him into regular contact with French and Spanish traders and citizens who resided in Indian country along the Mississippi and its tributaries. This Indian homeland had changed hands several times. Native sovereignty had been challenged by France's "Right of Discovery" in the 1680s when explorers such as LaSalle named the region Louisiana after the French king Louis XIV. Soon, the Spanish acquired the land west of the Mississippi River in the 1762 Treaty of Fontainebleau. Great Britain claimed all lands east of the Mississippi River after the 1763 Treaty of Paris (which ended the French and Indian War) and Americans reasserted the same claim following the 1783 Treaty of Paris (which ended the American War of Independence).²

After the American Revolution, America extended her western and southern borders over competing French, Spanish, and Native claims, which culminated in the Indian Wars of the Old Northwest (1785 to 1795). During these conflicts, Clark enlisted as a Kentucky militia volunteer. Then, as a lieutenant in the regular army, Clark commanded sixty infantry troops, twenty dragoons, and a remuda of 700 packhorses, which he adroitly saved from a Delaware and Shawnee ambush while on his way to Fort Greenville (in modern-day Ohio) in May of 1794. General Anthony Wayne granted Clark's request to command a company of riflemen as his reward. Wayne also recognized Clark's diplomatic abilities and sent him on several missions to negotiate with the Chickasaw Nation and with the Spanish forc-

es stationed at Chickasaw Bluffs (modern-day Memphis, Tennessee). The Spanish commander invited Clark to stay for supper. Clark wrote in his journal, “I was treated with the respect due to an American officer.” This may have been the first instance in which Clark dealt directly with a Spanish official.³

After the 1794 victory at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, General Wayne entrusted Lieutenant Clark to undertake another diplomatic mission to the Spanish. In the summer of 1795, Clark traveled to New Madrid (in modern-day Missouri) to protest the Spanish fortification on the Chickasaw Bluffs, to ascertain Spanish strength on the middle Mississippi, and to ensure free navigation of the river for American citizens. On September 15, 1795, Clark and seventeen men descended the Ohio River to its confluence with the Mississippi and thence to New Madrid. Clark delivered his message to the Spanish commander, Don Manuel Luis Gayoso de Lemos y Amorín, before returning to file his report at Fort Greenville on November 4.⁴ The Old Northwest Indian War ended with the signing of the 1795 Treaty of Greenville. Clark commanded the Chosen Rifle Company—comprised of elite riflemen—sharpshooters in the Second Sub-Legion—during the winter and spring of 1795 to 1796. It was then that he met Meriwether Lewis, who was his subordinate. Clark resigned from the army in July 1796 and returned to Louisville to care for his aging parents and to aid with the pressing financial and legal concerns of his brother George.⁵ During the fall of 1797, Clark organized his first entrepreneurial fur-trading venture. He visited Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and St. Louis on business, making acquaintances and ascertaining fur prices. Then he loaded two flatboats in Louisville with 1,479 pounds of deer skins, 50 pounds of beaver fur, 10 pounds of otter fur, 66 bear skins, and 500 pounds of bacon from neighbors and friends from Kentucky and prepared to embark for New Orleans. From March to December of 1798, his flotilla descended the Ohio, drifted down the Mississippi, and arrived at New Orleans, the center of the Spanish government’s commercial aspirations in North America. During his descent Clark drew numerous representations of the Mississippi River in a leather-trimmed journal wherein he recorded his travels. Unfortunately, Clark wrote little about his business dealings with the Spanish, but he did record selling his cargo for \$2,310.50, payment received in Spanish silver dollars, the prized currency of the day. Clark paid the 6% duty (\$288.77) and recorded the prices the Spanish paid for animal hides and pelts. Later,

he returned via Baltimore from this ten-month, 4,000-mile business trip to the Spanish port that initiated his lifelong interest and involvement in the fur trade.⁶

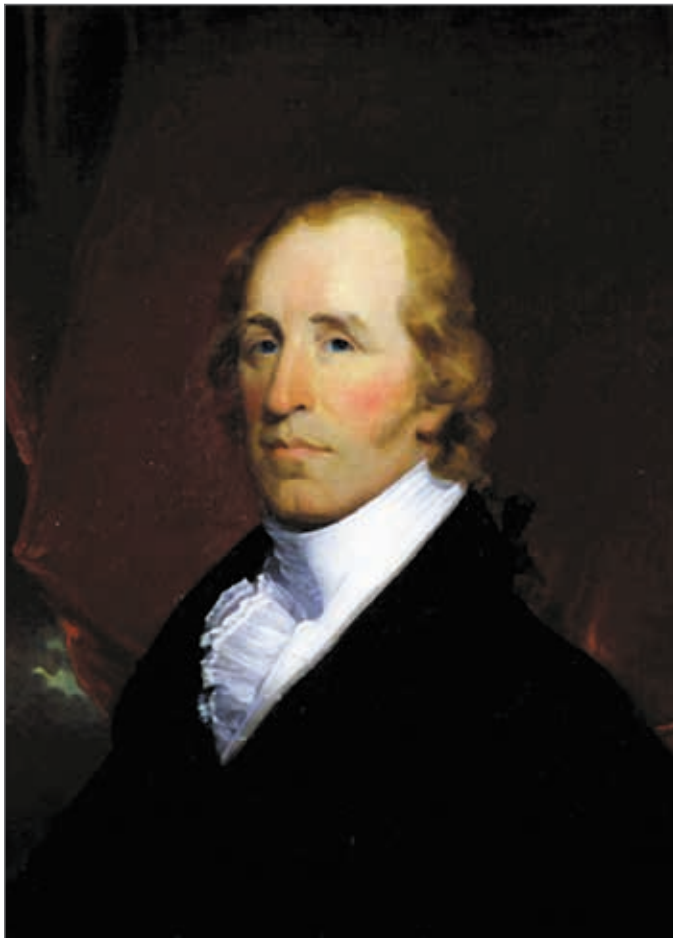
After President Jefferson asked Meriwether Lewis to lead a Corps of Northwest Discovery, Lewis asked Clark to join him in the venture. Jefferson tasked them with finding the best commercial route to the Pacific. Originally, the expedition would have trespassed through Indian territory claimed by the French. Fortune smiled on Jefferson, however, when his plenipotentiaries—James Monroe, Charles Pinckney, and Robert Livingston—reached an agreement with Napoleon to buy not only New Orleans but also the massive drainage west of the Mississippi for \$15 million. This concession proved crucial to the growth of the new country, with nearly half of American exports already passing down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans. Congress ratified the purchase on October 21, 1803. Suddenly, the Lewis and Clark Expedition gained a new kind of legitimacy that included asserting American sovereignty and replacing Native ties to the British, the Spanish, and the French with allegiance to the United States.

The American entry into the international race to control the fur wealth of the western half of North America intensified efforts to establish legitimate claims to the region. The Spanish had already acquired great wealth along the Pacific Coast by harvesting sea otters. Sea otter pelts and Spanish silver were about the only valuable items westerners could trade in China for the luxuries of Asia. The Spanish crown viewed the Manila galleon trade so favorably (because of the wealth it generated) that it allowed only one expedition to sail to the Orient annually. Meanwhile, English and French traders bartered for furs and hides with tribes from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River to supply Europe’s growing leather industry with hides and pelts from deer, elk, bison, antelope, and beaver—the five mammals most frequently mentioned in Lewis and Clark’s Expedition journals.

On October 3, 1803, Lewis alarmed his president, suggesting that instead of spending the winter in St. Louis preparing for the expedition, he might “make a tour this winter on horseback . . . up the Canceze [Kansas] River and towards Santafee” and that if “Mr Clark can with propriety also leave the party, I will prevail on him also to undertake a similar excursion.”⁷ On November 16, Jefferson’s reply arrived, along with a copies of the “Treaties of Louisiana, the act for taking possession,” and information from Jean Baptiste Tru-teau’s journal about the tribes of the Great Plains. Jefferson

cautioned Lewis that he “had better not enter the Missouri till the spring,” and “you must not undertake the winter excursion which you propose[d] in yours of Oct. 3.” The president left no room for ambiguity. Jefferson then revealed that he had made his own additional plans “for exploring the principal waters of the Missisipi & Missouri.”⁸

Jefferson instructed Lewis and Clark to “explore the Missouri river, & such principal stream of it, as, by its course and communication with the waters of the Pacific . . . may offer the most direct & practicable water communication across this continent for the purposes of commerce.” Gathering practical information on geography and fur resources was paramount, especially in justifying the expedition to Congress, as was fostering peace and friendship with tribal nations. Moreover, the captains must inform the nations of our “dispositions to a commercial intercourse with them; confer[ing] with them on the points most convenient as mutual emporiums, and the articles of most desirable interchange for them & us.”⁹ Jefferson’s counsel to be cautious and not provoke the Spanish proved prophetic. With advice from



Portrait of William Clark at about the age of 40 by John Jarvis. Courtesy Missouri Historical Society.

the double agent U.S. General James Wilkinson, Spanish officials sought to thwart the Lewis and Clark Expedition by sending four intercept parties to apprehend the Corps of Discovery.¹⁰

Although unsuccessful in arresting Lewis and Clark, the Spanish did capture, detain, or thwart other American explorers, adventurers, and fur hunters. Some of these include Zebulon Pike, Philip Nolan, Thomas Freeman and Peter Custis, Manuel Lisa, Auguste P. Chouteau, Jules DeMun, Jacques Clamorgan, Joseph McLanahan, Reuben Smith, James Patterson, Manuel Blanco, Robert McKnight, James Baird, Joseph Philibert, and others. Spanish officials detained these Yankee interlopers, confiscated their goods, and typically sent them back to the U.S. or detained them in Spanish prisons.¹¹ The intrigues related to the Santa Fe trade permeated St. Louis. James Wilkinson wrote Pike saying, “It is reduced to a certainty that Manuel Lisa and a society of which he is the ostensible leader have determined on a project to open some commercial intercourse with Santa Fe.” Wilkinson counseled Pike to try to block Lisa’s efforts, saying, “You must do what you can consistently to defeat the plan.”¹²

The realization that overland trade between Santa Fe and St. Louis was possible prompted Clark to gather as much information about it as he could. On August 3, 1804, a trader on the lower Missouri told Clark that a traveler could reach Santa Fe in twenty-five days from St. Louis via the Arkansas and Kansas Rivers. A year later, on August 15, 1805, a Shoshone informant told Lewis his people “could pass to the Spaniards by the way of the Yellowstone River in 10 days.” Both claims represented miscalculations, because the actual distances were between 950 and 1,023 miles from Santa Fe. On September 17, 1806, just days before the Corps of Discovery reached St. Louis, Captain John McClallen told the captains he was bound for Santa Fe via the Platte River to open trade negotiations with the Spanish. Clark remarked, “Capt McClellins plan I think a very good one if strictly prosued &c.”¹³

Clark’s career as Indian agent and Missouri territorial governor from 1807 to 1820

When Lewis and Clark returned from their epic journey, Thomas Jefferson appointed Lewis as territorial governor of Upper Louisiana and Clark as brigadier general of the territorial militia and principal federal Indian agent for all western tribes except for the Osages, whose agent was Pierre Chouteau. Clark became quite close to the influential Chouteau clan, especially Auguste and Pierre.¹⁴ Clark’s first ob-

jective was to make peace with the powerful Osage Nation. Accordingly, in 1808, he oversaw the erection of a military outpost and government trading factory on a bluff overlooking the Missouri River near modern-day Sibley, Missouri. Clark drew detailed sketches of the shape of the fort and its buildings. Originally named Fort Clark but renamed Fort Osage, the facility housed soldiers under the command of Captain Eli B. Clemson to provide protection for the United States Factory (trading post) under the direction of George Sibley, who encouraged the Osages to settle nearby for economic benefits. When built, the fort was simultaneously the westernmost fur-trading factory of the U.S. factory system (and the most profitable one) as well as the westernmost U.S. military post at the time.¹⁵

In the controversial Treaty of Fort Clark (signed in 1808, ratified in 1810), negotiated first by Clark and then by Pierre Chouteau, these U.S. diplomats and Osage emissaries agreed upon the construction of a fort to be built for the protection and economic benefit of the Osage. The Osages agreed to exchange most of their lands east of a line directly south of the fort (most of Missouri) in exchange for annual annuities, access to the government trading factory, and protection by the military garrison from the Sac and Fox Nations and other enemy raiders. The Great Osage were to receive \$1,000 and the Little Osage were to receive \$500. Fort Osage became the major stopping point for Indian and white traders, military escorts, and those traveling the Missouri. It was also an important landmark on the Santa Fe Trail.¹⁶

Constructing government factories and forts provided a starting point for stabilizing the region by establishing economic and military alliances with tribes, specifically the Osage. It was also a way to decrease illegal trading among the tribes by unlicensed traders. A number of upper Missouri tribes, however, lay outside of the government trading system, so agents sought to pull them into an American alliance through private traders operating under government regulations administered by Clark. Spaniard Manuel Lisa immediately carried out plans to ascend the Missouri River upon Lewis and Clark's return in 1806. His party, which included several Lewis and Clark Expedition veterans, headed upriver in 1807 and established a fort at the confluence of the Bighorn and the Yellowstone River, which achieved moderate success trading with the Crows. The next year brought additional returns and the possibility and desirability of his forming a fur company to capitalize on those profits and to extend American influence into the upper Missouri country.¹⁷

On March 7, 1809, Lisa assembled a group of prominent and influential citizens in St. Louis to organize the Missouri Fur Company. As the territorial seat of government, St. Louis served as a western gateway and as an outfitting center for nearly all expeditions destined for Santa Fe or the upper Missouri River. Lisa's company had the powerful backing of Pierre Menard and William Morrison of Kaskaskia, as well as the St. Louis elite: Pierre and Auguste Chouteau, Benjamin Wilkinson, Sylvestre Labbadie Jr., Andrew Henry, Governor Meriwether Lewis' brother Reuben, and General William Clark. Meriwether Lewis may have been a silent partner as well. With the energetic leadership of Lisa, and with Henry and Menard as field captains, St. Louis newspaper editor Joseph Charless concluded that the company had "every prospect of becoming a force of incalculable advantage, not only to the individuals engaged in the enterprise, but the community at large."¹⁸

The company's grand plans included erecting trading posts and forts among upper Missouri tribes and monopolizing the trade of the entire region, taking it from the British. The company had several points in its favor: Governor Lewis supported it; William Clark, the principal Indian agent, served on the board of directors; and there was enough capital to pursue the fur trade on an extensive scale. Article ten of the Articles of Association and Co-partnership listed an important and controversial item of business: Governor Lewis contracted with the Missouri Fur Company to transport Sheheke-shote (i.e., the Big White), the Mandan chief who had accompanied Lewis to Washington, back to the Mandan villages. The company would receive the generous sum of \$7,000 for its services.¹⁹ Pierre Chouteau and a party of 125 men (including 40 men from Clark's Missouri Militia) eventually forced their way through the Arikaras' blockade. Despite the success of this expedition in delivering the chief safely home, its exorbitant cost was one of several expenses authorized by Governor Lewis that the new secretary of war, William Eustis, refused to pay.²⁰

Clark's involvement in the Missouri Fur Company was extensive. As the government's representative, he ensured that the trading houses operated smoothly. He may have overstepped his bounds by using his position to engage in private trade, albeit in regions beyond the reach of the factories. To further complicate matters, Clark operated a general store in St. Louis, selling goods to Native Americans and company traders. He conducted this business on the side to supplement his government salary. It gave him an extra

source of income to support his immediate family and the proliferating clan of stepchildren, nephews, nieces, in-laws, and cousins he helped provide for as the years passed. Nevertheless, Clark's commingling of government, fur company, and private business looked like conflict of interest to some St. Louisians.²¹

Clark viewed his actions as furthering personal, state, and national interests among tribes in the continent's interior. The company's primary trading area near the Missouri River's headwaters lay hundreds of miles beyond the reach of the government trading houses. Clark desired to secure the fur trade then flowing into Britain's hands and to win the loyalty of the upper Missouri tribes. He envisioned the fur company as the means to accomplish both ends. Additionally, Clark held the authority to issue licenses to trade with the Indians. Having some influence in the firm would make his own task easier to complete. It also solidified his connection with his French Creole friends. Even the cautious Chouteaus trusted Clark to keep the company books.²²

The company appointed Clark as its resident agent in St. Louis to "receive all Peltries, furs, monies, or other property sent or delivered to him by the Company or any member thereof." In other words, Clark received all of the merchandise coming downstream, stored it at the government's expense in a government building, used his associations to complete the sale of the furs, and made contracts with Indian merchandise suppliers for trade goods. Finally, the company gave Clark full power "to sign and execute all notes, bills, obligations, receipts, discharges & acquittances for and in behalf of the Company." Clark was involved as a plaintiff or defendant in more than a dozen court cases involving the firm. To the company, it made sound business sense. To some Missourians, it reeked of a conflict of interest.²³

Manuel Lisa's attempts to open the Santa Fe trade faced setbacks with the outbreak of the War of 1812, but he still proposed to send his trusted lieutenant Charles Sanguinet to the Arapahos. Lisa penned a letter to introduce himself and the Missouri Fur Company to the Spaniards, proposing trade between Missouri and Santa Fe. Lisa stated it was his "desire to engage in business and open up a new commerce, which might easily be done. With this in view, and as director of the Missouri Fur Company, I propose to you gentlemen that if you wish to trade and deal with me, for whatever quantity of goods it may be, I will obligate myself to fill each year any bill of goods which shall be given me. And all shall be delivered (as stipulated) both as to quality and as to



Portrait of Manuel Lisa, ca. 1818. Artist unknown. Courtesy of Missouri Historical Society.

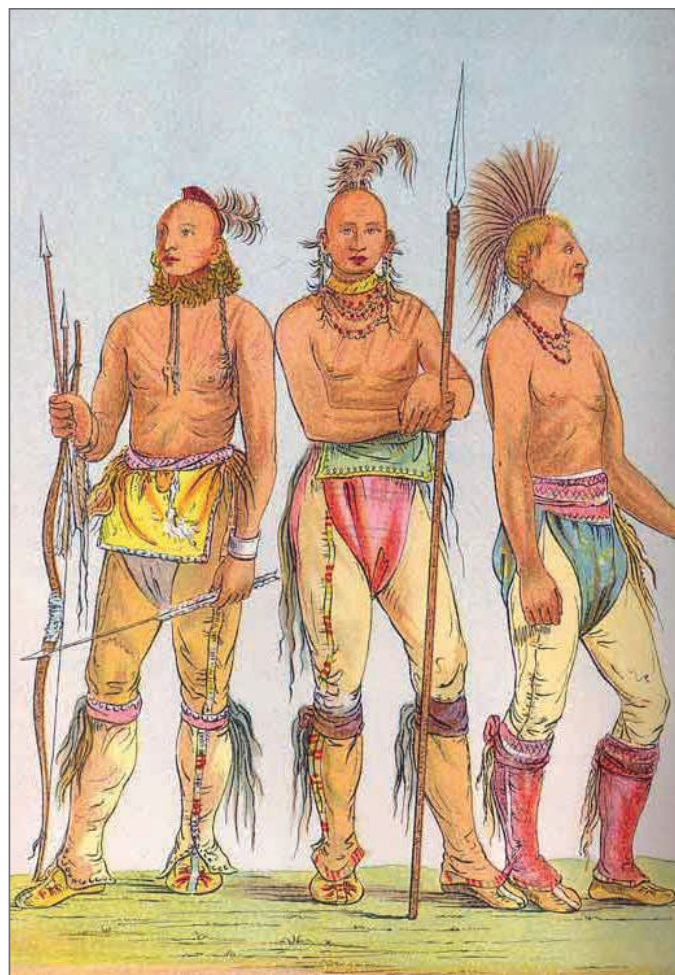
quantity, at the place nearest and most convenient for both parties, to your satisfaction, after we shall have agreed on the chosen place." Lisa dispatched more than one thousand dollars' worth of merchandise to indicate his seriousness and willingness to open the trade route, but the death of Jean Baptiste Champlain and Indian hostilities on the Plains and in the Rockies forced Lisa to pull back his vision for a time.²⁴

As the War of 1812 broke out, President James Madison appointed William Clark as governor of the newly created Missouri Territory. Territorial governors served as *ex officio* superintendents of Indian affairs. Clark tried to keep the peace on the western frontier during the War of 1812.²⁵ He used his connections with fur traders, like Manuel Lisa, to keep the Lakotas and other nations neutral. Clark authorized the construction of two dozen blockhouses between Fort Osage on the Missouri and Fort Madison on the Mississippi (in modern-day Iowa) with rangers to patrol between them. Following the war, he had the Osage treaty lines surveyed in 1815. Land with a clear title was incorporated into several towns and counties, especially Franklin in Howard County and Boonville in Cooper County. Boonville and

the Boone's Lick region in general derive their names from the famous frontiersman Daniel Boone (1734-1820). Clark knew the Boone family well, especially the sons Daniel Morgan and Nathan Boone. The latter traveled with Clark to help construct Fort Osage in 1808 and served as a militia officer during the War of 1812.²⁶ Militiamen and fur traders used the Boone's Lick Road in territorial Missouri to travel between St. Charles and Old Franklin, the western terminus of the Boone's Lick Road and the eastern terminus of the Santa Fe Trail. Both communities functioned as gathering places to hear the latest news, engage in trade, and procure supplies for westward excursions.²⁷

Clark also took action to protect his Indian charges from being overrun by squatters. On December 9, 1815, he issued a proclamation that "white persons emigrating from the settlements of this territory, as well as from the neighboring territories, States, and elsewhere, have, at various times intruded upon the Indian lands and made establishments there." He said that they had disregarded his previous warnings and were in violation of the law. "These practices can be no longer permitted," he stressed, and "should they neglect to this last and peaceful warning the military power will be called upon to compel their removal."²⁸ He reorganized the militia, knowing that if he were called upon to carry out the government's wish to expel squatters, he would need sufficient strength to back up the warnings he had issued. When federal approval to evict squatters came in the spring, Clark acknowledged that the task had proved "more difficult to perform than could well be imagined."²⁹

With no federal troops to enforce his eviction notice, Clark turned to the militia, who resisted removing the squatters and insisted that Clark was supporting Indian claims over the interests of American citizens. In the end, Clark's promise to protect Indian rights amounted to little more than lip service. Instead of removing the squatters, he laid the groundwork to remove the Native Americans. Moreover, Clark had defended the Spanish and French land claims of the old settlers. The new immigrants streaming into the territory began to complain that Clark was pro-Indian, pro-Spanish, and pro-French—clearly out of sync with the new Anglo direction in which the territory's political winds blew. The influx of American settlers altered the balance of political power in Missouri. Although the established French Creole families along the Mississippi controlled large landholdings, fur-trading interests, lead mining, and grain production, they soon became an



George Catlin's portrait of three Osage men. Courtesy of georgecatlin.org.

outnumbered minority.

Clark's francophone friends became a liability during his political campaign to become Missouri's governor in 1820. As territorial governor, Clark had allied himself with influential French Creole fur merchants and with land claimants holding unconfirmed Spanish titles. Land speculators and the majority of the American population who had arrived within the past five years disapproved of the governor's support of these claims, especially his proclamations about expelling squatters from Native American lands. Clark's loyalty to longtime friends and members of the territorial establishment fit what he felt would best serve his own and the territory's interests. This affiliation with Missouri's old-guard "caucus," made up of prominent politicians, leaders, and a lawyer junto, proved disastrous for Clark's political aspirations. This group had taken control of the convention, written in higher salaries for the office of governor and judge, and seemed to be dictating to the people what the new government would be like. Editor Joseph Charless

of the *Missouri Gazette* waged political warfare against the group and viciously attacked the caucus' ringleader, Thomas Hart Benton, in the newspaper.³⁰

Clark, whom many had viewed as overly sympathetic to Native Americans during his years as agent and territorial governor, recognized the shift in popular opinion and reluctantly compromised his views.³¹ Although Sibley developed strong trading ties with the Osages, private traders were not happy that they had to compete with the government for trade. By 1822, Clark joined Thomas Hart Benton and the Chouteau faction to lobby Congress to end the factory system in favor of private entrepreneurs regulated by trade and intercourse laws.³² Missouri's lobbying efforts succeeded. Private entrepreneurs like William Ashley advertised for adventurers to ascend the Missouri while William Becknell advertised for fur hunters to ascend the Arkansas.³³

This change occurred on the heels of a scientific exploration of the central plains led by Stephen Long, sparked by the 1819 Adams-Onís Treaty which established a transcontinental boundary between the United States and Spain.³⁴ Long and a group of scientists and officers set out from Fort Osage, marching westward along the Kansas and Platte rivers, mapping, surveying, and selecting future fortification sites. Unfortunately, they did not examine the sources of the Platte, Arkansas, or Red rivers. Although Long's expedition failed to explore the new American boundary with Spain, he brought back invaluable information about the central plains from the Platte to the Canadian rivers. The expedition was relevant to Clark because it helped to define the region within his superintendence. More importantly, Long deemed the land unsuitable for European settlement (the "Great American Desert"), and many Americans began to advocate that this unwanted land would be ideal to exchange for eastern tribal lands.³⁵

When Secretary of War James Barbour recommended Indian removal to facilitate the expanding settlements in eastern regions in 1826, Clark suggested that lands in the Great Plains be exchanged for Indian lands in the East. His proposal stated that the "country west of Missouri and Arkansas, and west of the Mississippi river, north of Missouri, is the one destined to receive them. From all accounts, this country will be well adapted to their residence." He continued, "[I]t is well watered with numerous small streams and some large rivers; abounds with grass, which will make it easy to raise stock; has many salt springs, from which a supply of the necessary article of salt can be obtained; contains

much prairie land, which will make the opening of farms easy; and affords a temporary supply of game."³⁶

Clark had gathered information about the geography of the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains and the inhabitants of each from his observations during the expedition of 1804 to 1806. He also possessed Indian information, gleaned from treaty councils and Indian delegations. At his Indian office and museum in St. Louis, he kept a master map of the West, created between 1810 and 1812, and added information supplied by Zebulon Pike, John Colter, Manuel Lisa, and other explorers, fur traders, and trappers who stopped by his office to receive permission to venture into Indian country. Some information proved difficult to reconcile. Pike's misinformation about the pyramidal height of land from whence all major western rivers flowed—the Snake, Yellowstone, Missouri, Platte, Colorado, and Arkansas—caused Clark to squish Wyoming and Colorado together to reconcile the geography. Aside from this egregious distortion of the geography of the Southwest, Clark's master map offered the best American cartographic representation of the trans-Mississippi West available until John C. Fremont's explorations in the 1840s.³⁷

In 1820, the government authorized Reverend Jedidiah Morse of the First Congregational Church in Massachusetts to tour the western country and ascertain the condition of the Native Americans. In his official report, Morse related that the object of his trip had been to find the Native Americans a place in an expanding America—areas directly under Clark's stewardship—and to define the government's relationship to them. Morse reported on how the American intrusion had transformed Indians, who had gone from being "happy proprietors of this extensive domain" to drinking "the bitter cup of humiliation." Poor treatment, land loss, armed conflict, and removal had left them "fugitives, vagrants, and strangers in their own country."³⁸

One of the most important sections of Morse's somewhat romanticized report focused upon the Indian trade. Morse concluded that the U.S. system wherein the government and licensed traders supplied Indians with merchandise in exchange for furs had several shortcomings. First, he wrote that the Indian agents were not vested with sufficient authority to stop dishonest and unprincipled traders or alcohol from reaching the Indians. Second, he proposed that the government either increase its investment and run the whole Indian trade itself or withdraw altogether and allow duly licensed and regulated traders to operate in Indian country.

Ironically, Clark had pointed out both of these shortcomings and possibilities for correction five years earlier, as territorial governor.

Morse thought that expanding the factory system with sufficient government capital might work to control the liquor trade as well as destroy the influence of the British credit system by selling goods at fixed prices in the villages. The government, however, could not supply high-quality goods as cheaply as private traders or the British could. Since the U.S. government factors at the fur factories were not allowed to extend credit to Indians, Morse suggested that they consider abandoning the trade altogether. He also cautioned that turning the trade over to private citizens would carry some risks. Regulating liquor and monitoring the custom of extending credit to the Indians, as well as the fact that traders, *engagés*, and interpreters were often British subjects and could sometimes be of dubious character, presented some potential problems in protecting the Indians from fraud, debauchery, and injustice. Morse concluded that “the Factory system for supplying the Indians with such articles as they may need, does not appear to me to be productive of any great advantage, either to the Indians themselves, or to the Government. . . . In my opinion the best plan of supplying the natives, is by private American traders of *good character*, if they could be placed under proper restrictions.”³⁹

For the government’s interest, private traders needed to appease Native Americans, extend credit, intermingle and instill elements of civilized ideas, manners, and customs, and promote intertribal peace. Indian agents also should reside in or near villages of the nations they served, build council houses, and employ blacksmiths and carpenters, the government providing the agents with the necessary tools to assist the Native Americans. Furthermore, the government should make certain to replace all British flags and medals with their American equivalents. They could also form or support a society to promote the general welfare of the Native tribes and begin a civilizing mission to refine them where they were or exchange land with them beyond the frontier settlements. By removing the Native Americans from contact with white men of evil intent, the government could allow time for Indian superintendents and agents of high moral character to assist the Native Americans in establishing agriculture and schools and to vaccinate them against European diseases. Schools, such as those operated by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, combined with the training by agriculturalists and the

agents, would make it possible for the Indians eventually to be “raised gradually and ultimately, to the rank, and to the enjoyment of all the rights and privileges of freemen, and citizens of the United States.”⁴⁰

Pawnee chief Petalesharo’s speech to President Monroe during the Indian leader’s 1822 visit to Washington provides a Native American’s perspective on the situation facing his tribe. He reminisced about the time before whites when Indians’ wants were fewer and there was nothing they could not get; all of their needs were met. But now, times were changing.

My Great Father: Some of your good chiefs, as they are called [missionaries], have proposed to send some of their good people among us to change our habits, to make us work and live like the white people. I will not tell a lie—I am going to tell the truth. You love your country—you love your people—you love the manner in which they live, and you think your people brave. I am like you. . . . I love my country—I love my people—I love the manner in which they live, and think myself and my warriors brave. Spare me then, Father; let me enjoy my country, and pursue the buffalo, and the beaver, and the other wild animals of our country, and I will trade their skins with your people. I have grown up, and lived thus long without work—I am in hopes you will suffer me to die without it. We have plenty of buffalo, beaver, deer, and other wild animals—we have also an abundance of horses—we have everything we want—we have plenty of land, if you will keep your people off of it.⁴¹

Clark’s tenure as superintendent of Indian affairs at St. Louis from 1821 to 1838

General Agustín de Iturbide proclaimed Mexican independence from Spain in 1821, which opened economic doors to Mexico’s northern provinces.⁴² Two hundred thirteen years after Governor Pedro de Peralta arrived and founded Santa Fé as the capital of New Spain in 1609, American Thomas James witnessed the celebration on Epiphany Sunday, January 6, 1822, near the Governor’s Palace in Santa Fé’s central square. James reminisced that he helped erect a seventy-foot liberty pole with a new flag but later remembered the revelry was too much for him. “No Italian carnival ever exceeded this celebration in thoughtlessness, vice and licentiousness of every description.”⁴³

The euphoria did not just affect New Mexicans. Missourians also took notice, recognizing that the Spanish policy



Map of the Santa Fe Trail. Courtesy of Jay H. Buckley.

of mercantilism, which had officially prevented Spanish citizens from trading with non-Spanish territories, was now lifted. A trading route connecting the Boone's Lick Road from St. Louis to Franklin and from Franklin to Santa Fe was now possible. Thomas James was soon joined in Santa Fe by Jacob Fowler and Hugh Glenn, who had set out from Fort Smith, Arkansas. In June, William Becknell, a manager of the Boone's Lick Salt Works and one of the founders of the Santa Fe Trail, advertised in the *Missouri Intelligencer* for "a company of men destined to the westward for the purpose of trading horses and mules, and catching wild animals of every description." Intending to trap furs in the Rockies and trade with southern tribes like the Comanches, he and a half dozen men loaded mules with cotton goods and other merchandise at Franklin and stopped at Fort Osage, the last American outpost, in September. They journeyed overland along the Arkansas River and south through Raton Pass before arriving at San Miguel, the port of entry. At Taos, they exchanged their goods for silver dollars, burros, and Spanish blankets. At Santa Fe, they received a cordial reception from Governor Facundo Melgares and were granted permission to trap beaver.

Taos and Santa Fe evolved into trapping and Indian trading operation bases for men like William Wolfskill, Ewing Young, Augustus Storrs, Antoine Robidoux, James O. Pattie, Étienne Provost, Ceran St. Vrain, Bill Williams, Thomas Fitzpatrick, and others, many of them personally acquainted with Clark. Over the next five years, more than \$100,000 in beaver skins were harvested from mountain streams in the Southwest.⁴⁴ Others, like Thomas James, found trading with Comanches for buffalo robes and horseflesh in Comancheria more enticing than the mules and furs of New Mexico.⁴⁵

Becknell's pack mules returned to Missouri in 1822 loaded down with Spanish silver dollars, and news quickly spread that Mexican trade on the Santa Fe Trail was both feasible and lucrative.⁴⁶ Soon, merchandise worth tens of thousands of dollars flowed east and west over the 780-mile journey. Teams of six or eight oxen pulled heavy wagons filled with three to six thousand pounds of glass beads, rifles, silk stockings, calico ribbon, domestic cotton, and other manufactured goods, which were exchanged for silver dollars, furs, and mules. Moreover, the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (or Royal Road of the Interior Lands) ran for 1,200 miles and connected Mexico City to Santa Fe. Connected to

the Missouri settlements via the Santa Fe Trail and, a decade later, to the California missions via the Old Spanish Trail, Santa Fe emerged as the crossroads of the Southwest.⁴⁷

The increased traffic along the Santa Fe Trail brought a host of problems to the Native inhabitants, and Missouri's statehood (achieved on August 10, 1821) created even more. Demolishing the factory system and opening up the fur trade to private entrepreneurs led to more conflict. With almost 400,000 settlers in the new state, population pressures pushed out against the Native inhabitants. In 1822, Congress passed a special act that created the post of superintendent of Indian affairs at St. Louis, and the president appointed Clark to fill the post for an annual salary of \$1,500. Until the Indian Department was reorganized in 1834, Clark oversaw all Native Americans west of the Mississippi River, as well as numerous eastern tribes relocated onto the Great Plains over the next two decades. Clark felt that reserving a permanent homeland for tribes where they could engage in agricultural pursuits was one of the ways they would be assimilated and acculturated into the American mainstream. He proposed and supported the creation of a permanent Indian territory, Indian "civilizing" missions, Indian schools, and Christian proselytizing. Like many of his day, Clark thought that individual land ownership, public education, and Christianity provided the path for Indians to gain American citizenship.⁴⁸

Superintendent Clark and his nephew Benjamin O'Fallon (who was a subagent for the Upper Missouri) corresponded with Mexican officials on a number of topics including the overland trade, Indian depredations, and individual traders. Santa Fe Governor Joseph Vizcarra corresponded with Alexander McNair and Superintendent Clark but they had to be circumspect in their letters because only the secretary of state in Washington was supposed to deal with foreign diplomats. Nevertheless, Clark informed Vizcarra that he was doing all in his power to stop the Pania [Pawnee] war against the Upper Spanish provinces of New Mexico. "I have spoken to the Pania Chiefs . . . and instructed the agents in that quarter to use their influence to prevent a continuation of this war . . . [although] I am apprehensive that it will be with much difficulty that those Indians will be restrained from persuing a war for which have been lucrative without much loss on their part." O'Fallon, the agent using his influence, kept Clark apprised of the situation, although O'Fallon often wrote those letters from St. Louis instead of from his post on the Upper Missouri where he should have been re-

siding. This correspondence among O'Fallon, Clark, and Mexican officials continued when Bartolomé Baca became Governor of Santa Fe.⁴⁹

In addition to helping the Mexicans avert war with the Pawnees, Clark also supported efforts to assist, survey, and protect the people and goods traveling along the Santa Fe Trail. After all, the furs, silver, and other products were a boon to the Missouri economy and helped Clark's friends, just as the New Mexicans enjoyed the cutlery, silks, and cotton cloths supplied by Missouri merchants. Unlike the fur trade companies that required bonds and capital investment, practically anyone could buy a wagon or some mules, load them with goods, and make a profit if they reached Taos or Santa Fe, while others could invest in mercantile endeavors from St. Louis. Missourians received raw materials, like furs, robes, and silver bullion, in exchange for cheap manufactured goods.⁵⁰

Clark's efforts to survey and protect the Santa Fe Trail aided entrepreneurs and investors in their quests. He had worked with surveyor Joseph Brown before. A fellow Virginian, Brown had conducted the 1815 survey of the Louisiana Purchase in Arkansas and Missouri, provided the first plat of St. Louis, which fittingly started at the home of Auguste Chouteau, and, finally, conducted the 1823 survey of the line between the Missouri and Indian territories beginning at the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri rivers. Brown was accompanied by former factor George Sibley, Missouri legislator Benjamin Reeves, and Thomas Mather, who replaced entrepreneur Pierre Menard who was too ill to make the trip. Clark may have aided the commissioners in garnering congressional approval and support for the appropriation of funds and the permission to make treaties. Clark was also well aware of the need to purchase a right-of-way from tribes along the route, as well as to ensure safety for the caravans and protection for the tribes. The surveying team successfully concluded additional treaties with the Osage and Kansa Nations. Ironically, the survey was a little short on both ends, starting at Fort Osage instead of Franklin and ending in Taos instead of Santa Fe.⁵¹

In June 1825, Clark met with Osage and Kansa representatives at Castor Hill on his Marias Castor (Beaver Pond) ranch on the outskirts of St. Louis and enacted a treaty that divested those nations of much of the territory encompassing today's Kansas and parts of Oklahoma. After the 1825 Osage Treaty, the twenty-five-mile-wide strip that includes Jackson County was made available for American settle-

ment. After Lexington had been platted in 1822 and, later, Independence in 1827 (the same year Fort Leavenworth was constructed further upstream on the Kansas side of the Missouri River), Fort Osage lost its luster. Lexington became the county seat and was the new eastern terminus of the Santa Fe Trail, where mules, silver, and furs traveled its main street. Clark was acquainted with the Aull brothers and other entrepreneurs who lived and traded in Lexington and Independence.⁵²

During 1829, the sunset of the John Quincy Adams administration, William Clark and Thomas McKenny formulated a new code of regulations for the administration of Indian affairs. Lewis Cass used his influence as secretary of war to convince Congress of the wisdom of adopting the code. On February 9, 1829, Cass and Clark submitted a lengthy treatise of fifty-six sections to Congress to organize the Indian Department. The Cass-Clark bill recommended increased government regulation of frontier trading, clearly marked boundary lines, and substantial oversight by Indian superintendents and their agents to ban alcohol and control all trading licenses for persons entering Indian country.⁵³

Unauthorized and unlicensed traders could not legally enter Indian country without Clark's permission (or permission from one of his agents or subagents). Thus, Clark developed friendships and corresponded with the top rung of the fur trade community. William Ashley, Jedediah Smith, William Sublette, David Jackson, Robert Campbell, Jim Bridger, and others all worked closely with Clark and ensured that they carried his favor to keep their licenses to trade and the bonds they offered current and up to date. Jedediah Smith, for instance, cultivated a close relationship with Clark, writing letters, sharing geographical information, and sending artifacts for Clark's Indian museum.⁵⁴ Smith also relied on Clark to write letters of recommendation to the government. Smith wrote Secretary of War John Eaton that he should contact Clark to verify Smith's qualifications for a proposed government expedition to the West with Lieutenant Reuben Holmes, for instance. In addition to acquiring licenses from Clark to enter Indian country to trade with the Indians, traders like Smith who planned to travel to Santa Fe also had to apply for a passport from the State Department to enter Mexican Territory. Smith had Ashley write a note to Thomas Hart Benton to help Smith acquire a passport for a "trading Expedition to the Mexican Provinces," which Smith received on March 3, 1831.⁵⁵

Fur brigade leaders like Jedediah Smith also provided

useful field information for Clark. Smith wrote Clark a letter in December 1829 recounting his difficulties with Native Americans and Mexicans during his 1827 and 1828 journeys to California. Smith acknowledged the hospitality of John McLoughlin and the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver but then stated, "Until British interlopers are dismissed from off our territory . . . Americans will never be respected or acknowledged as patrons by Indians on the west side of the Rocky Mountains."⁵⁶

Clark echoed Smith's sentiments in an 1831 governmental report on the condition of the fur trade, wherein he offered a glimpse into how to improve the trade and eliminate its negative effects on Indians: "In elucidating the present conditions of the Fur Trade on the frontiers of the States, it will be seen to lie under many disadvantages." Principally among these disadvantages, he offered, was "the preference which the Indians themselves have always shewn and still continued to shew the English." Clark advocated for more government control and more humanitarian aid, as well as a crackdown on liquor taken into Indian country. One agent informed Clark that only one out of one hundred gallons of liquor taken into Indian country was actually permitted by the Indian office. Since liquor intended for the "boatmen" had been used instead for trade, "I shall conceive it my bound duty to recommend the total & entire prohibition of this article in the indian Country under any pretence or for any purpose whatever."⁵⁷

Smith's 1831 journey to Santa Fe occurred a decade after the trail opened and hundreds of traders and fur hunters had already made the 1,700-mile round trip from St. Louis



Trail Marker along the Santa Fe Trail in Kansas. Erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution, 1906.

to Santa Fe. Plains nations, like the Comanches, Pawnees, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, loathed the traders who were killing their game and trespassing through their territory.⁵⁸ Josiah Gregg estimated that three hundred traders and helpers freighted a quarter million dollars of merchandise across the trail that year. The Smith, Jackson, and Sublette entourage that departed St. Louis on April 10, 1831, consisted of seventy-four men and twenty-two mule-drawn wagons, half of them belonging to Smith and half to the other partners. Unfortunately, Smith lost his life on the journey. The Jackson and Sublette caravan arrived in Santa Fe on the Fourth of July. Sublette traded well, garnering fifty-five packs of beaver and 800 buffalo robes as his share.⁵⁹

Congress and the American public failed to realize that ratification of Indian treaties did not bring an end to Indian-white conflicts. In fact, these treaties often created new problems and misunderstandings that resulted in atrocities committed by both sides. Mexican officials grew suspicious of people's evading custom duties. Even worse, Americans traded ammunition, guns, and liquor to Indians, creating a potential powder keg of trouble. The Missouri, Arkansas, and Kansas frontiers, in particular, became zones where hostilities frequently occurred. Comanche, Kiowa, Osage, Pawnee, and Wichita warriors regularly pillaged trade caravans or collected tolls between Missouri and Santa Fe as well as waged war against emigrant tribes like the Cherokees and Delawares, who had been driven out of the East by the Indian Removal Act of 1830.⁶⁰ When the Reverend Isaac McCoy embarked on an exploring tour of Kansas to establish an Indian Canaan, Clark warned him not to venture past the lands recently allotted to the Shawnees due to the presence of Pawnee war parties.⁶¹

Cheyenne and Arapaho warriors raided horses from Kiowas and Comanches, who raided them back. The vast herds of horses, mules, oxen, and other livestock on the overland trail, in addition to the merchandise available, proved alluring to raiders on all sides, including the Comancheros. Clark encouraged the deployment of the First Regiment of U. S. Dragoons from Leavenworth to garrison forts in Indian country, beginning in 1829, to conduct regular patrols of the extensive area, to escort overland expeditions, and to minimize depredations among settlers and emigrant Indians and the Indigenous tribes.⁶²

Nevertheless, it was an uphill battle. Major Bennet Riley from Jefferson Barracks provided Clark with the number and names of men killed on the 1829 Santa Fe expedition.

Others, like William Gordon, informed Clark that the Arapahos and Gros Ventres "have 1,200 warriors. They inhabit the country from the Santa Fe trail to the head of the Platte. . . . They harrass the Santa Fe traders, and those engaged in the fur trade."⁶³ Five years later, in 1836, the threats of Indian attack had not abated, and Kentuckian Herman Bowman informed Vice President Martin Van Buren that the Indian Territory represented "a more expos'd frontier, than at present in a part of any Civilized nation."⁶⁴

The liquor traffic, in particular, contributed to the hostilities. Clark wrote that after one drink, "not an Indian could be found among a thousand who would not sell his horse, his gun, or his last blankets for another drink."⁶⁵ Traders bought pure alcohol in St. Louis for a dollar a gallon and sold it in the mountains for four dollars or a buffalo robe a pint, making it the most lucrative (and illegal) trading item.⁶⁶ Clark's record on stopping the liquor trade equivocated, consistently condemning it in correspondence to Washington but often granting liquor licenses to overland caravans for the use of their boatmen. The whiskey trade in Indian Territory and along the Santa Fe Trail is a story full of heartbreak and debauchery.⁶⁷

Private traders operating beyond the permanent Indian Territory often viewed the government's trade and intercourse laws as unenforceable. Most company leaders, such as the Bents, still tried to maintain respectability. Clark knew the Bent family. He had likely met Silas Bent in the spring of 1804 before the Lewis and Clark Expedition departed because Bent served as a prominent lawyer and judge of the St. Louis Superior Court. Of Bent's seven sons, at least four of them—Charles, William, Robert, and George—became fur traders on the upper Arkansas. William Bent and Ceran St. Vrain, another St. Louis native son, formed Bent, St. Vrain & Company and constructed a stockade near Pueblo (in today's Colorado) on the north side of the Arkansas River, which served as an outpost to trade for beaver pelts and buffalo robes with the Native Americans. Southern Cheyenne warrior Yellow Wolf informed William Bent that if the company constructed a fort further downstream, they would be in a better location to trade with the southern Cheyennes and Arapahos for buffalo robes. About a dozen miles above the mouth of the Purgatoire River, the partners constructed the adobe Bent's Fort on the north side of the Arkansas. The adobe fort quickly became the center of the Bent, St. Vrain & Company's expanding trade empire, which included Fort St. Vrain to the north and Fort Adobe to the south, along

with company stores in New Mexico at Taos and Santa Fe. From 1833 to 1849, the fort became a stopping point along the mountain route of the Santa Fe Trail. Just as Clark's Fort Osage had been the trading center for the Osages, Kansas, Otos, and Missouriias, Bent's Fort served as the nexus for southern plains tribes as well as a convenient rendezvous for trappers, mountain men, and explorers. On December 13, 1834, William Clark issued Charles Bent a license to trade with Indians at Bent's Fort.⁶⁸

That same year, Clark's efforts to reinvent the Indian trade and streamline the Indian Department culminated in two substantial changes: the passing of the 1834 Indian Trade and Intercourse Act and the Indian Reorganization Act. The Indian Department field service "consisted of four superintendents, eighteen agents, twenty-seven subagents, thirty-four interpreters, and a miscellaneous group of officers" with an annual collective income of nearly \$60,000. Clark's efforts also contributed to the establishment of an Office of Indian Affairs in 1834.⁶⁹ His attempts, however, to ameliorate Native American suffering, tighten trade relations, curb the liquor traffic, and improve department efficiency in Indian country proved too little, too late.⁷⁰

For three decades following the expedition for which he is best known, William Clark forged a meritorious public career that contributed even more to the opening of the West. From 1807 to 1838, he served as the U.S. government's most important representative among western Indians. Although he never made the trek to Santa Fe himself, his role in establishing Fort Osage, his efforts to survey and protect the Santa Fe Trail, and his close associations with the principal participants in the trade through issuing licenses to trade, paying depredation claims, issuing reports, and supporting patrols along the trail convey the significant role William Clark played in advancing the Santa Fe trade.

Over the next few decades, the beaver fur trade declined while the buffalo hide trade increased dramatically on the southern, central, and northern plains. By the time of William Clark's death in 1838, an estimated quarter of a million dollars in goods annually traversed the Santa Fe Trail. While Clark never personally made the journey, his eldest son, Major Meriwether Lewis Clark, led an artillery battalion in General Stephen Kearny's Army of the West from Fort Leavenworth to Bent's Fort, and then on to Santa Fe, before invading Mexico. In 1846, at the start of the Mexican War, the U.S. Army used the Santa Fe Trail to invade and later supply New Mexico.⁷¹ Another son, George

Rogers Hancock Clark, married Eleanor Ann Glasgow, whose brothers, Edward and William, were significant merchants on the Santa Fe and Chihuahua Trails.⁷² And it was Eleanor and her daughter Julia Clark Voorhis who preserved and later donated many of the eighteen boxes of the Clark Family Collection papers to the Missouri Historical Society, which made this inquiry into Clark's role in the Santa Fe Trail possible. ■

Jay H. Buckley is an associate professor of history at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. He is a past president of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, and a frequent contributor to WPO. He is the author of several books, including William Clark: Indian Diplomat. He co-edited By His Own Hand: The Mysterious Death of Meriwether Lewis.

Notes

1. I am grateful to John Carson and Philippa Newfield for their editorial suggestions. An earlier version of this article was delivered at the 2015 Fur Trade Symposium and published as Jay H. Buckley, "William Clark, the Southern Plains Fur Trade, and the Santa Fe Trail," *Proceedings of the 2015 Fur Trade Symposium, Bent's Fort and the Southern Fur Trade*, John Carson, ed. (La Junta, CO/Denver, CO: NPS Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site/National Park Service, 2016) 82-111.

2. William Clark's older brother George Rogers helped win the West for the American colonies, but his capture of French communities led to numerous lawsuits, which tied up his resources for the remainder of his life. William spent much time and money to help relieve his brother from these suits, particularly a vexing lawsuit brought by Spanish merchant Laurent Bazadone, who demanded retribution for goods George seized at Vincennes during his 1786 campaign. Most of the papers pertaining to the case were lost in an 1837 fire. For a discussion of *Clark v. Bazadone*, see John Bakeless, *Background to Glory* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1957), 323, 331-35; William Preston Clark to George Rogers Clark, 3 August 1834, William Clark Papers, Missouri Historical Society; Clark Family Papers, Filson Historical Society.

3. For Clark's dealings in the war, see: William Clark, Journal of Hardin's Campaign, August 5, 1789-March 18, 1790, William Clark Papers, MHS; William Clark, "Journal of General Charles Scott's Campaign dated, May 23-June 16, 1791, William Clark Papers, MHS; William Clark, "Journal and Memorandum Book," May 15, 1792-February 27, 1793, William Clark Papers, MHS; William Clark, Journals, May 2, 1793-March 29, 1794, April 12-May 17, 1794, William Clark Papers, MHS; William Clark, Muster Roll of a Company of Riflemen in the Fourth Sub-Legion, November 13, 1794, M-6, RG 107, National Archives; Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army from September 29, 1789 to March 2, 1903*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1903), 1:306; General Anthony Wayne, "Public Order of the Commander-in-Chief," on May 17, 1794, *Kentucky Gazette*, May 31, 1794. Secondary sources include Wiley Sword, *President Washington's War: The Struggle for the Old Northwest, 1790-1795* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 171-91; Frederick L. Deming, "William Clark, 1770-1820" (master's thesis, Washington University [St. Louis], 1935), 6-25; R. C. McGrane, ed., "William Clark's Journal of General Wayne's Campaign," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 1, no. 3 (December 1914): 418-44; Alan D. Gaff, *Bayonets in the Wilderness: Anthony Wayne's Legion in the Old Northwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 116-17, 142-43.

4. William Clark, Report to General Wayne on Descent of Ohio with Dispatches to New Madrid, November 4, 1795, William Clark Papers,

MHS; Samuel W. Thomas, ed. "William Clark's 1795 and 1797 Journals and Their Significance," *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society* 25 (July 1969): 277-95 and also in John F. McDermott, ed., *The Spanish in the Mississippi Valley, 1762-1804* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974). The Governor of Spanish Louisiana at that time (1791-1797) was Francisco Luis Héctor, baron de Carondelet. Manuel Gayoso de Lemos replaced him and served from 1797-1799.

5. Treaty of Greenville, August 3, 1795, M-668, RG 75, NA; Leave Request from William Clark, November 27, 1795, William Clark Papers, MHS; George Rogers Clark to William Clark, June 1796, William Clark Papers, MHS. William Clark to Jonathan Clark, October 4, 1798, Jonathan Clark Papers-Temple Bodley Collection, FHS; James J. Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother: Letters of William Clark to Jonathan Clark* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 28-29.

6. William Clark, Memorandum Notebook dated 1798-1801, Breckenridge Collection, C 1075, SHSM; William Clark Papers, MHS. Jo Ann Trogdon recently investigated evidence linking Clark to a series of plots by Benjamin Sebastian, Samuel Montgomery Brown, and others involved in the so-called Spanish Conspiracy. Corrupt officials lined their pockets with Spanish silver dollars in return for promises to help separate Kentucky from the United States, although Clark's involvement in the ring is still not completely clear. Jo Ann Trogdon, *The Unknown Travels and Dubious Pursuits of William Clark* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2015), 131; Trogdon, "Five Mysteries from William Clark's 1798-1801 Notebook," *We Proceeded On* 41, no. 4 (November 2015): 24-30.

7. Meriwether Lewis to Thomas Jefferson, October 3, 1803, in Donald Jackson, ed., *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, with Related Documents, 1783-1854*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), 1:126-31.

8. Thomas Jefferson to Meriwether Lewis, in Jackson, ed., *Letters*, 1:136-37. Six months later, after the acquisition of Louisiana, Jefferson amended his instructions, telling Lewis that since America was now "sovereigns of the country, without however any diminution of the Indian rights of occupancy we are authorised to propose to them in direct terms the institution of commerce with them. It will now be proper you should inform those through whose country you pass, or whom you may meet, that their late fathers the Spanish have agreed to withdraw . . . that they have surrendered to us all their subjects . . . that henceforward we become their fathers and friends." Jefferson to Lewis, January 22, 1804, in Jackson, ed., *Letters*, 1:165. For a chronicling of those Jeffersonian expeditions, see Doug Erickson, Jeremy Skinner, Paul Merchant, eds., *Jefferson's Western Explorations: Discoveries Made in Exploring the Missouri, Red River, and Washita* (Spokane: Arthur H. Clark, 2004); and Jay H. Buckley, "Jeffersonian Explorers in the Trans-Mississippi West: Zebulon Pike in Perspective," in Matthew L. Harris and Jay H. Buckley, eds., *Zebulon Pike, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 101-38.

9. Thomas Jefferson's Instructions to Meriwether Lewis, June 20, 1803, in Jackson, *Letters*, 1:61-66.

10. Dan Sturdevant and Jay H. Buckley, "Spanish Attempts to Apprehend Lewis and Clark," *We Proceeded On* 45, no. 1 (February 2019): 18-25. James Wilkinson, the commanding General of the U.S. Army, was a Spanish spy—the infamous Agent 13. Clark's former commander in the War of the Old Northwest now informed and encouraged the Spanish to arrest Lewis and Clark. J. A. Robertson, *Louisiana Under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, 1785-1807* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1910), 2:323-47; Carlos Martínez de Yrujo to Pedro Cevallos, December 2, 1802, January 31, 1803, in Jackson, ed., *Letters*, 1:4-6, 14-15; Carlos Delassus to Juan Manuel de Sacedo and Marqués de Casa Calvo, 9 December 1803, in Jackson, ed., *Letters*, 1:142-43; Continuing correspondence, March 30, 1804, May 8, 1804, in Jackson, ed., *Letters*, 1:173-75, 183-88, 210-12, 687n; David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 291-96; Warren L. Cook, *Flood Tide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

11. Matthew L. Harris and Jay H. Buckley, eds., *Zebulon Pike, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012); John F. Bannon, *The Spanish Borderlands Frontier, 1513-1821* (1970; repr., Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), 216-18; Donald Jackson, ed., *The Journals of Zebulon Montgomery*

Pike (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966).

12. James Wilkinson to Zebulon Pike, August 6, 1806. Elliott Coues, ed., *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike* (New York: Francis P. Harper, 1895), 2:573-74; Richard H. Dillon, "Meriwether Lewis, Manuel Lisa, and the Tantalizing Santa Fe Trade," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 17 (Spring 1967): 47-52.

13. Clark, journal entry, August 3, 1804, in Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 2:438; Meriwether Lewis, journal entry, August 14, 1805, in Moulton, ed., *Journals*, 5:91; Clark, journal entry, September 17, 1806, in Moulton, ed., *Journals*, 8:362-63; John C. Jackson, *By Honor and Right: How One Man Boldly Defined the Destiny of a Nation* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2010); James Wilkinson to Secretary of War, September 8, 1805, Clarence E. Carter, comp., *The Territorial Papers of the United States, Vol. 13: The Territory of Louisiana-Missouri, 1803-1806* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1948), 13:199.

14. William E. Foley and Charles D. Rice, *The First Chouteaus: River Barons of Early St. Louis* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983); William E. Foley, *Wilderness Journey: The Life of William Clark* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004).

15. Kate L. Gregg, ed., *Westward with Dragoons: The Journal of William Clark on His Expedition to Establish Fort Osage, August 25 to September 22, 1808* (Fulton, MO: Ovid Bell Press, 1937); Ann Rogers, "Clark's Fort Osage Journal," *We Proceeded On* 25 (August 1999): 24-28.

16. Meriwether Lewis to Pierre Chouteau, October 3, 1808, in Clarence E. Carter, comp., *The Territorial Papers of the United States, Vol. 14: The Territory of Louisiana-Missouri, 1806-1814* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1949), 14:229-31. Governor Lewis took the treaty that Clark had drawn up, modified it, added an annuity, and sent it back with agent Pierre Chouteau for tribal approval. On November 10, 1808, Chouteau presented the substance of the new treaty penned by Lewis—basically the same one outlined by Clark, but with an additional mention of Osage lands held north of the Missouri River—the Osages gathered at Fort Osage. The last Osage signers finally gave their assent on August 31, 1809. William E. Foley and Charles David Rice, "Pierre Chouteau: Entrepreneur as Indian Agent," *Missouri Historical Review* 72, no. 4 (July 1978): 365-87.

Writing to the Secretary of War, Clark commented that the Osage treaty, when confirmed, "will extinguish the Indian title to more than 200 miles square of the finest country in Louisiana, for which they have received merchandise to the amount of about \$2,500, taken from the Indian fund." Congress ratified this treaty, ceding Indian lands representing nearly the entire state of Missouri to the United States on April 28, 1810. William Clark to Henry Dearborn, December 2, 1808, in Carter, comp., *Territorial Papers*, 14:242-44; Charles J. Kappler, ed., "Treaty with the Osage, 1808," *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, 3 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904-13), 2:95-99; William P. O'Brien, *Merchants of Independence: International Trade of the Santa Fe Trail, 1827-1860* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2014), 19-20.

17. Richard E. Oglesby, *Manuel Lisa and the Opening of the Missouri Fur Trade* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963); Moulton, ed., *Journals*, 8:157-58; Larry E. Morris, *The Fate of the Corps: What Became of the Lewis and Clark Explorers After the Expedition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

18. *Missouri Gazette*, March 8, 1809.

19. The government honored this \$7,000 draft, but subsequent bills in excess of \$500 that the government refused to pay contributed to the destruction of Lewis' credit in St. Louis. Secretary of War to Meriwether Lewis, July 15, 1809, in Carter, comp., *Territorial Papers*, 14:285.

20. St. Louis Missouri Fur Company, Articles of Association, St. Louis Missouri Fur Co., *St. Louis Record Book 1809-1812*, Papers of the St. Louis Fur Trade, MHS.

21. *Missouri Gazette*, May 24 and 31, and June 12, 1809.

22. William E. Foley, "Friends and Partners: William Clark, Meriwether Lewis, and Mid-America's French Creoles," *Missouri Historical Review* 98, no. 4 (2004): 279-80.

23. Articles 14-15, 22, St. Louis Missouri Fur Company, Papers of the St.

Louis Fur Trade, MHS; *St. Louis Circuit Court Records*, Case Files, Office of the Circuit Clerk—St. Louis, Missouri State Archives—St. Louis [http://stlcourtrecods.wustl.edu], 2-7, 9-11, 13, 19, 21, 29-30, 40.

24. Missouri Fur Company Ledger Book, April 1812–July 1813, Kansas State Historical Society; Herbert E. Bolton, “New Light on Manuel Lisa and the Spanish Fur Trade,” *Southwest Historical Quarterly* 17 (July 1913): 61-66; Oglesby, *Manuel Lisa*, 131-32.

25. Jay H. Buckley, “William Clark’s Impossible Task: The War of 1812 in the West,” *We Proceeded On* 43, no. 4 (November 2017): 8-22.

26. William Becknell and his party started out for Santa Fe in 1821 from Franklin, following the Osage Trace. They returned with substantial profits, signaling the opening of the Santa Fe Trail. Franklin was washed away by the Missouri River in 1826 to 1827. The historic site is north of the present river channel. R. Douglas Hurt, *Nathan Boone and the American Frontier* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998); Mary Collins Barile, *The Santa Fe Trail in Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010); Marc Simmons, *Following the Santa Fe Trail: A Guide for Modern Travelers* (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1984).

27. R. Douglas Hurt, “Seeking Fortune in the Promised Land: Settling the Boon’s Lick Country, 1808–1825,” *Gateway Heritage: The Quarterly Magazine of the Missouri Historical Society* 13 (Summer 1992): 4-19.

28. *Missouri Gazette*, December 9, 1815.

29. *Missouri Gazette*, March 2, 1816.

30. See notice, *Missouri Intelligencer*, September 2, 1820; John O’Fallon, “Brief Notices of the Principal Events in the Public Life of Governor Clark” *St. Louis Enquirer*, August 9, 1820.

31. William E. Foley, “After the Applause: William Clark’s Failed 1820 Gubernatorial Campaign,” *Gateway Heritage* 24, nos. 2 and 3 (Fall 2003-Winter 2004): 104-11, passim 105.

32. Belonging to numerous bank boards and civic boards, Clark had many personal friendships. With Clark as chairman of the board of trustees to supervise schools in St. Louis, other board members included Thomas Hart Benton, Auguste Chouteau, Alexander McNair, Jean P. Cabanné, and William C. Carr. For the demise of the factory system, see: May 6, 1822, *U.S. Statutes at Large*, 3:678-80; Aloysius F. Plaisance, “The United States Factory System, 1796–1822,” (PhD dissertation, St. Louis University, 1954), 552-91; “Report on Liquidation of Indian Trading Houses,” January 1, 1825, *New American State Papers: Indian Affairs* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1972), 3:384-86.

33. Ashley’s advertisements appeared in the *Missouri Gazette and Public Advisor*, February 13, 1822. Similar advertisements appeared in the *Missouri Republican*, 20 March 1822, and the *Missouri Intelligencer*, March 16, 1822. See a follow-up ad in the *Missouri Gazette and Public Advisor*, January 18, 1823. Ashley’s license to trade with the Indians was dated September 24, 1824. His group left two days later for the Rocky Mountains.

34. The line ran north up the Sabine River, north on about the 94th meridian, west up the Red, north on the 100th meridian, west up the Arkansas, north on the 106th meridian, and west to the Pacific on the 42nd parallel. Philip C. Brooks, *Diplomacy and the Borderland: The Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1939).

35. Roger L. Nichols and Patrick Halley, *Stephen Long and American Frontier Exploration* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1980). Only a few years passed before Long’s Great American Desert, the treeless plains between the Missouri and Red rivers, was designated a permanent Indian territory by Congress in May 1830.

36. Walter Lowrie and Matthew St. Clair, eds., *American State Papers: Indian Affairs, 1789–1827*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1832-1834).

37. Clark’s original “Master Map of the North American West of 1810-1812” resides in the Coe Collection of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University. John L. Allen, “An Analysis of the Exploratory Process: The Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804–1806,” *Geographical Review* 62 (January 1972): 13-39; Allen, “Maps and the Mountain Men: The Cartography of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade,” in William Wyckoff and Lary M. Dilsaver, eds., *The Mountainous West: Explorations in Historical Geography* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 63-91; Allen, “The Maps of the Lewis and Clark Expedition,” in Paul E.

Cohen, ed., *Mapping the West: America’s Westward Movement, 1524–1890* (New York: Rizzoli, 2002), 74-96; John C. Jackson, “Updating William Clark’s ‘Error of the Southwest,’” *We Proceeded On* 41, no. 3 (August 2015): 15-25; Peter J. Kastor, *William Clark’s World: Describing America in the Age of Unknowns* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

38. Jedidiah Morse, *A Report to the Secretary of War of the United States, on Indian Affairs* (New Haven: Printed by S. Converse, 1822), 29n-30n.

39. Morse, *A Report to the Secretary of War*, 39-64.

40. Morse, *A Report to the Secretary of War*, 80.

41. Skidi Pawnee chief Petaleshoro to President James Monroe, February 4, 1822, quoted in W.C. Vanderwerth, comp., *Indian Oratory: Famous Speeches by Noted Indian Chieftains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), 81.

42. David J. Weber, *The Mexican Frontier, 1821–1846: The American Southwest under Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), 125-33.

43. Thomas James was among three or four American groups converging on Santa Fe in 1821. Milo M. Quaife, ed., *Three Years among the Indians and Mexicans by Thomas James* (1846; repr. New York: Citadel Press, 1966). For the founding of Santa Fe, see Herbert E. Bolton, *The Spanish Borderlands* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), 176-77.

44. James Baird estimated this amount in 1826. Quoted in W. Eugene Holton, *The Southwest: Old and New* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), 94. See also, LeRoy R. Hafen, *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West* (1965; repr., Spokane: Arthur H. Clark, 2000), 1: 64-67. For trappers of the southwest, see David J. Weber, *The Taos Trappers: The Fur Trade in the Far Southwest, 1540–1846* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970); Robert G. Cleland, *This Reckless Breed of Men: The Trappers and Fur Traders of the Southwest* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950).

45. Quaife, ed., *Three Years Among the Indians and Mexicans*, 227.

46. For a selection of primary sources on the Santa Fe Trail, see: Josiah Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairie* (1844; repr., New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1962); James Josiah Webb, *Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade, 1844–1847*, Ralph P. Bieber, ed. (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1931); Lewis H. Garrard, *Wah-to-yah and the Taos Trail*, Ralph P. Bieber, ed. (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1938); Clyde and Mae Reed Porter, eds., *Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960); Stella M. Drumm, ed., *Down the Santa Fe Trail and Into Mexico: The Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin, 1846–1847* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926). For a selection of secondary works, see: R. L. Duffus, *The Santa Fe Trail* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1930); William E. Hill, *The Santa Fe Trail: Yesterday and Today* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, 1992); David Dary, *The Santa Fe Trail: Its History, Legends and Lore* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001); Henry Inman, *The Old Santa Fe Trail: The Story of a Great Highway* (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1966); Stephen G. Hyslop, *Bound for Santa Fe* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002).

47. Pedro Vial had made the journey in the 1780s from Santa Fe to St. Louis and should be given some of the credit for establishing the Santa Fe Trail. Chihuahua traders bartered for sheep, wool, buffalo hides, pine nuts, pottery, and other products at Santa Fe. For information on the King’s Road, see Hal Jackson, *Following the Royal Road: A Guide to the Historic Camino Real de Tierra Adentro* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006); William Becknell, notes from the *Missouri Intelligencer* [1822-1823]; “The Journals of Capt. Thomas [i.e. William] Becknell from Boone’s Lick to Santa Fe and from Santa Cruz to Green River,” *Missouri Historical Review* 6 (January 1910): 66-84. In 1825, \$65,000 worth of goods arrived at San Miguel, the port of entry. John L. Kessell, *Kiva, Cross, and Crown* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987), 448-49.

48. Jay H. Buckley, *William Clark: Indian Diplomat* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008).

49. “Correspondence Between Mexican Officials at Santa Fe and Officials in Missouri: 1823 – 1825,” *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society* 16 (October 1959): 20-32 (esp. 21, 24-25); J. Ryan Badger, “Bartolomé Baca and the Opening of the Mexican Southwest,” *Rocky Mountain Fur Trade Journal* 7 (2013): 61-75; David J. Weber, “Señor Escudero Goes to Washington: Diplomacy, Indians, and the Santa Fe Trade,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 43 (Winter 2012): 417-35.

50. James N. Primm, *Lion of the Valley: St. Louis, Missouri, 1764–1980*, 3rd ed. (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1998), 130–31.
51. The official U.S. government survey of the Santa Fe Trail in 1825–1827, which was headed by Sibley, began 1.75 miles south of Fort Osage, where the Osage Trace crossed the eastern boundary of Indian lands as defined by the 1808 treaty. The survey starting point is commemorated in place names such as 110 Mile Creek and 142 Mile Creek. Sibley completed the 165 miles from eastern Jackson County to west of Council Grove in 1827. Kate L. Gregg, ed., *The Road to Santa Fe: The Journal and Diary of George Champlin Sibley* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995).
52. For more than a decade, Fort Osage had served as a transition point between overland routes to the west and southwest and waterborne routes on the Missouri River to the east. In 1822, the government closed the factory, and Sibley operated it as a private venture until 1824. The fort's prominence gradually waned, and it was eventually abandoned in 1827, when the military moved further upriver to Fort Leavenworth. Lewis E. Atherton, "James and Robert Aull: A Frontier Missouri Mercantile Firm," *Missouri Historical Review* 30 (1935): 3–27; Atherton, "Business Techniques in the Santa Fe Trade," *Missouri Historical Review* 34 (April 1940): 335–41; Atherton, "The Santa Fe Trader as Mercantile Capitalist," *Missouri Historical Review* 77 (October 1982): 1–12.
53. Report of Lewis Cass and William Clark, February 9, 1829, *House Document* 117, 20th Congress, 2nd Session, 52–77. Thomas McKenny served as superintendent of Indian trade from 1816 to 1822. Clark gave an extensive report to Secretary of War Cass in 1831. "Report of William Clark to Lewis Cass," November 20, 1831, "More Reports of the Fur Trade and Inland Trade to Mexico," *Glimpses of the Past* 9, no. 3 (July–September 1942): 45–54.
54. Jedediah Smith, David Jackson, and William Sublette to William Clark, December 24, 1829, in Dale L. Morgan, *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West* (1953; repr. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 341.
55. Barton H. Barbour, *Jedediah Smith: No Ordinary Mountain Man* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 251–255.
56. Jedediah Smith to William Clark, December 1829, in Dale L. Morgan, ed., *The West of William H. Ashley* (Denver: Rosenstock–Old West Publishing Co., 1964).
57. William Clark, November 20, 1831, Office of Indian Affairs, NA, reprinted in "1830 Report on the Fur Trade by General William Clark," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 48 (March 1947): 25–33 (27–28).
58. Clark must have respected the tribes, even with the trouble some of them occasionally caused. Clark named Paducah, Kentucky, the only town he ever platted, after the Comanches, whom the Lakotas called *Padouca*.
59. William Sublette led trapping parties into the Rockies from 1823 to 1826 and purchased Ashley's interests with Smith and Jackson in 1826. After leading the supply caravan to the 1827 Bear Lake rendezvous, he sold his interests to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company in 1830 and joined Smith and Jackson on their trading expedition to Santa Fe in 1831. Upon his return, he joined Robert Campbell in supplying the 1832 rendezvous for the RMFC and built Fort William and Fort Laramie to compete with the American Fur Company in 1833. William Sublette's new two-year license to trade is dated April 25, 1832. William Sublette Papers, Missouri Historical Society. See also, Don Berry, *A Majority of Scoundrels: An Informal History of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company* (1961. repr., Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2006), 252; John E. Sunder, *Bill Sublette, Mountain Man* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1959).
60. Susan Koester, "The Indian Threat Along the Santa Fe Trail," *Pacific Historian* 17, no. 4 (1973): 13–28.
61. Clark to McCoy, August 20, 1828, McCoy Correspondence. George A. Schultz, *An Indian Cavanaugh: Isaac McCoy and the Vision of an Indian State* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 104–105. Clark and McCoy did not view Indian missions in the same way. Clark probably wished he had not warned McCoy and that the Pawnees would have found the Baptist missionary and put him out of his misery. Clark tasked his nephew George Kennerly with accompanying McCoy on subsequent expeditions in order to keep an eye on the reverend as well as to interface with Indian agent John Dougherty on the Upper Missouri, who often found fault with Clark's administration of Indian affairs and sought to obtain his position as superintendent upon Clark's death. Mark W. Kelly, *Lost Voices on the Missouri: John Dougherty and the Indian Frontier* (Leavenworth, KS: Sam Clark, 2013).
62. In 1829, the first military escort was led by Bennet Riley, for whom Fort Riley was named in 1853. Henry H. Goldman, "A Survey of Federal Escorts of the Santa Fe Trade, 1829–1843," *Journal of the West* 5 (October 1966): 504–16; Fred S. Perrine, "Military Escorts on the Santa Fe Trail," *New Mexico Historical Review* 3, no. 3 (July 1928): 286, 293; C. C. Rister, "A Federal Experiment in Southern Plains Indian Relations, 1835–1845," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 14 (December 1936): 434–55.
63. Bennet Riley to William Clark, September 28, 1831, William Gordon to William Clark, October 3, 1831, William Clark Papers, Kansas State Historical Society, 6:301, 330–35; Leo E. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 25–42.
64. Herman Bowman to Martin Van Buren, August 29, 1836, Martin Van Buren Papers, Library of Congress.
65. William Clark, journal entry, December 3, 1831, William Clark Papers, KSHS, 4:306–307.
66. Janet LeCompte, *Pueblo, Hardscrabble, Greenborne: The Upper Arkansas, 1832–1856* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978), 90.
67. For instance, Clark authorized Sublette and Campbell to take 450 gallons of alcohol to the 1832 rendezvous, even though his letter to Sublette says, "It is not to be used in trade, or barter, or to be given to the Indians." Berry, *Majority of Scoundrels*, 300–301; William E. Unrau, *Indians, Alcohol, and the Road to Taos and Santa Fe* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2013), 47, 65, 98; Unrau, *White Man's Wicked Water: The Alcohol Trade and Prohibition in Indian Country, 1802–1892* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996), 18–19, 34–36; Unrau, *The Rise and Fall of Indian Country, 1825–1855* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 68–69.
68. "Abstract of Licenses Issued to Persons to Trade with the Indians," 23rd Congress, 2nd Session, *Senate Document* 69 (Washington, 1834), 3; Nolie Mumey, *Old Forts and Trading Posts of the West: Bent's Old Fort and Bent's New Fort on the Arkansas River* (Denver: Artercraft Press, 1956), 18–19; David Lavender, *Bent's Fort* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972); George Bent and Savoie Lottinville, eds., *The Life of George Bent: Written from His Letters* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968); Donald J. Berthrong, *The Southern Cheyennes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 26.
69. Ronald N. Satz, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 155.
70. Otto Frovin Frederikson, "The Liquor Question among the Indian Tribes in Kansas, 1804–1881," *Bulletin of University of Kansas* 33, no. 8 (April 1932): 49–50. Indian country in 1834 represented Indigenous lands west of the Mississippi but not part of Missouri, Louisiana, or the territory of Arkansas.
71. K. Jack Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846–1848* (1974; repr., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 130–31, 151–56; Joseph G. Dawson III, *Doniphan's Epic March: The 1st Missouri Volunteers in the Mexican War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999).
72. Mark L. Gardner, ed., *Brothers on the Santa Fe and Chihuabua Trails: Edward James Glasgow and William Henry Glasgow, 1846–1848* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1993).

A portrait of William Clark, an older man with white hair, wearing a dark blue coat and a white cravat. He is seated in a chair, looking slightly to the left. The background features a window with red curtains and a landscape view.

After the Applause: William Clark's Failed 1820 Gubernatorial Campaign

By William E. Foley

Portrait of William Clark ca. 1820 by artist Chester Harding. Courtesy of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri at St. Louis.

At the conclusion of their epic journey to the Pacific in September 1806, William Clark and Meriwether Lewis were the toasts of St. Louis. Cheering crowds lined the city's waterfront to welcome them home, and during a dinner and ball held in their honor at William Christy's tavern, the town's leading lights raised their glasses no fewer than eighteen times in celebration of the exploring party's safe return.¹ But the applause soon subsided, and within the space of a few short years their courageous deeds had largely faded from the public memory. As he traveled about Missouri during the summer of 1820, William Clark's

nephew St. Louis businessman John O'Fallon sensed that a majority of voters in the American union's soon-to-be twenty-fourth state had long since consigned Lewis and Clark's remarkable voyage to the dustbin of history.² That was certainly not good news for Clark, who had recently placed his name before his fellow citizens as a candidate to become the new state's first elected governor.

Concerned that his uncle's bid was likely to fail, O'Fallon put pen to paper and drafted a lengthy campaign biography designed to remind the state's burgeoning populace of William Clark's past glories. Among other things, O'Fallon



Alexander McNair, the first elected governor of Missouri. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

lamented that his fellow countrymen had failed to grasp the value and importance of America's pioneering scientific expedition, but alas his detailed recounting of the Corps of Discovery's actions and of Clark's numerous other accomplishments fell largely on deaf ears.³ When they went to the polls on August 28, 1820, nearly two out of every three Missouri voters cast their ballots for Clark's popular opponent Alexander McNair. It was a resounding defeat for the once-celebrated explorer who called Missouri "the home of my choice and the country of my permanent residence."⁴

In truth, waning interest in the great expedition had little bearing on the election's outcome, but the contest was emblematic of nineteenth century America's changing social and political attitudes. In Missouri, as elsewhere, the growing appeal of political democratization and expanded economic opportunities for white men transformed U.S. politics and intensified public demand for settlement on western lands and Indian removal. These national trends were very much at play in William Clark's loss at the polls.

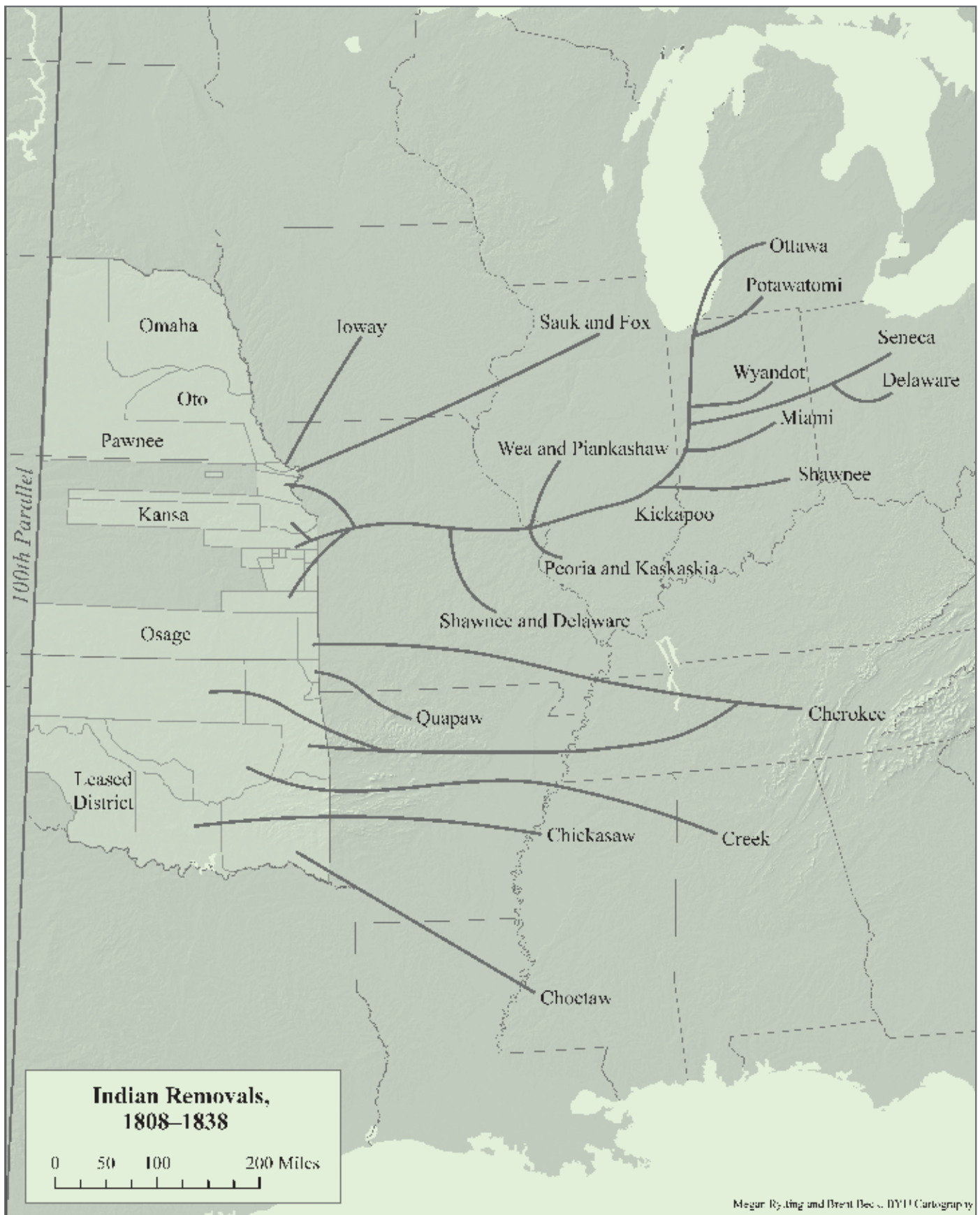
Missouri's 1820 gubernatorial election presaged the dawn of a new political era that required candidates for public office to affect a common touch if they wanted to be successful. William Clark's gentlemanly bearing and his previous associations with an elitist territorial clique made

him an easy target among politicians now intent on wooing workingmen and farmers. Consequently, the scion of Virginia's old republican order became an early casualty of the populist political dynamic that in a few short years would catapult his friend and cohort General Andrew Jackson into the American presidency.⁵

But this new strain of political democracy was not all-inclusive, and the nation's Native American inhabitants along with African Americans and women were left standing outside the new order's charmed circle. The champions of the common man and popular democracy paradoxically embraced Indian relocation and ethnic cleansing. And here again Clark's failed bid for office evidenced those trends. Missouri's growing ranks of new Indian-hating emigrants from the east rejected the more tolerant notions of their French and Spanish predecessors in the trans-Mississippi territory. Prior to the War of 1812, pockets of Native peoples had coexisted peaceably beside white neighbors in a multi-ethnic society, but by the time of statehood most Missourians were no longer inclined to permit a continued Indian presence in their state.⁶ Notwithstanding his sustained efforts in support of the divestiture of Indian land, most of Clark's Missouri constituents came to view him as unduly sympathetic to Native people. Consequently, during the 1820 campaign the opposition's steady drumbeat that Governor Clark was stiff, reserved, inhospitable, and too friendly with Native Americans resonated with rank and file voters ready for change and contributed to the longtime territorial official's defeat.

Initially William Clark appeared to be the heads-on favorite to lead Missouri after it crossed the threshold into statehood. His friends and political allies believed that his lengthy years of public service, which included a seven-year stint as Missouri's appointed territorial governor, made him the most qualified prospective candidate in the field. As early as 1818, Thomas Hart Benton, a staunch Clark partisan, had initiated a campaign to boost his friend's political fortunes, and in January 1820 Dr. Bernard G. Farrar, a prominent physician who had served in the territorial assembly, wrote Clark, "You must be our Governor when we become a state or represent us in the Senate."⁷

Even with such warm encouragement, Clark's decision to stand for office did not come easily. His beloved wife Julia was seriously ill, and concerns about her health and the welfare of their young children made him hesitant to commit himself. The birth of the couple's fifth child John



Map of Indian Removals between the return of the Corps of Discovery and the death of William Clark. Cartography by Megan Rytting and Brent Beck. Courtesy of Jay H. Buckley.

Julius in July of 1818 had left Julia in a severely weakened condition possibly made worse by the ill effects of cancer and consumption. There was a faint glimmer of hope when she was well enough in October of 1818 to travel with her husband and children to Louisville to spend the winter with her sister and brother-in-law, Caroline and William Preston. William Clark remained at Julia's side in Louisville until March when, with the encouragement of his father-in-law George Hancock, he returned to St. Louis to look after his official duties. In June 1819 he went back to Louisville to accompany his family eastward for a reunion with Julia's parents in Virginia. At the urging of friends, including President James Monroe, the Clarks spent several weeks at a nearby warm springs, but the therapeutic waters failed to have the desired effect, and the young mother, who was not yet thirty, had to be transported on a bed to her parents' plantation Fotheringay, where all hoped that she still might recuperate under the watchful care of close relatives. Still attempting to juggle personal affairs with public duties, William Clark made a hasty trip late in the year to the federal capital where a congressional impasse over slavery had stalled Missouri's statehood bill, but he was again in Virginia with his family at Christmas.⁸

Governor Clark's extended absences from St. Louis produced criticism from political enemies who suggested that if he could not give proper attention to public business, he should resign. Early in 1820 Clark received Dr. Farrar's letter urging him to enter the governor's race and stressing the need for him to come to the territory as soon as possible. Heeding his friend's advice, Clark arrived in St. Louis on March 19 where according to the sympathetic editor of the *St. Louis Enquirer* he received an "affectionate welcome." Within a week of his return, word reached St. Louis that Congress had finally approved a compromise authorizing Missouri's admission to the Union.⁹

Clark no doubt joined in the spontaneous celebrations that erupted throughout the territory, but he also understood that the agreement meant that he was about to be out of a job and would soon have make new arrangements for his future. Meanwhile, planning for the transition to statehood proceeded apace. In early May Missourians went to the polls to elect delegates to a constitutional convention. Members of the conservative commercially oriented territorial establishment with which Clark was affiliated successfully fended off any serious opposition by seizing upon largely unfounded fears that yet another attempt might be made

to restrict slavery in Missouri. The newly elected delegates convened at St. Louis's Mansion House Hotel on June 19 and immediately began drafting a framework of government for the new state. While members of the convention debated the constitution's provisions, leaders of the triumphant old guard caucused behind-the-scenes to settle on its slate of candidates for the new state offices. Clark was privy to more than a few of those discussions among friends who pressed him to declare as a candidate for governor.¹⁰

Clark vacillated on the subject of his availability. After returning to St. Louis in the spring of 1819, he had signaled his willingness to become a candidate for the state's highest office, but a year later his wife's deteriorating condition had given him second thoughts.¹¹ By then predisposed not to enter the race, Clark drafted a letter addressed to a local editor announcing with regret "that the particular situation of my family now in the state of Virginia demand my immediate attention & will deprive me of the satisfaction of tendering my services in execution of the duties of chief magistrate of the new state of Missouri."¹² The unfinished letter was never sent.

With Clark seemingly no longer in contention, several local politicians bandied about the name of Clark's friend and convention member Alexander McNair as a possible alternative, but the *Missouri Gazette's* endorsement of his candidacy made him unacceptable to the territorial governor's closest allies. Clark remained their preferred choice, and when they failed to find a suitable replacement, he relented and agreed to allow his name to be put forward as a candidate for governor. In late June of 1820, O'Fallon reported the good news to General Thomas Smith in Franklin.¹³

Friendly pressure was not the sole reason for Clark's change of mind. Reports from Virginia via Louisville suggested that the end was near for Julia, and the sobering prospect of caring for five children all under the age of eleven forced him to take stock of his situation. Missouri's pending statehood placed his continued federal employment at risk at the very moment that he most needed a steady source of income. The proposed 1820 Constitution had established the governor's salary at \$2,000 per year, the same amount that he currently received for his combined duties as territorial governor and superintendent of Indian affairs, and that surely provided added incentive for him to reconsider.

In June William Clark's nephew Dennis Fitzhugh in Louisville wrote to John O'Fallon, "I fear your poor Aunt Clark is no more. The last advises inform us that

Clark's close identification with one of the warring factions made him a prime target for longtime adversaries, including the brilliant but sharp-tongued curmudgeon John B. C. Lucas and the Irish firebrand and editor of the *Missouri Gazette* Joseph Charless.¹⁸

But as the old combatants squared off to battle for control of the new state, they knew intuitively that the hordes of newcomers flooding into Missouri in search of a better life were likely to be the final arbiters of their destiny. Clark's backers confidently believed that their esteemed candidate's renown and his extensive administrative experience would propel him to victory, even as McNair and his supporters took to the hustings to wage a campaign to win over the hearts and minds of the state's ordinary working folk. From the outset, it was clear that their campaigns would be very different.

Clark seemed unbothered that his delicate personal situation would prevent him from taking part in the campaign. In announcing his candidacy to the people of Missouri, he acknowledged the necessity for his absence from the state but hastened to add: "this circumstance does not give me uneasiness, except as it might be construed by some into an indifference for your good will. Otherwise I think it of no importance for me to be present. The choice of a Governor is your business and not mine; and so far as my fitness for that place may be the subject of enquiry, that matter may be discussed as well in my absence as in my presence. I should take no part in the discussion even if I remained at home, but should leave it to those whose business it is to decide upon my pretensions."¹⁹ Clark took his lead from the method of political canvassing that he had witnessed during his boyhood days in Virginia, no doubt confident in the knowledge that the system had produced the illustrious Virginia dynasty of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe.

In his message, Clark briefly outlined his qualifications and his record of public service. He declared himself a republican and invoked the principles of his mentors and friends Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe. Beyond that he simply pledged to "bring with me a fervent wish to contribute to your prosperity, and to maintain the honor of a State whose name must forever be dear to me." Clark's decision to adopt a hands-off approach to campaigning and to refer enquiries concerning his character to the territory's "old inhabitants and early settlers" played into the hands of political enemies who sought to portray him as aloof and out of touch with ordinary voters and a captive of the old guard.²⁰

William Clark was a congenial man, usually affable and agreeable, but his bearing was clearly that of a gentleman. Noah Ludlow, an actor and theatrical entrepreneur who first met Governor Clark in St. Louis in 1820, remembered him as "the finest specimen of the old Virginia gentleman" and as a patron of the arts. Ludlow considered the illustrious westerner's gentlemanly demeanor charming, but Clark's political opponents claimed that in the matter of gubernatorial dignity he excelled McNair only in "stiffness and formality."²¹ John B. C. Lucas, a bitter foe of Clark and his sponsor Thomas Hart Benton, entered the fray with a series of letters published in the *Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser* under the signature of An Elector. In some hastily scrawled preparatory notes, Lucas portrayed McNair as a decent and plain Pennsylvania farmer while he cast Clark as possessing the borrowed manners of a Virginia overseer. In one of several installments in the *Gazette* he expounded on that theme: "Mr. Clark possesses a compound of gloss and borrowed manners which gives him the appearance of what is termed in Europe a provincial gentleman. But even if he was master of all the touches that constitutes the finished man of the world this could not be any recommendation with the freemen of this state. They are above aping at European manners; they have taste of their own, and have right and power to establish a standard of manners amongst themselves suitable to their condition and circumstances." According to Lucas, McNair was a man of the people whose candidacy originated not in a political caucus, "but in the cabins among the farmers, the mechanics and the multitude, which all popular government ought and must govern." In a final rhetorical flourish, Lucas triumphantly proclaimed that he had "heard on the plantations, in cabins, and in every direction from young and old, that they would support Alexander McNair for Governor."²²

McNair, eager to place himself on the side of the people and to distance himself from the political squabbling, condemned the politics of an entrenched establishment, but left it to others to attack his opponent directly. In a general message to the citizens of Missouri, McNair wrote: "From my long residence in this country, and my general acquaintance I think I know the wants of its citizens. It has ever been my practice, to all the public situations which I have had the honor to fill to know no person as a friend or an enemy." He further pledged "to do that which would result to the benefit of this country, and its citizens . . . with an eye to the present and future prosperity of our country, without

respect to friends or party.”²³

Those noble words moved a McNair partisan to suggest: “If Wm Clark were to make another tour to the Pacific Ocean, build another boat and go to Prairie du Chien; if he were to be a general of militia. . . a governor seven years longer, and spend his whole time at Washington City, and in Virginia, he never would learn to utter so dignified—so republican—and so liberal a sentiment as that.”²⁴ McNair also capitalized on the public disaffection with the constitutional convention’s decision to grant the governor and judges a salary of \$2,000 per annum and reminded voters that he had opposed those provisions in the convention as extravagant.²⁵

Perhaps the opposition’s most telling salvo against Clark was the charge that while acting in his official capacities as governor and superintendent of Indian affairs he often favored his Native American charges at the expense of his white constituents. Missourians particularly resented Clark’s past attempts to protect peaceful Native Americans against squatters who encroached on their lands. There were other complaints as well, including an assertion that Clark had lobbied U.S. officials to pardon a Native American convicted of murdering a French trader. These charges infuriated Clark’s supporters, as did the allegations that their candidate had failed to properly defend the territory’s exposed settlements during the War of 1812, because they considered them unfair, but even more because they seemed to strike a responsive chord with voters. Especially galling was an attempt to question the propriety of Clark’s 1814 expedition to Prairie du Chien on grounds that the hapless excursion had unnecessarily extended the lines of defense and diminished the number of troops available in the territory. A writer in the *Missouri Gazette* charged that General Clark’s actions were contrary to all principles of military defense and the best interests of the territory.²⁶ One irate Clark partisan responded that, during that conflict, Clark’s accusers “were living quietly at home when he was risking his life at the head of a body of brave men who ascended the Mississippi 600 miles into the heart of the Indian country, into the presence of the most warlike tribes, instigated by British agents to every act of treachery and war.”²⁷

The published allegations that Clark was partial to the Native Americans paled by comparison with the even more egregious rumors circulating by word of mouth. A letter in the *Enquirer* enumerated numerous “villainous and contemptible” falsehoods that were being given credence in the state’s outlying areas, including reports that Governor

Clark traded with the Natives during the war, that he recently authorized the resettlement of a Kickapoo band on the Osage River, that he had an Indian wife, that his Indian children had been educated at public expense, and that he loved Native Americans more than white people.²⁸

Critics of Clark’s military tactics simultaneously championed McNair, a popular militia officer who had seen only limited action during the War of 1812, as the true defender of the territory’s beleaguered residents during that conflict. Neither did it hurt that in 1815 McNair had refused to join William Clark as a commissioner for the unpopular treaty councils established to make peace with the Native Americans at war’s end.

Clark’s supporters rushed to his defense in the columns of local newspapers with slight effect. They allowed that Clark had sometimes treated the unfortunate Native Americans with mildness and humanity, noting that it was his duty to do so, but they suggested that his humane actions were also the impulses of his own magnanimous heart. More importantly, they argued that he understood Native peoples and how to control them effectively. He knew when to be conciliatory and when to use force as in the case of his expedition to Prairie du Chien. They credited his mildness of manner and firmness of purpose with creating the relatively peaceful conditions that prevailed on the Missouri frontier at the same time neighboring regions found themselves subjected to far bloodier scenes.²⁹ But reasoned words in Clark’s defense were no match for neighborhood gossip or tavern talk.

In fact, General Clark’s friends seemed at a loss to figure out how to counter McNair’s electioneering in tipping shops and along back streets. One critic accused McNair of “making vote begging expeditions by day and by night from churches to grog shops and from lime kilns to boat yards.” It all appeared unseemly to them, but they also sensed its effectiveness. Clark’s friends railed against McNair’s populist campaign and accused him of pitting the recently arrived farmers and the poor against Missouri’s old inhabitants. Noting that August was cider time in Missouri, they belittled their opponents for using the cider cart to entice swilling men and boys to join their political rallies. Cider, they noted, was better than whiskey as a political lubricant because it cost less and went farther. Meanwhile they fumed that the honest candidate who stayed at home attending to his ordinary business or to the cultivation of his understanding was stigmatized as a proud man and an enemy to the people.³⁰

While a majority of the territory’s American voters

seemed ready to embrace McNair's candidacy, Clark's longtime French Creole friends remained steadfast in their support. Statehood and the new framework of government promised to further diminish their political influence, and leaders in the Creole community looked to Clark to defend their interests as he had so often in the past. In a campaign letter published in the *Enquirer* only in French, a Louisianan advised Missouri Francophones that the new constitution gave them the right to vote, something they might not know since the document's framers had not seen fit to have it translated into French. The writer made it clear that he intended to exercise his franchise and urged his Creole friends to do the same. He also suggested that they would do well to recall that during the War of 1812 when former Governor Benjamin Howard had accused the French populace of siding with the savages rather than the government, Mr. Clark had come to their defense and vouched for their loyalty. To underscore his point, he closed with the observation, "Mister Clark has not forgotten the taking of Yorktown and that Lafayette was French." The French voters rallied solidly to Clark's cause, but by 1820 they were too few in number to have a significant impact at the polls.³¹

As Election Day drew near, it was clear to Clark's friends that all was lost. John O'Fallon advised members of the Clark family in Louisville, "Uncle William will not be elected. His opponent will have a handsome majority."³² In the Boone's Lick region, a bastion of McNair supporters, Duff Green struggled on in Clark's defense to the very end, but as the returns began pouring in O'Fallon's worst fears had been borne out. The official canvass gave McNair 6,576 votes and Clark only 2,656.³³ It was a landslide. In seeking to explain away Clark's loss, Thomas Hart Benton protested that the endless predictions of a McNair victory had caused many Clark supporters to jump on the McNair bandwagon at the last minute. But Benton knew better, and he would soon follow McNair's lead and embrace the new populist political realities. By successfully repositioning himself as a champion of the people, the aristocratic Benton went on to win six consecutive terms in the U.S. Senate where he served as a western spokesman for the new democracy and the policies of Andrew Jackson.

It was too late politically for William Clark, who had fallen victim to changing times. The defeat was mortifying for the old soldier and public servant, but he did not allow his disappointment to show. His wife's death and his decisive

loss at the polls seemed a lot to bear. Always a worrier, John O'Fallon needlessly fretted about his uncle's prospects: "I sympathize most sensibly for the irreparable loss of uncle Wm. I am gratified to hear that he bears it so well. I fear he will not spend the evening of his life as serenely as he desires. . . I wish he could get something from the Genl. Govt. to contribute to his support."³⁴

As always, the steadfast Clark persevered in the face of tragedy and adversity. Predictably he took these latest setbacks in stride and prepared to get on with his life. He had arrived in Virginia too late to bury his wife, but once on the scene he arranged for the care of his children. Two-year-old Julius, a child with significant disabilities, was to remain with his grandmother in Virginia for the present, and six-year-old Mary Margaret would stay with her Aunt Caroline in Louisville. The three remaining boys, Meriwether Lewis, William Preston, and George Rogers Hancock, would return with him to the familiar environs of their home in St. Louis. He was on his way back to Missouri when the news of his electoral defeat reached him. Clark and the boys arrived in St. Louis on September 19, 1820, the day after the state's newly elected General Assembly had convened in the Missouri Hotel, but the devoted and doting father's priorities were now with his young sons for whom he purchased an assortment of apples, nuts, and toys.³⁵

The 1820 election marked the end of Clark's political career, but it did not terminate his role as a public servant. Never one to carry a grudge, he put the loss behind him and determined to remain in St. Louis, the place he considered home. His past service earned him a new federal appointment as the superintendent of Indian affairs in that city, which enabled him to play a prominent role in the administration of U.S. Indian policy until his death in 1838. Missouri voters may not have approved of Clark's treatment of the Native Americans, but the very qualities that had caused them to reject his candidacy now garnered praise and respect from government and tribal leaders alike.

On the personal front, Clark remarried in late 1821. His new spouse, Harriet Kennerly Radford, was a widow with three small children of her own. The happy couple had two more sons prior to Harriet's death a decade later. Active to the end, Clark passed his final years attending to Indian business and enjoying the company of family and friends. A steady parade of visitors, including a host of distinguished travelers, artists, and writers, regularly called at his St. Louis home to hear his stories and to view his

collection of Native American artifacts and other assorted curiosities. By then the failed 1820 gubernatorial election like many other chapters in William Clark's event-filled life had become only a distant memory. ■

William E. Foley is professor emeritus of history at the University of Central Missouri. He is the author of Wilderness Journey: The Life of William Clark and The Genesis of Missouri: From Wilderness Outpost to Statehood, as well as numerous other books and scholarly articles including some published in We Proceeded On.

Notes

Reproduced by permission from the Missouri Historical Society, William E. Foley, "After the Applause: William Clark's Failed 1820 Gubernatorial Campaign," *Gateway Heritage* 24, No. 2-3 (Fall 2003-Winter 2004): 104-111.

1. [Frankfort, Kentucky] *Western World*, 11 October 1806, in James P. Ronda, "St. Louis Welcomes and Toasts the Lewis and Clark Expedition: A Newly Discovered 1806 Newspaper Account," *We Proceeded On*, 13 (February 1987), 19-20.
2. John O'Fallon to Dennis Fitzhugh, August 18, 1820, Fitzhugh Family Papers, Missouri Historical Society (MHS).
3. John O'Fallon, "Brief Notices of the Principal Events in the Public Life of Governor Clark," August 9, 1820, copy in MHS Library.
4. [St. Louis] *Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser*, September 6, 1820, and "To the People of the State of Missouri," political circular, July 2, 1820, William Clark Papers, MHS.
5. Jerome O. Steffen introduced this interpretation in his study *William Clark: Jeffersonian Man on the Frontier* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977).
6. See John Mack Faragher, "More Motley than Mackinaw: From Ethnic Mixing to Ethnic Cleansing on the Frontier of the Lower Missouri, 1783-1833," in Andrew R. L. Cayton and Frederika J. Teute, eds., *Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750-1830* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 304-26.
7. Thomas Hart Benton to Governor Preston, May 20, 1818, photostatic copy, Thomas Hart Benton Papers, MHS and Bernard G. Farrar to William Clark, January 20, 1820, William Clark Papers, MHS.
8. William Clark Journal, 1817-1820, William Clark Papers, MHS; William Clark to Dennis Fitzhugh, September 20, 1818, Fitzhugh Family Papers, MHS; George Hancock to Julia Clark, October 14, 1818, Preston Family Papers-Joyes Collection, Filson Historical Society (FHS), Louisville; John O'Fallon to General Thomas Smith, June 28, 1819, Thomas A. Smith Collection, Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia (WHMCC); and William Clark to John O'Fallon, October 18, 1819, O'Fallon Papers, MHS.
9. *St. Louis Enquirer*, March 22 and 29, 1820.
10. *Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser*, June 28, 1820.
11. William Carr Lane to Mary Lane, April 17, 1819, Letters of William Carr Lane, 1819-1831 in *Glimpses of the Past*, 7 (July-September 1940): 60.
12. Rough copies of notes addressed to the editor, 1820, William Clark Papers, MHS.
13. John O'Fallon to General Thomas A. Smith, June 24, 1820, Thomas A. Smith Collection, WHMCC.
14. Dennis Fitzhugh to John O'Fallon, June 15, 1820, Dennis Fitzhugh Papers, FHS.
15. To the People of Missouri, July 2, 1820, political circular in William Clark Papers, MHS; *St. Louis Enquirer*, July 22, 1820; John O'Fallon to General

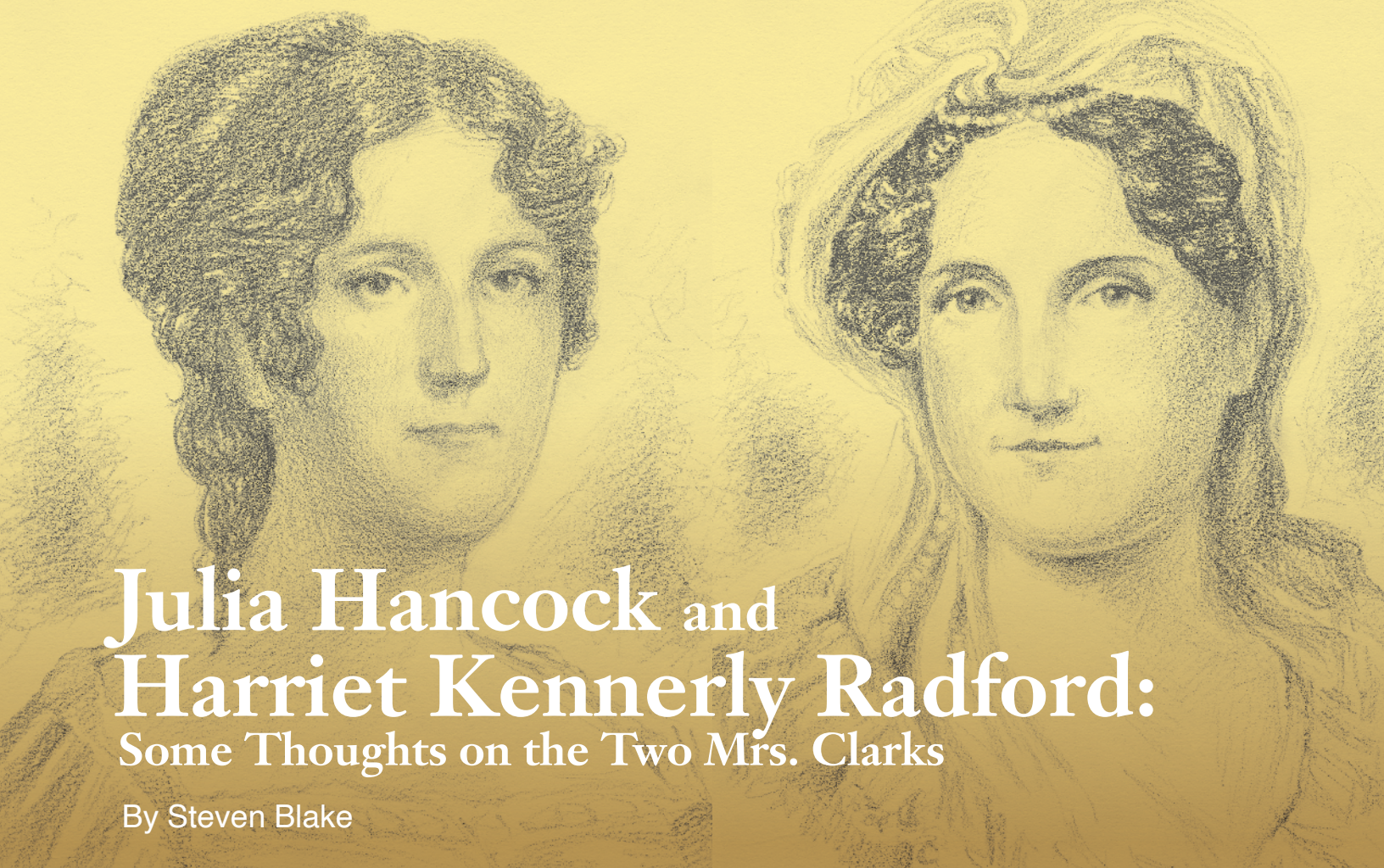
Thomas A. Smith, June 24, 1820, Thomas A. Smith Collection, WHMCC; *Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser*, July 5, 1820.

16. *St. Louis Enquirer*, July 22, 1820.
17. For more on McNair's background, see Perry McCandless, "Alexander McNair," in Lawrence O. Christensen, William E. Foley, Gary R. Kremer, and Kenneth H. Winn, eds., *Dictionary of Missouri Biography* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 538-40.
18. On Missouri politics and territorial factions see William E. Foley, *The Genesis of Missouri: From Frontier Outpost to Statehood* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989), especially Chapter 16.
19. To the People of Missouri, July 2, 1820, political circular, William Clark Papers, MHS.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Noah M. Ludlow, *Dramatic Life As I Found It* (St. Louis: G.I. Jones and Co., 1880), 184-85 and *Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser*, August 16, 1820.
22. An Elector in *Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser*, August 23, 1820, and Political Notes of John B. C. Lucas on his reasons for favoring McNair [1820], Lucas Collection, MHS.
23. Alexander McNair's address to Fellow Citizens of the New State of Missouri in [Franklin] *Missouri Intelligencer*, August 26, 1820.
24. *Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser*, August 16, 1820.
25. *Missouri Intelligencer*, August 26, 1820.
26. *Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser*, July 19, 1820, and August 16, 1820. On Clark and the Indian murder cases see William E. Foley, "Different Notions of Justice: The Case of the 1808 St. Louis Murder Trials," *Gateway Heritage* 9 (Winter 1988-89): 2-13.
27. *St. Louis Enquirer*, July 15, 1820.
28. A Citizen in *St. Louis Enquirer*, August 19, 1820.
29. *St. Louis Enquirer*, July 15, 1820.
30. "On the Noble Arts of Electioneering," in *St. Louis Enquirer*, August 2, 9, and 19, 1820, and John O'Fallon to Thomas A. Smith, August 27, 1820, Thomas A. Smith Papers, WHMCC.
31. *St. Louis Enquirer*, August 23, 1820.
32. John O'Fallon to Dennis Fitzhugh, August 18, 1820, Fitzhugh Family Papers, MHS.
33. Duff Green to Thomas A. Smith, August 22, 1820, Thomas A. Smith Papers, WHMCC; *Missouri Gazette & Public Advertiser*, September 6, 1820.
34. John O'Fallon to Dennis Fitzhugh, November 2, 1820, Fitzhugh Family Papers, MHS.
35. William Clark Memorandum and Account Book, 1820-1825, William Clark Papers, MHS.

from William Clark to Jonathan Clark, November 8, 1809

"You have heard of that unfortunate end of Govr. Lewis, and probably more than I have heard, I was in hopes of hearing more particular at this place, but have not—I wrote from Lexington to Wm. P. Anderson, to send the Govrs. paipers to me if they were yet in his part of the Contry —

I am at a loss to know what to be at his death is a turble Stroke to me, in every respect. I wish I could talk a little with you just now."



Julia Hancock and Harriet Kennerly Radford: Some Thoughts on the Two Mrs. Clarks

By Steven Blake

Pencil sketches of Julia Hancock Clark (left) and Harriet Kennerly Radford Clark by Kerry D. Soper. Courtesy of Jay H. Buckley.

In history, those people around the primary personages may not receive as diligent scrutiny as they deserve. For William Clark's first wife, Julia Hancock, analysis of the supposed longstanding prenuptial romance does not withstand a close inspection of the evidence. And for his second wife, Harriet Kennerly Radford, her extraordinary national achievement has never been recognized.

Judith, the first Mrs. Clark

William Clark's military career began in the Kentucky militia during the summer of 1789, and then in 1792, he enlisted in the United States Army. Clark fared ably as a soldier and developed friendships with two men who would significantly contribute to his future. Eventually he grew to consider his assignments menial and his initiatives unrecognized. In a July 1, 1796, letter, William resigned his commission, citing poor health.¹ Although Clark did suffer from bouts of illness, his apprehension may have been more for the condition of his brother George, who was tangled in a maze of legal and financial difficulties dating back to his

campaigns for American independence between 1776-1783.

George Rogers Clark ended his military career deeply in debt and pursued by creditors. Despite receiving thousands of acres of land for his exploits, General Clark had drawn no salary for his strenuous efforts in the trans-Appalachian region. During the wars, he had depleted his savings and opened personal loans to support his troops. Worse, the United States Army mislaid his \$27,000 reimbursement request. Suffering a heavy toll from both military and bureaucratic battles, he had descended into alcoholism and self-pity.²

The Clark brothers divided responsibilities to manage George's finances. One of William's tasks was to visit the various properties to assure that taxes were not delinquent, liens were not outstanding, and settlers were not encroaching on lands owned or claimed by the Clark family. In a strategy to frustrate creditors, he also transferred title ownership from his more famous brother to himself. The trek lasted much of 1797. William Clark estimated he traveled more than 3,000 miles, although a current estimate suggests something closer to 1,820 miles.³

In May 1801, William Clark commenced his second circuit of George's properties. Arriving in the town of Fincastle, Virginia, he stayed with Major William Preston, at Smithfield, the Preston estate. Preston was engaged to Caroline Hancock, the daughter of Colonel George Hancock, a veteran of the Revolutionary War, a two-term United States congressman, a prosperous lawyer turned planter, and a Federalist. Visiting the Hancock home, Preston introduced Clark to the colonel, his wife Margaret, his daughters Mary and Julia, and Preston's fiancée Caroline. Also residing in the house was a niece, Harriet Kennerly, whose mother, the colonel's sister, Mildred Hancock Kennerly, had died after Harriet's birth. Harriet moved in with her three female cousins to ensure she would better learn feminine duties and behaviors. Family lore indicates that William had independently met both Julia and Harriet when he assisted them with a troublesome horse. After a few days, Clark continued his journey on his brother's behalf.⁴

In July 1803, William accepted an expedition invitation from his army friend Meriwether Lewis to join the great transcontinental expedition. That October, Clark joined the Corps of Discovery when he, Lewis, and a skeleton crew pushed off from Clarksville in Indiana Territory in the 55-foot expedition keelboat. After traveling with Lewis to the Pacific Ocean shore, Clark arrived back in St. Louis, Louisiana Territory, in September 1806.⁵ A party, including a Native American delegation, assembled with Clark and Lewis to travel to Washington, D.C. On October 21, the group departed St. Louis and on November 5, 1806, reached Louisville, Kentucky. Six days later, the party resumed their travel, but without Clark.⁶

Why? William had determined that finding a wife was his immediate priority. After three years in the wilderness, he had no idea whether any of his acquaintances might have married, moved, or died for that matter.⁷ There is no record of William's search process for a prospective mate, but he must have contacted William and Caroline Preston to inquire about the Hancock girls. The Prestons replied that Mary and Harriet were to marry soon, and so Julia, the unbetrothed daughter of arguably the most prominent man in Botetourt County, Virginia, became William's quest.⁸

A tradition has persisted in biographies and accounts of the expedition and its aftermath that William Clark had become smitten with Julia in 1801. But, during the ensuing years, Clark never mentioned Julia in his letters, diaries, or the expedition's journals, and he never visited her during the

intervening years. The love fable arose from Meriwether Lewis' journal entry regarding the designation of the Judith River in east central Montana, which does derive from Julia Hancock's birth name.⁹ On May 29, 1805, Lewis wrote that Clark "has (thought it proper to) call...it *Judieths* River." Lewis' preceding sentences had indicated that Clark had observed an "abundance" of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep nearby which may have caused Clark to call it the Big Horn River as Lewis had initially recorded. Lewis erased the word "Big Horn" and substituted "Judieths" in its place but did not continue the revisions in later mentions. Nicholas Biddle reconciled all the discrepancies to "Judith" for the 1814 printed paraphrased edition of the "journals."¹⁰ Some believed that Clark was renaming the stream after Julia Hancock as a wedding tribute.

Clark's apparent obliviousness to Julia stems from another compelling reason. When Clark (born on August 1, 1770) had assisted Julia (born on November 21, 1791) with a difficult horse in 1801, he was thirty years old. Julia was just nine, a prepubescent child. By the winter of 1806, William was 36, and Julia was 15, a pubescent woman. Strange though it may seem to us now, many women married in the mid-teens in the early national period of American history. In 1783, the father of the U.S. Constitution James Madison paid court to a fifteen-year-old named Kitty Floyd before she rejected him for a more suitable lover.

We can probably be certain that a mere child had not stirred Clark's fancy in 1801. Moreover, if the Prestons had indicated either Mary or Harriet as available, William may have chosen one of them instead.

On December 15, 1806, Clark left Louisville for the town of Fincastle. He missed the December 23 double wedding of Mary Hancock to John Griffin and Harriet Kennerly to Dr. John Radford. Perhaps with an aggressive horseback ride over the roughly 450 miles, Clark might have arrived in time for the nuptials, but his December 14 letter to William Croghan, indicated no such haste.¹¹ Further, no record or folklore suggests that Clark attended the ceremony or indicates the date he arrived at Fincastle. We can get some sense of Clark's traveling pace by noting that when he subsequently left Fincastle for Washington, D.C., he traveled 225 miles in eleven days. Assuming the same pace for twice the distance, William probably reached Fincastle on or around January 5, 1807.¹² He had only a few days to court Julia, who was likely overwhelmed by such attention from a national celebrity, but enough time to request Julia's hand from

Colonel Hancock. Clark would later write to Lewis about his gambit, “I made and attacked most vigorously.”¹³ This is not necessarily as strange as it might seem to us. Thomas Jefferson’s daughter Martha’s courtship with Thomas Mann Randolph lasted no more than six weeks in 1789 to 1790.

Colonel Hancock undoubtedly was impressed but not overwhelmed by Clark’s proposal to marry his daughter. Although Clark came from an illustrious family and had secured a very prestigious standing, his expedition employment was at an end and his future prospects were as yet uncertain. As proven from his brother George’s plight, fame alone does not pay the bills. Uncertainty about Clark’s capacity to sustain Julia’s customary lifestyle prevented the colonel’s consent. The men did agree to reassess the proposal after William had secured a job. Clark’s visit of a few days to Fincastle in January supports the notion that the winning of Julia Hancock conformed to eighteenth and nineteenth century mores—dowries and financial settlements were the norm—not to the romantic tradition of love at first sight.

After delivering a speech to Fincastle residents on January 8, 1807, Clark rode to rejoin Lewis, arriving in Washington on January 18. Over the next days, he grew confident that Congress would reward him with a handsome settlement package, including a federal office. William wrote a January 22 letter to his brother John, boasting that he had “an object in view that I flatter myself will extort from her that old promise.”¹⁴ The word “object” does not seem to convey much affection toward Julia but likely meant the pending engagement. Also, some historians construed the adjective “old” as a five and one-half-year-old marriage promise between Clark and a nine-year-old girl or between Clark and her parents. Instead, “old” would suggest the traditional response after a marriage proposal. This is worth considering, at least.

Clark did receive employment as an Indian agent, stationed in St. Louis, Louisiana Territory. Departing Washington on March 11, 1807, William returned to Fincastle, where Colonel Hancock consented to Julia’s marriage. During his stay at Hancock’s recently completed Santillane estate, a message arrived that Secretary of War Henry Dearborn had awarded Clark an additional position in St. Louis as the Brigadier General for the Louisiana territorial militia.¹⁵ William wrote to Meriwether Lewis, notifying him of his engagement to Julia, stating, “I have made an attack most vigorously, we have come to terms, and a delivery is to be made first of January.”¹⁶

On January 5, 1808, William married Julia in a ceremony

conducted at Santillane. One year plus five days later, Julia gave birth to the first of their five children. The Clarks would name their two oldest sons, Meriwether Lewis Clark and William Preston Clark, after the two army friends who had assisted William’s fortunes.¹⁷

However the relationship began, Clark and Julia developed a strong attachment. Clark called her “my Dear wife.” By all accounts, he was a good father. Clark was characteristically attentive and solicitous during Julia’s prolonged illness. She died in 1820 at the age of twenty-eight.

Harriet, the second Mrs. Clark

William Sutherland, a Fredericksburg, Virginia, colonist, enlisted in the 45th Regiment of Foot to fight in the French and Indian War.¹⁸ He had responded to a recruitment request issued in Virginia Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie’s Proclamation of 1754.¹⁹ At the end of the War, Ensign Sutherland earned 2,000 acres of land per English King George III’s Proclamation of 1763. But, to acquire that property, he had to obtain a military land warrant, submit both that warrant and land location to the Fincastle county land office, hire a deputized surveyor, and receive a land patent from the Royal Governor of Virginia.²⁰ Ten years elapsed before the warrant distributions were finalized, during which Virginia asserted authority over its newly acquired region known as Kentucky.

Unlike the later Oklahoma land rush, where gunshots began a frantic dash, Kentucky’s land rush began when the guns of war were silenced, proceeded at a slower pace, but was just as wild. The Treaty of Paris in 1763, which ended the French and Indian War, split the land of New France between Britain and Spain at the Mississippi River.²¹ The Proclamation of 1763 also established an Indian reserve west of the Appalachian divide. With the debt incurred from the war, England could not support a military presence in Kentucky, so King George III ordered everyone to evacuate the reserve. Nevertheless, most settlers believed their farms had been secured by “cabin rights.”²² And, because no Indian tribe resided in Kentucky,²³ the lure of unoccupied, fertile ground drew families away from their existing farms in increasing numbers each year.²⁴

In 1768, British agents negotiated the Treaty of Hard Labor with the Cherokee to move the eastern border of the reserve westward and the Treaty of Fort Stanwix with the Iroquois to set the Ohio River as a barrier to white encroachment. Tribes residing north of the river, particularly the Shawnee, protested the loss of access to their hunting ground

without their consent.²⁵ Conflicts with settlers increased as a result.²⁶ After the Treaty of Lochaber of 1770 with the Cherokee, the Donnelson Indian Line of 1771 became the final demarcation of the Indian reserve's eastern perimeter. Unfortunately, John Donnelson did not identify which river flowing into the Ohio, the Cumberland, the Kentucky, or the Big Sandy served as the physical borderline. This ambiguity enabled white settlers to claim land "legally" where perhaps they were not intended to stake their claims.²⁷

In September 1771, John Murray, known as Lord Dunmore, became the fourth and final British governor of Virginia. He formed Fincastle County to encompass the Kentucky area. For the principal surveyor of the county, Dunmore named Colonel William Preston in 1772.²⁸ Preston built his Smithfield estate to serve as both his home and county land office.²⁹ Dunmore issued the neglected military land warrants in 1773 for lands along the waterways of northern Kentucky.³⁰

Also, in 1773, Captain John Bullitt began surveys for Harrodsburg, the first town of Kentucky.³¹ When Bullitt submitted his plats to the land office at the end of summer, William Preston refused to accept them, citing unauthorized surveyors, unperfected land warrants, and possible intrusion into the Indian reserve. With his land speculation scheme in jeopardy, Bullitt pleaded with Lord Dunmore to overrule Preston, and Dunmore did so in December 1773.³² Dunmore also announced that established settlers alleging "cabin rights" properties could receive a 400-acre warrant for their claims.³³ Administrative interference into the process resulted in many land office missteps, which led to legal and administrative land disputes persisting for decades.

Upon receiving his 2,000-acre warrant, William Sutherland filed it at Smithfield and booked a surveyor. He requested two tracts, both on the south bank of the Ohio River—an eastern thousand-acre parcel thirty miles below (west of) the Scioto River, and a western thousand acres near Louisville.³⁴ (The east acreage lies between the towns of Vanceburg and Concord, Kentucky, near Lock and Dam No. 32 and Pond Run on the Ohio River.)³⁵

In April 1774, county surveyor John Floyd, a protégé of William Preston, led three deputized surveyors, Hancock Taylor, Isaac Hite, and James Douglas, down the Kanawha River, and then down the Ohio.³⁶ They agreed to rendezvous near Harrodsburg on August 1. On May 4, Taylor and his chainmen, Abraham Hemptonstrall, James Strother, and Willis Lee, ran lines for Sutherland's eastern property, and,

on June 1, completed his western survey.³⁷

The surveyors learned from travelers along the waterways that Indian reprisals had resumed.³⁸ On July 8, an attack near the Harrodsburg site left two men dead. Two weeks later, the Hite and Douglas crews arrived at the rendezvous but noticed the two fresh graves nearby. They carved a departure message on a tree trunk and canoed to New Orleans, where they booked ship passage to Virginia. On July 24, Floyd's crew saw the carving and fled overland to Smithfield. But on July 27, near Carrollton, Native Americans attacked Taylor's team, killing Strother and wounding Taylor. During their retreat, Taylor died near Richmond, and Hemptonstrall delivered Taylor's surveys to Smithfield.³⁹ Eventually, Preston recorded over 150,000 acres from the 1774 surveys into Fincastle County Survey Book A and sent the patent requests to Lord Dunmore.⁴⁰

At the onset of the Revolutionary war, Sutherland remained a loyalist and thereby became an enemy alien. As such, he would forfeit his 2,000 acres if detected. So he hired attorneys to manage his land and departed to the Orkney Islands of Scotland. In 1776, Virginia changed the name of Fincastle to Kentucky County.⁴¹ Virginia passed the Land Office Law of 1779 to allow the purchase of treasury warrants for land ownership.⁴² On June 30, 1780, Kentucky County split into Fayette, Jefferson, and Lincoln counties.⁴³

In 1781, brothers John and Lewis Craig each purchased a treasury warrant. Registering them with the Fayette County land office, they specified locations between Vanceburg and Concord and hired a surveyor. Virginia issued land patents to the Craigs on May 26, 1788, and then to William Sutherland on August 5, 1788. These patents claimed the same ground, a dilemma termed "shingling" because one claim lay atop another.⁴⁴ The Fayette County land office was unaware of the Fincastle County claim, and the lack of a cabin or cultivated fields made the land appear unclaimed.

The Commonwealth of Kentucky became the fifteenth state in 1792, retaining the three counties.⁴⁵ The jurisdiction for deeds quickly shifted as new counties evolved, adding more complexity in determining land ownership. On August 19, 1796, William Sutherland ordered his lawyers to advertise the sale of his eastern thousand acres, which at that time was under Mason County jurisdiction.

On February 13, 1799, William Radford, a prosperous Richmond, Virginia, businessman, purchased Sutherland's deed for \$3,000.⁴⁶ Discovering individuals, including Simon Kenton, who also claimed ownership, Radford filed a chancery

suit in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky on December 2, 1800. The case reconvened every six months or so, usually with one party requesting additional time, but after 1806 the court records are lost. Abraham Hemptonstrall, a member of Hancock Taylor's crew, not only gave testimony but also assisted a resurvey to verify the 1774 Sutherland lines versus the 1785 Craig lines.

William Radford died in 1803, and his son Dr. John Radford inherited the Vanceburg land and became the plaintiff in the chancery suit. John had graduated from Washington Academy (now Washington and Lee University) in Lexington, Virginia. No details of his romance with Harriet Kennerly are known but, on December 23, 1806, they were married. The couple set up home first in Fincastle but moved to their Vanceburg property in 1808 (under Lewis County jurisdiction, as it remains today). They became parents of three children, William, Mary, and John Desborough.⁴⁷ Radford, besides his medical practice and farm management, became very active in the affairs of the county, serving as a college trustee, coroner, surveyor, militia captain, and state assemblyman for the 1811 to 1812 term (for both Lewis and neighboring Greenup counties).⁴⁸

On November 15, 1815, the district court decreed both parties in the protracted land litigation had acquired their patents correctly but that the Radfords owned the senior patent.⁴⁹ The Craigs appealed the decision to the United States Supreme Court, and the justices heard arguments in February 1817.⁵⁰

While hunting on April 16, 1817, John Radford shot a boar, but, as he approached, the boar revived and gored Radford, killing him.⁵¹ After enduring seventeen years of litigation, John Radford never learned that he and his wife Harriet also won the U.S. Supreme Court's decision on March 12, 1818.⁵² Harriet retained her Vanceburg property, but she moved with her three children to St. Louis, where her brothers George, James, and Augustus Kennerly and her cousin Julia Hancock Clark already resided. After a long illness, Clark's first wife Julia died on June 26, 1820, at Fotheringay, Colonel George Hancock's second estate. Colonel Hancock died two weeks later, and both repose within a mausoleum at the rear of Fotheringay.⁵³

Harriet (born on July 25, 1788) was almost thirteen when she first met William Clark in the town of Fincastle with her cousin Julia and that stubborn horse. On November 28, 1821, at the age of thirty-three, she became the second Mrs. Clark and would deliver two sons, Jefferson and Edmund, into the Clark Family. William Clark adopted her three

Radford children as well.⁵⁴ Ironically, the marriage rendered William an owner of property situated in Lewis County, named in late 1806 after his expedition partner (Clark County had already been named in honor of George Rogers Clark.) Harriet fell ill in the autumn of 1831, and on Christmas day, she passed away. She bequeathed the Vanceburg property to be divided amongst her Radford children.⁵⁵ By 1839, the children had sold their deeds.

Thus William Clark was married twice, first for twelve years to Julia Hancock (1808-1820), then for ten more to Harriet Kennerly (1821-1831). He had known both women since 1801. The first marriage almost certainly did not come from the rekindling of a romance that began when Julia was nine. Second marriages were even more common in that era than they are today. The widower Clark turned to an old acquaintance who had herself been a widow for four years. Clark had a much happier domestic life than his friend Meriwether Lewis, who never married, and who was, by his own admission, a "musty, fusty, rusty old bachelor" at the time of his lonely death on October 11, 1809. ■

Steven Blake is a recently retired computer programmer with an agriculture degree, who in 2000 began writing history columns to fill out a quarterly St. Charles, Missouri, newsletter. In 2003, the articles recounted the Corps of Discovery's travels, in ninety-day segments. That research unexpectedly connected three of his favorite childhood topics: Lewis and Clark, Daniel Boone, and the Battle of Hampton Roads. It also triggered puzzling questions and discovered hidden history, which after fifteen years of further research, this article addresses.

Notes

1. Harlow Lindley, "William Clark—The Indian Agent," Benjamin F. Shambaugh, ed., *Proceedings of The Mississippi Valley Historical Association for The Year 1908-1909* Vol. I (Cedar Rapids: The Torch Press, 1910), 63-4.
2. James J. Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother: Letters of William Clark to Jonathan Clark* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 24-5.
3. Landon Y. Jones, *William Clark And the Shaping Of The West* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004), 93-97; William E. Foley, *Wilderness Journey: The Life of William Clark* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2004), 46.
4. Jones, *William Clark*, 107-8; William Preston Johnston, *The Johnstons of Salisbury* (New Orleans: I. Graham and Son, Ltd., 1897), 205-216; Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 124-5.
5. Reuben Gold Thwaites, "William Clark: Soldier, Explorer, Statesman," *The Washington Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (July 1907): 238-45.
6. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 417.
7. Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 115.
8. Robert Douthat Stoner, *A Seed-Bed of the Republic* (Kingsport, TN: Kingsport Press, Inc., 1962), 294-6.
9. Eldon G. Chuinard, "Fincastle-Santillane and William and Julia Clark," in

- Robert A. Saindon, ed., *Explorations into the World of Lewis and Clark*, vol. 3 (Scituate, MA: Digital Scanning, Inc., 2003), 1258.
10. Gary E. Moulton, *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, 13 vols. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1983-2001; paperback edition 2002), 4:215-216, 220n1.
11. Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 122.
12. Conversation with James J. Holmberg, Curator of Collections, The Filson Historical Society, email exchange.
13. Jones, *William Clark*, 156.
14. Holmberg, ed., *Dear Brother*, 126.
15. Foley, *Wilderness Journey*, 158-9.
16. Thomas C. Danisi and John C. Jackson, *Meriwether Lewis* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2009), 169.
17. Jay H. Buckley, *William Clark: Indian Diplomat* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 69-70.
18. Charles Hughes Hamlin, *They Went Thataway: Three Volumes in One* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 1994), 66.
19. William Waller Hening, *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, From the First Session of the Legislature*, Vol. VII (Richmond: Franklin Press, 1820), 661-2.
20. Hening, *Statutes at Large*, 663-9.
21. Otis K. Rice, *Frontier Kentucky* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 16.
22. Joan E. Brookes-Smith, *Master Index Virginia Surveys and Grants 1774-1791* (Frankfort: Kentucky Historical Society, 1976), ii.
23. A. Gwynn Henderson and David Pollack, "A Native History of Kentucky," Daniel S. Murphree, ed., *Native America: a State-by-State Historical Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, *Selections from Chapter 17* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Press, 2012), 19.
24. Neal O. Hammon, *Early Kentucky Land Records, 1773-1780* (Louisville: Butler Book Publishing Services, Inc., 1992), xi.
25. Henderson and Pollack, "A Native History," 25.
26. Rice, *Frontier Kentucky*, 57.
27. Hammon, *Early Kentucky Land Records*, xiii.
28. William C. Pendleton, *History of Tazewell County and Southwest Virginia 1748-1920* (Richmond: W.C. Hill Printing Company, 1920), 257-8.
29. John Frederick Dorman, *The Prestons of Smithfield and Greenfield in Virginia* (Louisville: General Printing Company, 1982), 17.
30. Hammon, *Early Kentucky Land Records*, 1.
31. Willard Rouse Jillson, *The Kentucky Land Grants: Part I* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 1971), 3.
32. Rice, *Frontier Kentucky*, 52.
33. Hammon, *Early Kentucky Land Records*, xiii.
34. Mary B. Kegley and F.B. Kegley, *Early Adventurers On the Western Waters*, Vol. 1 (Orange, VA: Green Publishers, Inc., 1980), 72.
35. U.P. James, *James' River Guide: Descriptions of All the Cities, Towns, and Principal Objects of Interest On the Navigable Waters of the Mississippi Valley* (Cincinnati: U.P. James, 1860), 6.
36. George Morgan Chinn, *Kentucky Settlement and Statehood 1750-1800* (Frankfort: Kentucky Historical Society, 1975), 55.
37. Philip Fall Taylor, *A Calendar of the Warrants for Land in Kentucky, Granted for Service in the French and Indian War* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 1991), 118, 92.
38. Chinn, *Kentucky Settlement*, 62.
39. Neal O. Hammon, "The Fincastle Surveyors in the Bluegrass, 1774," *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, Vol. 70, No. 4 (October, 1972): 287-94.
40. Kegley and Kegley, *Early Adventures*. 71.
41. Kegley and Kegley, *Early Adventures*. 97.
42. Brookes-Smith, *Master Index*, v.
43. Taylor, *Warrants for Land*, 64.
44. Brookes-Smith, *Master Index*, i.
45. Taylor, *Warrants for Land*, 65.
46. Michael L. Cook and Bettie A. Cook, *Kentucky Court of Appeals Deed Books A-G*, Vol. 1 (Evansville, IN: Cook Publications, 1985), 206. The deed first appears in Book D but is repeated in Books H and N.
47. Robert Somerville Radford Yates, Sr., *A History of William Radford of Richmond, Virginia* (Decorah, IA: The Anundsen Publishing Company, 1986), 4-47.
48. Reverend O.G. Ragan, *History of Lewis County, Kentucky* (Cincinnati: Press of Jennings and Graham, 1912), 137, 244, 248; William M. Talley, *Talley's Northeastern Kentucky Papers* (Fort Worth: American Reference Publishers, 1971), 110; Lewis Collins and Richard H. Collins, *History of Kentucky* (Covington, KY: Collins & Co., 1892), 775.
49. Information provided by Kandie Atkinson, Office of the Secretary of State, Land Office Section, Capitol Annex, Suite T21-B, Frankfort, KY.
50. Henry Wheaton, *Reports of Cases Argued and Adjudged in the Supreme Court of the United States, February Term, 1818*, Vol. 3 (New York: R. Donaldson, 1818), 594-600.
51. Sophie Radford de Meissner, *Old Naval Days* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920), 8.
52. Wheaton, *Reports of Cases Argued*, 596.
53. William Clark Kennerly, *Persimmon Hill* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1948), 54-5.
54. de Meissner, *Old Naval Days*, 16.
55. Lewis County Clerk Legal Records Department, *Lewis County Deeds* Vol. G (Vanceburg, KY), 101-4.

Donor Roll

In Honor of Alexandria Searls

Dan Sturdevant

In Honor of Lou Ritten

Jerry B. Garrett

In Honor of Ken Jutzi

Jerry B. Garrett

In Honor of Sue Buchel

Karen and Lawrence M. Goering

In Memory of Carol Buckley

Jerry B. Garrett

In Memory of Chas Langelan

Lorna Hainesworth

In Memory of Ella Mae Howard

Gary E. and Faye Moulton

Barbara and Rennie Kubik

Steven G. Lee

Philippa Newfield

In Memory of Frank Muhly

Jerry B. Garrett

In Memory of Ida Johnson

Sue Heifner

In Memory of Jane Knox

Steven G. Lee

Chris and Louie Maillet

Debby Norman

Philippa Newfield

Jerry and Janice Wilson

Beverly Ann Lewis

Jerry B. Garrett

Lou Ritten

Lynn and Doug Davis

In Memory of Walter "Cheetah" Madry

Steven G. Lee

Donations to the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation to honor individuals, activities, or the memory of a friend, family member, or colleague are deeply appreciated, and may be designated for the foundation's general fund or earmarked for a particular purpose.

Photograph of Trapper Peak, Bitterroot Mountains, Montana, courtesy of Steve Lee.

Review

Dreams of El Dorado: A History of the American West

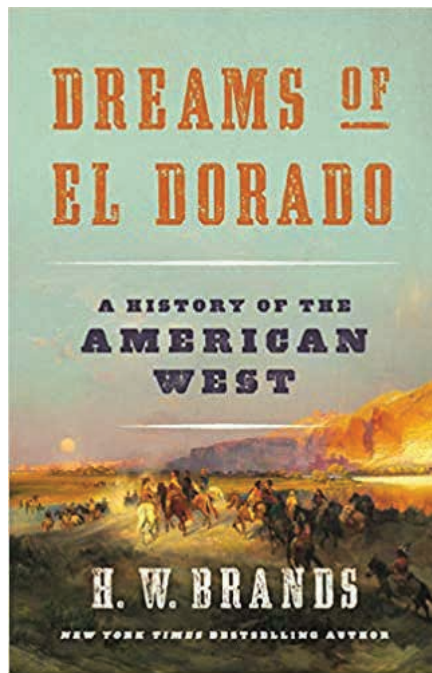
By H. W. Brands

New York: Basic Books, 2019. 524 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$32.00.

Reviewed by Jay H. Buckley

Any author willing to include a subtitle like “A History of the American West” has already taken on a herculean task fraught with numerous difficulties. For the first three-quarters of the twentieth century, western historians looked to Frederick Jackson Turner’s influential 1893 essay, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” which he published with other essays in *The Frontier in American History* (1920). Turner’s “Frontier Thesis” served as a standard interpretation of nineteenth century western history, focusing upon the frontier process as the genesis of American democracy. The advancing frontier and the availability of free land, Turner argued, freed Americans from European customs and ensured the advancement of liberty, freedom, and democracy. Turner’s protégé Ray Allen Billington’s *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier* (1949) became the standard western history textbook for several generations of scholars.

It has been nearly a decade, however, since anyone has attempted to tell a sweeping, popular history of the nineteenth century American West—until now. H.W. Brands, Jack S. Blanton, Sr., chair in history at the University of Texas at Austin and a *New York Times* best-selling author, employs a lively



narrative style highly accessible to the general public in his new book *Dreams of El Dorado: A History of the American West*. Through his choice of compelling characters, engaging episodes that are both heartbreaking and enthralling, and masterful narrative storytelling with lucid prose and well-crafted syntax, Brands paints a panoramic portrait of the American West. He explores longstanding western myths by contrasting the expectations of those who ventured west with the realities of what they found along the way and upon their arrival at their chosen destination. When these individuals encountered the West, the encounters brought out a range of actions from selfless heroism to unspeakable violence. For those who went west seeking wealth, however, the “Dream of El Dorado” typically proved elusive and unattainable.

Brands examines three western history themes through the lives of the people who lived there. First, the West inspired hopes and dreams, occasionally fulfilled them, but usually shattered

them. Second, Indigenous peoples faced persistent and relentless violence from settler colonialism as well as a sustained federal assault on their lives and culture through government policy and military action to weaken and dispossess them of their ancestral lands and resources. Third, the notion that individuals conquered the West is largely a myth. In reality, the federal government developed the West and the West augmented and sustained the power of the federal government. Brands’ thesis is that attaining or fulfilling ones dreams of “El Dorado was at least as elusive in the West as it ever was in the East [xvi].”

While none of these three themes is earth-shattering news or particularly new to western historians, Brands’ ability to blend biography and narrative prose to draw the reader into the story is refreshing and captivating. Beginning with Thomas Jefferson’s notion of an “Empire of Liberty” and ending with Rough Rider Theodore Roosevelt’s ascendancy to the presidency, he takes readers on an epic journey highlighting eight episodes that he feels help explain the history of the nineteenth century West.

Brands does well with incorporating individual protagonists to illustrate larger themes. In “A Skin for a Skin,” for example, he presents the lives of individuals like John Jacob Astor, Comcomly [Chinook], and John McLoughlin to tease out the history of the Astorians and the western fur trade. Lewis and Clark fans will be pleased that John Colter makes a brief appearance. Mountain man Joseph Meek, who was born in Virginia and died in Oregon, exemplified the quintessential westerner, engaging in a variety of roles including trapper,

overland guide, community founder, settler, farmer, sheriff, and western sage. Nevertheless, as the fur trade exemplified, “time and again Americans would project their dreams onto the West and be disappointed [41-42].”

A master storyteller, Brands is at his best in his novel observation of the Texas Revolution in “Gone to Texas.” Here he takes us into the minds of Moses and son Stephen Austin, including the son’s reluctance to be saddled with fulfilling his father’s dying wish—founding an American Texas. In “The Great Migration,” Brands carries the same Texas theme to Oregon and California, for “where wagons and women could go, families would follow. And where American families went, American governance would eventually follow [147].” Moreover, “Americans, like most people, are easily flattered, and Manifest Destiny was flattery in its most seductive form. It cast American self-interest as a providential imperative. To oppose the acquisition of Oregon, to resist westward expansion, was to contradict God himself [214].”

In “Napoleon’s Gift,” the author highlights the transcendent Louisiana Purchase, which doubled the size of America and made the Mississippi River the nation’s zipper—a seam that could either bring the country together or tear it apart. With the purchase in 1803, Jefferson launched America into a game of empire-building against Indigenous and foreign opponents. Jefferson’s efforts to launch the Lewis and Clark Expedition demonstrated that individuals could prevail against great odds but also, and more importantly, illustrated the truth that the “development of the trans-Mississippi West would be a top-down affair driven by the federal government [9].” In

effect, the “American West owed its existence—as an American West—to the federal government. And the federal government owed much of the legitimacy and authority it assumed during the nineteenth century to the American West [10].”

In his chapter “The World in a Nugget of Gold,” Brands insists that “the creation of the American West, as the American West, was arguably the greatest accomplishment in the history of the American federal government [224].” The extermination of California’s Natives, the injustices and racial violence endured by Californios and Latinos, and the environmental disasters prove that the “accomplishment” came at an extremely high price, however.

In “Steel Rails and Sharps Rifles,” Brands chronicles the significant role played by the West in the coming of the Civil War. After the war commenced, President Lincoln and northern politicians sought to use the transcontinental railroad to unite the east and west, tying the coasts together with bands of iron. Immigrant cattle replaced indigenous bovines (bison) which were mercilessly slaughtered by the buffalo hunters. Mother Nature, in turn, killed a large percentage of the cattle in the winter of 1886 to 1887 during the big die-off.

Brands’ concluding chapter, “The Cowboy in the White House,” reveals how effete New Yorker Theodore Roosevelt reinvented himself with an iconic cowboy persona—a Rough Rider—that many voters adored. Roosevelt’s ascension to the nation’s highest office in September 1901 reflected that the West had largely been mainstreamed into American society. Nevertheless, not everyone was excited about that

transformation. Senator Mark Hanna of Ohio exclaimed, “Now look! That damn cowboy is president of the United States.”

In the latter part of the twentieth century, western historians challenged the frontier thesis. In so doing, they replaced the westering process with a western place; the waves of settlers with Native peoples beset by colonialism, violent genocide, and dispossession; and the predominant male history with ethnic, social, and gender her-story. Moreover, the heretofore neglected twentieth century western history received more scholarly treatment. Patricia Nelson Limerick’s *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (1987), Richard White’s *Its Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West* (1991), and Clyde A. Milner II and Carol A. O’Connor’s *The Oxford History of the American West* (1997) represent “New Western History” publications that inspired a flood of new monographs about the American West. The twenty-first century dawned with the publication of historical surveys that incorporated and integrated the “old” and “new” western history. Among them were Robert Hine and John Mack Faragher’s *The American West: A New Interpretive History* (2000), Richard Etulain’s *Beyond the Missouri: The Story of the American West* (2006), an updated edition of Billington’s *Westward Expansion* (2009), and Anne F. Hyde’s *Empires, Nations, and Families: A New History of the North American West, 1800-1860* (2012).

In contrast to these newer interpretations, Brands has a penchant for retelling the history largely from a white male point of view—Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, John Jacob

Astor, John McLoughlin, Joe Meek, Stephen Austin, Sam Houston, Leland Stanford, Charles Crocker, Brigham Young, Theodore Roosevelt, etc. Other limitations include the inclusion of few minorities beyond buffalo soldiers and Native Americans. The Indigenous voices he does weave into the story—Comcomly, Black Elk, Crazy Horse, Red Cloud, Quannah Parker, Captain Jack, and Chief Joseph—often serve merely as foils to America’s westward expansion and ignore Indigenous discourse about genocide. Few female voices beyond Sacagawea and Narcissa Whitman are heard. Moreover, the volume lacks footnotes, although a section of sources used for quoted material is appended. The minimal use of images and the dearth of detailed maps

further detract from its utilitarian use. Thus, Brands’ western saga largely remains popular history as adventure and scholarship as entertainment, often reaffirming the triumphal narrative rather than reexamining mainstream interpretations of the past.

The unspoiled Edenic garden through which Lewis and Clark passed quickly changed as “free land” drew adventurers, freedom seekers, settlers, and capitalists. These recent arrivals plundered the West’s animals, grasses, trees, and minerals as they searched for El Dorado. Moreover, they committed violence against the Indigenous peoples, turning their dreams into a recurring nightmare. As both the frontier and the nineteenth century “closed,” the American West became

fully incorporated into the United States. Brands’ popular history reveals that, despite this incorporation, western myths live on. The West’s frontier legacy has stubbornly persisted even though the reality of the West fell far short of the dreams of El Dorado. ■

Jay H. Buckley is the author of William Clark: Indian Diplomat and co-author of By His Own Hand? The Mysterious Death of Meriwether Lewis and Zebulon Pike, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West.

We Proceeded On The Journal of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

ADVERTISING RATES

FULL PAGE (7.25" x 9.25"):	\$500
2/3 page vertical (4.25" x 9.25"):	\$400
1/2 horizontal (7.25" x 4.625"):	\$300
1/3 vertical (2.25" x 9.5"):	\$250
1/3 square (4.75" x 4.625"):	\$250
1/6 vertical (2.25" x 4.625"):	\$100
Inside back cover (7.5" x 9.5"):	\$500
Inside front cover (7.5" x 9.5"):	\$500
Outside back cover (7.5" x 4.75"):	\$450
Double spread, inside (14.5" x 9.25"):	\$800

Ads are required to be submitted either as a minimum 300-dpi jpeg or as a high-resolution pdf with embedded images and fonts.

RESERVATION DEADLINES

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Reservation Due Date</u>	<u>Artwork Due Date</u>
February (Winter)	November 15	January 1
May (Spring)	February 15	April 1
August (Summer)	May 15	July 1
November (Fall)	August 15	October 1

DISCOUNTS

- 2 ads earn a 2% discount
- 3 ads earn a 3% discount
- 4 ads earn a 4% discount
- 5 ads earn a 5% discount

Advertiser must place a minimum of at least 2 ads within 12 months in the same calendar year or at least 2 consecutive ads if the ads fall in different calendar years. Payment must be received 30 days in advance of the ad deadline for the first scheduled ad. Multiple ads must be paid for 30 days in advance of the deadline for the first advertisement.

FOUNDATION MEMBER DISCOUNT: 15%

For example, a Foundation member who runs ads in the May, August, and November issues of *WPO* would receive an 18% discount on the total bill if paid by cash, check, money order, or credit card through our website—www.lewisandclark.org—by selecting “Join” or “Donate.”

Direct all advertising correspondence, including ad reservations, to chris@lewisandclark.org or call 406-454-1234.

W. Raymond Wood 1931-2020



The LCTHF is greatly saddened to report the recent passing of W. Raymond Wood, writer, anthropologist, historian, and educator. Ray was a major figure in Lewis and Clark studies. Born on May 18, 1931, in Gordon, Nebraska, Ray earned his B.A. from the University of Nebraska and his Ph.D. from the University of Oregon. His career included appointments at the Smithsonian

Institution, the State Historical Society of North Dakota (SHSND), the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, the Missouri State Advisory Council for Historic Preservation, and the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he had been an emeritus professor since 2002.

Ray received the University of Nebraska's Alumni Achievement Award and the SHSND's Heritage Profile Honor Award. Best known for his work on the archaeology and anthropology of the Great Plains, Ray was an editor and contributor to books and journals on many aspects of western history. Ray was the author of *Prologue to Lewis and Clark: The Mackay and Evans Expedition*, *Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains: Canadian Traders Among the Mandan and Hidatsa Indians, 1738-1818* (with Thomas D. Thiessen), *A White-Bearded Plainsman: The Memoirs of Archaeologist W. Raymond Wood*, and *Or Go down in Flame: The Death of a Navigator over Schweinfurt*, among other books and innumerable articles.

We will hope to have an appreciation of the life of W. Raymond Wood in the February 2021 issue of WPO.



Above: Ray Wood and Gary Moulton puzzle things out (ca. 1980).

Top: Ray Wood in the field at the Fort Clark historic site in central North Dakota, July 19, 2012.



PO Box 3434
Great Falls, MT 59403

