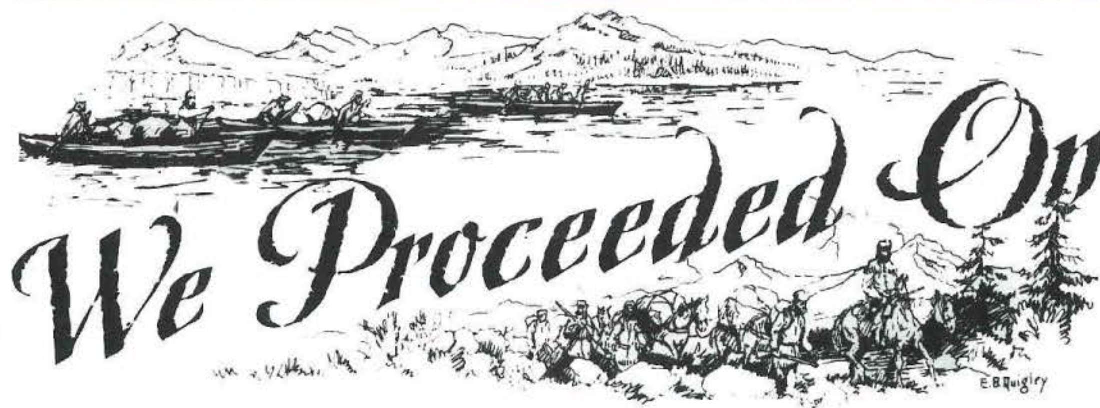
Seaman's Fate — Pompey's Baptism — Caspar Wistar



The Official Publication of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. **February 2000** Volume 26, No. 1

Charbonneau Reconsidered

Bumbling incompetent or valued member of the expedition?

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.

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

Mission Statement

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

Officers

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

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

Vice-President
Jane Henley
1564 Heathrow Drive
Keswick, VA 22947

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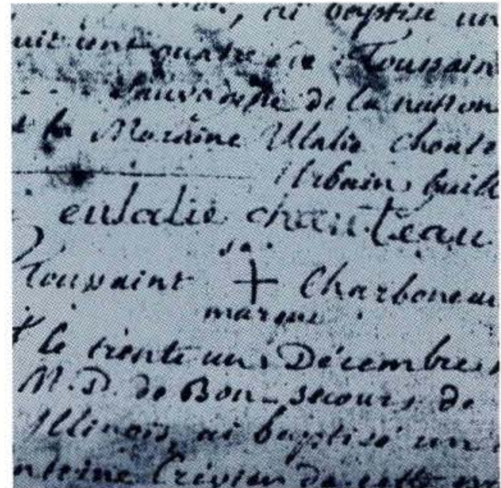
On the cover
This aquatint by Swiss artist Karl Bodmer depicts a meeting between the Minnetarees and Prince Maximilian de Wied at Fork Clark in 1833. The gesturing interpreter is probably Toussaint Charbonneau, the subject of our story beginning on page 18. Courtesy the Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska.



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Volume 26, Number 1

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

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

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

Art Direction
Margaret Davis Design
Princeton, New Jersey

Printed by Advanced Litho Printing
Great Falls, Montana

Editorial Board

Gary E. Moulton, Leader
Lincoln, Nebraska

Robert C. Carriker
Spokane, Washington

Robert K. Doerk, Jr.
Fort Benton, Montana

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From the Publications Committee

"Drive On": Changes for WPO

The twentieth century has drawn to a close, and not only a new century, but a new millennium, has dawned. The world did not screech to a halt on January 1, 2000. No doubt being prepared for the anticipated needs and demands of the new century and millennium helped smooth our transition past this milestone.

In just a few years another milestone of sorts will be reached—the two-hundredth anniversary of the greatest exploring venture in the history of the United States. The 2003-to-2006 bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition presents the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation with both opportunities and responsibilities. We undoubtedly will play a major role in commemorating the bicentennial. The Foundation will be a leader, with literally millions of people looking to it for information and guidance. A major focal point of all that attention will be *We Proceeded On.* In many ways it is, and will continue to be, our standard-bearer. Thousands, perhaps millions, will judge us based on it. Therefore, it is imperative that we be prepared—just as the Corps of Discovery was prepared two hundred years ago—to accomplish our mission.

To that end changes are being made concerning WPO. The most important change is in the position of editor. To meet current and anticipated demands, the position has been expanded to that of publications editor and further professionalized. After nine years at the helm of WPO, Marty Erickson is stepping down. Marty will be missed. His folksy style and relaxed manner endeared him to many. His humor and good nature made him a popular figure at annual meetings. Marty deserves a share of the credit in helping to make Lewis and Clark the national phenomena it is becoming. He reflected in his November column that his time as editor was an adventure, and indeed it was. It is hoped that Marty will be able to pull himself away from his fly fishing and writing projects to attend future annual meetings. We all hope to see him there or along the trail.

The person who will be guiding WPO into the new century and toward the bicentennial is Jim Merritt. Jim has one career in editing and publishing behind him. Having recently taken early retirement from Princeton University as editor of its alumni magazine, this nineteen-year member of the Foundation answered the call to become our publications editor. Jim brings years of experience, many ideas, and enthusiasm to a growing job. That ability and experience is apparent in this issue of WPO. Changes are being made in the design of the magazine. Other changes will be noticed in future issues. Not only is Jim editing WPO, but he will be involved in an increasingly active publications program. Supplemental publications, reprints of out-of-print Lewis and Clark–related books, and new publications will all be part of the Foundation's mission as we head toward, into, and beyond the bicentennial.

We all have the same goal for the Foundation. We want to make it a vital part in telling and commemorating the Lewis and Clark saga. It is a responsibility we must shoulder, as well as an opportunity we must seize. Marty Erickson took *We Proceeded On* through the home stretch of the twentieth century, and for this we thank him. Jim Merritt will take WPO and the Foundation's publications toward the bicentennial and into the twenty-first century. One of William Clark's favorite expressions concerning the fortunes of his family and friends was "drive on." May we all—Marty, Jim, the Foundation, and the commemoration of the Lewis and Clark experience—"drive on" in good fortune and success in this new year, new century, and new millennium.

—James J. Holmberg
Chairman

Looking back—and ahead

I write this as January, the first month of the new year, approaches. The month was named for Janus, the Roman god of gates, doors, and new beginnings. Janus was a god with two faces, one looking backward, to the past, and one looking forward, to the future. It is an auspicious name that beckons us to look back in reflection over the past forty years. We can take great pride in our significant accomplishments as an organization, evolving from the dreams and vision of our Foundation elders, and before them, the courage of the Corps of Volunteers for Northwest Discovery. Today we look forward to new beginnings, new plans, and new dreams in the new century.

Looking back, it has been an exciting year for the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation: Twenty-six vibrant chapters and a membership of 2,630 collectively represent our national voice. Designation of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail as a Millennium Trail appropriately ties the past and the present together.

With heavy hearts, we acknowledge the passing of authors, scholars, and friends like Irving Anderson of Portland, Oregon, Ruth Colter Frick of Washington, Missouri, and Blanche Schroer of Lander, Wyoming. Our world is much richer for their contributions to the Lewis and Clark legacy.

Some of the things this new year bring include:

- An exciting annual meeting in Dillon, Montana, in the heart of Shoshoni country, hosted by the Camp Fortunate Chapter.
- Release of the one-dollar Sacagawea coin.
- The sale of our own Pendleton "Peace and Friendship" blanket.
- The Trail Stewardship Program and our first trail coordinator.
- A new look (with this issue) for *We Proceeded On*.
- The first publication in our Feature Article Project series and *The Mystery of Lost Trail Pass*.
- The film project *Who Was York?*, produced by filmmaker Ron Craig.

Traditionally, the new year was a time to remember friends and family, and to say thank you to all. So, on behalf of the Foundation, here are my thanks to:

- Each of our members. You have generously supported the Foundation's endeavors with your time, money, scholarship, and interest.
- Marty Erickson, our longtime editor of WPO. Marty leaves us for new adventures and trails.
- Megan Smith, our membership director. Megan leaves us to follow her husband, Captain Kevin Smith, to Winnipeg. Megan and the Captain are expecting their first child.
- The National Park Service for generously supporting many of the Foundation's endeavors, including the protection, preservation, and promotion of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, Foundation research, and chapter projects and programs.
- Our scholars, historians, and archaeologists, whose research efforts contribute to this rich legacy, and particularly to Dr. Gary Moulton as he completes production of the finest work there is on the story of the Corps of Volunteers for Northwest Discovery, and Dr. Stephen Ambrose for his generous contributions and support of Expedition-related projects along the Trail.
- Our past presidents and mentors, who continue to guide us in our efforts to preserve this legacy with sage advice. A special acknowledgement to Don Nell. For years, Don stored and sold the Foundation's publications from his home in Bozeman. Last month, all of the publications were transferred to our office in Great Falls.

May the new year find each of you surrounded by friends, family, and the spirit of the story of the Corps of Volunteers for Northwest Discovery. Look back, as Janus does, with reflection on your accomplishments for the past year, and look forward with us to the new year and its promise of new discoveries and adventures.

"Proceed On."

—**Cynthia Orlando**
President

From the Bicentennial Council

"Prepared for action"

The National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council is honored to share our greetings of the season and best wishes for all of our Foundation friends and associates as we continue the countdown to the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

There are many exciting happenings to share which are markers on our way to a memorable commemoration of the bicentennial.

In October 1999, the Council joined our fifteen federal-agency partners for the first of many Lewis and Clark congressional caucus briefings, attended by several elected representatives and staff members representing dozens of caucus members. There was special interest in how state project priorities and funding criteria could be established. In November, the Council sponsored the first meeting of the trail-states coordinating committee, held in Portland and hosted by the Oregon Historical Society. More than sixty representatives gathered to discuss national events, project priorities, tribal outreach and participation, trail stewardship, cooperative visitor surveys, and opportunities for cultural tourism. Based on the expressions of the House and Senate Lewis and Clark caucuses, trail-state representatives agreed to participate in an inventory of project priorities for presentation to the congressional caucuses in February 2000.

Also in November, the Council en-

joyed cosponsoring the American Rivers Conference "Voyage of Recovery." An excellent meeting unveiled many more opportunities for collaboration with American Rivers and Dr. Stephen Ambrose on the rivers of Lewis and Clark.

In January, the Council initiated the national calendar of events for the Bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition at a special event in Washington, DC. In collaboration with Landon Y. Jones, a member of the Council's board of directors, and partners at the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, we will announce the inaugural bicentennial event, which WPO will report on in its May issue. Following the announcement, we will meet with the Missouri River Roundtable delegates in Denver to explore collaborative opportunities.

Finally, the Council's fifth annual planning workshop, "'All prepared for Action'—Clark 7/01/1804—Realizing the Vision," will be held April 26-28, 2000, in Kansas City, Missouri, where Dr. Ambrose will be a featured speaker and the Council will unveil its national board of advisors. Watch for our 1999 annual-giving campaign and your chance to receive a commemorative logo pin from the Council. Join us for the journey!

—David Borlaug
Michelle D. Bussard

For the Record

Regarding the November WPO, Bill Stableford of Madison, Connecticut, notes that the article by Dayton Duncan, "Lewis and Clark's Old Glory," refers to "Christmas morning of 1805" at Fort Mandan, and asks. "Wasn't it 1804 that the guys were there?" He is correct, of course.

Also in the November issue, the correct title of Gail Karwoski's book on Meriwether Lewis's canine partner in discovery is *Seaman: The Dog Who Explored the West with Lewis and Clark*.

Lewis and Clark revival in full swing

Buffs search for heroes and find a region invaded by weeds and tourists

J.L. MERRITT

Tourists, like these viewing Beaverhead Rock, are increasing in numbers along the L&C trail.

While tracing the steps of Lewis and Clark, Judy Anderson has stopped off at two dozen places where the explorers walked nearly 200 years ago. Among these, Pompey's Pillar, a lonely landmark on the plains of southeastern Montana, remains fixed in her memory. There, immortalized behind Plexiglas, she saw William Clark's signature carved into soft sandstone. For Anderson, a retiree from Minnesota, it was a fascinating link with the past.

"You can climb to the top and see the view he saw," she says.

Until recently, Anderson could have traveled the entire Lewis and Clark Trail without meeting anyone on a historical journey like her own. Even though the route was named a National Park Service historical trail in 1978, it has remained largely the domain of Lewis and Clark history buffs. But as the 2003–2006 bicentennial nears, the anniversary is attracting a new generation of travelers captivated by Lewis and Clark history. The U.S. Forest Service predicts that 10 percent of the American public will visit some part of the 4,000-mile trail during the bicentennial.

Jim Fazio, a University of Idaho professor and member of the national Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council, which is helping to plan the celebration, explains the fascination: "A lot of people are looking for heroes."

With help from local donors, the U.S. Forest Service built the 5,500-square-foot Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Great Falls, Montana, in 1998. Though the center expected no more than 70,000 visitors in its inaugural year, more than 100,000 people walked through its doors.

Just upriver, crowds are appearing on the Wild and Scenic stretch of the upper Missouri River in eastern Montana. Last year, this area saw 34 percent more river travelers than in 1997. National Park Service sites along the Lewis and Clark trail report a 25 percent increase in visitors during the same time period. Two years ago, there were only twelve outfitters on the river; today, the

BLM reports that number has more than doubled.

"We have no permit system as of yet, but I imagine we'll be doing that shortly," says Buck Damone of the Bureau of Land Management in Lewistown, Montana. "It's not drastic yet, but we're concerned what it's going to be in 2006."

Reliving the experience

All along the route, chances to relive the L&C experience are popping up. In North Dakota, the state historical society is inviting tourists to spend winter nights at Fort Mandan, where the Corps of Discovery endured blizzards and below-zero temperatures during the winter of 1804–1805.

The National Park Service has proposed a novel way of telling the story of Lewis and Clark: a park on wheels. Dubbed "Corps of Discovery II: 200 Years to the Future," this small convoy of three semitrailers would trace the historic route for three and a half years, making occasional detours in the off-season to bring the traveling, $29-million museum to cities. Plans call for a laser show and high-tech satellite uplinks. With help from the congressional Lewis and Clark Caucus, the National Park Service could win funding for the project this year.

Historians such as Fazio hope that scenic portions of the trail are recognized without lining them with roadside attractions. "My fear is that the agencies might try to overreact and get in on the development bandwagon," he says.

As more people take to the trail, land managers like Damone are reminding travelers that though places such as eastern Montana are still wide open, people from the time of Lewis and Clark would be startled by the changes.

"The biggest change they would see is the weeds. The noxious weeds. People who come here (today) wouldn't notice that. But Lewis and Clark would," Damone says.

Farther west, in the Columbia River Basin, environmentalists trying to restore the river's salmon runs are instilling a sense of what's been lost over the last two centuries by using the journey's observations as an environmental benchmark.

"In 200 years, a profound change has taken place," says John Osborn of the Lands Council in Spokane, Washington. The commemoration, he adds, "allows us to see these issues by starkly contrasting what we see today and what Lewis and Clark saw 200 years ago."

Native Americans' views

Allen Pinkham of the Nez Perce Tribe says the history of the expedition has left out details that ought to be told as the nation relives the experience.

For instance, the Lewis and Clark route followed the Nez Perce Ni Mi Pu Trail, which linked the salmon-rich mountain streams with the buffalo herds of the plains. The trail runs 100 miles through Idaho, from around Kamiah to Lolo Pass, and then east through Montana to the plains. A new museum planned for the reservation would help complete the story of Native Americans' contribution to the expedition, says Pinkham, a member of the national Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council.

As for the bicentennial, Pinkham says the tribes are planning a commemoration of their own, but it will not be festive. "The Indians aren't going to celebrate this Lewis and Clark thing," he says. "To us, Lewis and Clark certainly aren't heroes."

—Dustin Solberg

This article appeared in slightly different form in the September 27, 1999, issue of High Country News *(119 Grand Ave., Paonia, CO 81428; www.hcn.org; free copy available on request) and is reprinted by permission.*

Briefings

STOLEN MEDALS

The Maryhill Museum of Art, in Goldendale, Washington, needs help in recovering two Lewis and Clark medals stolen from it in 1986.

The two bronzelike medals, which were distributed to Indian tribes by Lewis and Clark, are known as Washington "season" medals because they were minted for President George Washington's second term and feature the four seasons. They depict a man sowing wheat and are a little larger than a modern silver dollar. The medals are suspended on leather thongs with glass and shell disc beads.

Persons with information about the stolen medals can contact the Museum at 509-773-3733.

CAMP DUBOIS LAND

Thirty-nine acres of federal land at Lewis and Clark State Park near Alton, Illinois, were recently transferred to state ownership. The land will be the site of a $7 million interpretive center and a replica Camp Dubois commemorating the Corps of Discovery's winter of 1803-4.

According to the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, the transfer caps an eleven-year effort by George Arnold "to secure the land transfer from federal hands to the state of Illinois." Construction on the 15,000-square-foot center will begin next spring and be completed by late 2001. The single-story center will include a 120-seat auditorium, and will display a full-size replica of the keelboat that helped transport the Corps of Discovery up the Missouri 1804.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

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

• Award of Meritorious Achievement, for outstanding contributions in bringing to this nation a greater awareness and appreciation of the Lewis and

Clark Expedition;

• Distinguished Service Award, for outstanding contributions toward furthering the purpose and objectives of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.;

• Appreciation Award, in recognition of gracious support (deed, word, or funds) given to the Foundation in its endeavor to preserve and perpetuate the lasting historical worth of the 1804-1806 Lewis and Clark Expedition; and

• Youth Achievement Award, in recognition of a person (or group of persons) under the age of twenty-one who has increased knowledge of the Lewis and Clark Expedition through outstanding composition, art, drama, photography, site preservation and enhancement, or other significant contributions.

The Distinguished Service Award may only be presented to a member of the Foundation. In addition to names and addresses, nominations should include sufficient background information to assist the Awards Committee in its selection. They should be sent to S. E. Knapp, chairman, Awards Committee, 1317 S. Black, Bozeman, MT 59715. Nominations for the Youth Achievement Award will be forwarded to the chairman of the Young Adults Committee. All nominations must be submitted by April 20.

Virtual Fort Clatsop

A virtual tour of Fort Clatsop and vicinity is now available on the Discovering Lewis and Clark Website (www.lewis-clark.org), according to Joseph Musselman, who oversees the site. Other additions are an updated treatment of York and improved renderings of the Model 1803 Harper's Ferry rifle. The Website offers text (including excerpts from Lewis and Clark's journals, historical background, and an overview of the expedition by historian Harry W. Fritz), images (both still and animated), and sounds of the expedition.

Blair Chicoine

History buffs from the greater Sioux City, Iowa, area paid tribute on November 18 to Foundation member Blair Chicoine. The forty-eight-year-old Chicoine had died three days earlier from complications of cancer and Hodgkin's disease, which he had battled for thirty years.

Chicoine was an authority on riverboats and a master craftsman of historic boats and models. He helped spearhead efforts to create the Sergeant Floyd Riverboat Museum, located in Sioux City, and was its manager at the time of his death.

The Corps of Discovery, a group of Lewis and Clark re-enactors to which Chicoine belonged, honored him at his funeral with a ten-gun salute. He was buried in his blue Corps outfit.

At a gathering after the funeral, the reenactors folded a fifteen-star American flag, representative of the Lewis and Clark period, and gave it to his wife, Rose. Last summer, at a re-enactment commemorating the anniversary of Floyd's death, the group honored Chicoine by making him its first lifetime member.

Chicoine was instrumental in reviving the memory of Sergeant Charles Floyd, the only member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition to die on the trail and the first American soldier to die west of the Mississippi River. Floyd succumbed from what was probably a burst appendix on August 20, 1804, and was buried on a bluff on the site of present-day Sioux City.

Lillian Ruth Coulter Frick

Lillian Ruth Coulter Frick, age seventy-three, of Washington, Missouri, died in her sleep on November 9, while attending an American Rivers conference in St. Charles, Missouri. Frick had been a member of the Foundation for fifteen years and regularly attended national meetings, including last year's in Bismarck, North Dakota. She was vice-president of the Foundation's GreaterMetro St. Louis Chapter.

Lillian Ruth Coulter Frick

Forty years of research made her an authority on her ancestor John Colter, a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and a fur trapper who may have been the first white man to see the region of thermal springs which became Yellowstone National Park. Her book, *Courageous Colter and Companions*, was published in 1997, and at the time of her death she was working on a book about Meriwether Lewis. An authority on Lewis, she was subpoenaed to testify at an inquest on his death held in 1996 in Lewis County, Tennessee. In 1997, she spoke on Lewis's death at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences.

As a volunteer for the National Park Service, Frick organized the Grace Lewis Miller Collection in the library archives of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, in St. Louis. Miller was a St. Louis historian who spent four decades researching the life and times of Meriwether Lewis.

The sixth of nine children, Frick was born in Washington, Missouri, on February 11, 1926, and attended local schools, Southwest Teachers College, the Missouri School of Mines, Washington University, the University of Missouri–St. Louis, and East Central Junior College.

She is survived by her husband of fifty-two years, William; two daughters; a son; and three granddaughters.

Seaman's Fate?

Lewis's Newfoundland dog likely survived the expedition and accompanied his master on his last, fateful journey

By James J. Holmberg

"The musquetoes continue to infest us in such manner that we can scarcely exist, . . . my dog even howls with the torture he experiences from them."[1] With that journal entry by Meriwether Lewis on July 15, 1806, his dog Seaman, the Corps of Discovery's faithful companion and fellow explorer, disappears from history. He is not mentioned again in the journals, nor does he appear in any known post-expedition correspondence or report.

What happened to this famous Newfoundland dog? Did he complete the expedition? Did he live happily in St. Louis upon the Corps' return; taking dips in the Mississippi and curling up in front of a cozy fireplace? Or did he perish somewhere along the Missouri River? Was he perhaps left behind in Lewis's flight following his party's skirmish with a band of Blackfoot braves on July 27, 1806?

Various theories have been postulated over the years. Seaman is an enduring subject of fascination for expedition enthusiasts and dog lovers alike. He first appears in the expedition's journals on September 11, 1803, when Lewis notes the breed and qualities of "my dog," including his talent for catching and retrieving swimming squirrels, and vanishes from the record almost three years later, with no hint of what happened to him.[2] Although Seaman is mentioned infrequently in the journals, I think it likely that some note would have been made of him perishing during the expedition. The lack of any such entry suggests that he survived it.

Assuming he returned, did he accompany Lewis and Clark back to Louisville? Did he faithfully trot beside Lewis when his master visited Charlottesville and Washington? Given Seaman's presence with Lewis on the expedition, it is plausible that he accompanied his master

on his travels east in late 1806 and his return to St. Louis in 1808. If so, Seaman would have followed Lewis from coast to coast over the course of some five years; an explorer in his own right, he was one of the most widely traveled dogs in history.

A 1976 table bronze of Meriwether Lewis and Seaman by Montana sculptor Robert M. Scriver. Seaman was a Newfoundland, a strong-swimming dog bred by Basque fishermen to work nets while fishing from dories on the Grand Banks, off Newfoundland.

If Seaman did survive the expedition and accompany Lewis on his subsequent travels, was he with Lewis on his fateful trip east in 1809? This question has intrigued people for years. If he was with Lewis, what happened to him after his master's death at Grinder's Stand on October 11? I recall reading a fictional account that had Seaman refusing to leave his dead master and pining away on his grave. This, of course, was an imagined end, created for its dramatic effect, with no sources cited to give it a basis in fact. Even so, could this really have been Seaman's fate? Could the devoted canine have refused to leave Lewis, remaining with him even in death?

There's evidence to suggest so. In 1814, the same year that the long-delayed official history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition was published, a Congregational clergyman and educator named Timothy Alden published *A Collection of American Epitaphs and Inscriptions with Occasional Notes*.[3] Alden had been collecting epitaphs and inscriptions for years. For each listing he provided the source of the epitaph or inscription, stating the city and whether it was from a monument, a headstone, or something else. He collected so many that their publication spanned five volumes.

Alden was a respected man of letters. He was a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the New York Historical Society, and the American Antiquarian Society, three of the country's oldest and most prestigious historical organizations. From 1808 to 1810 he worked on a catalog of the New York Historical Society's library. He published various histories and magazines and in 1817 founded Allegheny College.[4] His background suggests that he would have been scrupulous about accurately recording the information he found. "This must be distinctly understood," as Charles Dickens tells us, "or nothing . . . can come of the story I am going to relate."[5]

Entry 916 in his *American Epitaphs and Inscriptions* lists an interesting inscription on a dog collar in an Alexandria, Virginia, museum. It reads, "The greatest traveller of my species. My name is SEAMAN, the dog of captain Meriwether Lewis, whom I accompanied to the Pacifick ocean through the interior of the continent of North America."[6]

Seaman's collar in an Alexandria museum in 1814—proof that he survived the expedition! But the entry gets better. Alden includes a note about the collar and its owner. It reads:

> The foregoing was copied from the collar, in the Alexandria Museum, which the late gov. Lewis's dog wore after his return from the western coast of America. The fidelity and attachment of this animal were remarkable. After the melancholy exit of gov. Lewis, his dog would not depart for a moment from his lifeless remains; and when they were deposited in the earth no gentle means could draw him from the spot of interment. He refused to take every kind of food, which was offered him, and actually pined away and died with grief upon his master's grave![7]

Here is the whole story of Seaman's fate. He was

indeed Lewis's faithful companion to the end; refusing to leave his dead master even though it meant dying himself: the archetypal example of man's best friend.

There is no reason to doubt Alden's entry concerning Seaman. This information would have been collected no more than five years after Lewis's death. There were people contemporary with Alden, including William Clark and Nicholas Biddle, the first editor of the Lewis and Clark Journals, whom he could have contacted about the accuracy of both the collar and Seaman's fate. It's unlikely that the collar was a hoax, for it was probably given to the museum two years before the publication, in 1814, of the Biddle edition of the Journals, when the expedition was fading from public consciousness. Apparently there was enough faith in the account that newspapers were repeating it some twenty years after the publication of *American Epitaphs and Inscriptions*.[8]

Clark the possible donor

The story's truthfulness is further bolstered by evidence that the collar's donor may have been none other than William Clark.

The museum that displayed Seaman's collar almost certainly was part of a Masonic lodge—specifically, Alexandria-Washington Lodge #22 (known simply as Alexandria Lodge until 1805, when the name was changed to honor its late member George Washington). We know that by 1812 the lodge had established a museum, for on August 21 of that year lodge official Thomas Sanford wrote Clark to thank him for the "truly valuable Present made by you to our infant Museum . . . . We esteem them Sir as Curiosities deserving to be ranked amongst the first in our Infant Establishment."[9]

The items Clark donated are not described, but one of those "Curiosities" could well have been Seaman's collar. Given his close association with Lewis and his role in examining some of Lewis's effects after his death, it's certainly possible that Clark would have had the collar in his possession. Lewis and Clark were both masons, so it's also reasonable to assume that Clark would have given this keepsake to a masonic museum.

It would be wonderful to report that the collar, or at least a listing of it in the museum's inventory, still exists. Unfortunately, neither the artifact nor any official record of it can be found. Jack Riddell, a member of Alexandria-Washington Lodge #22 and curator of the replica lodge room of the old Alexandria Lodge #22, checked the lodge's records, including its minute books and museum catalog, but found no mention of either a dog collar or any gifts by William Clark. But Riddell acknowledges that the museum's records, like those of many institutions, are incomplete. A fire in 1871 destroyed many of the museum's artifacts—including, presumably, Seaman's collar—although its catalog and the lodge's minute books were saved.[10]

Was it Seaman's fate to die keeping vigil at his master Lewis's grave? Perhaps we will never definitely know; but the inscription and note about him recorded in Alden's book, together with Sanford's letter and the information provided by Jack Riddell as supporting facts, provide a creditable explanation of the fate of the Corps of Discovery's faithful canine.

Foundation member Jim Holmberg is the curator of special collections of the Filson Club Historical Society, in Louisville, Kentucky. *For their assistance with this article he thanks Pen Bogert of the Filson Club's library staff and Jack Riddell of Alexandria-Washington Lodge #22. For more on Seaman, see "The Lewis and Clark Expedition's Newfoundland Dog" (WPO Publication No. 10, September 1990, available from the Foundation at 888-701-3434).*

NOTES

[1]Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition*, 13 volumes (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983-2000), Vol. 8, p. 110.

[2]Moulton, Vol. 2, p. 79.

[3]Francis S. Drake, *Dictionary of American Biography, including Men of the Time* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1872), 13; Timothy Alden, *A Collection of American Epitaphs and Inscriptions with Occasional Notes*, five volumes (New York: Privately printed, 1814).

[4]Drake, p. 13.

[5]Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol* (New York: Weathervane Books, 1977), p. 4.

[6]Alden, Vol. 5, p. 98.

[7]Alden, Vol. 5, p. 98.

[8]Louisville (Ky.) *Public Advertiser*, May 5, 1835.

[9]Thomas Sanford to William Clark, August 21, 1812, William Clark Papers—E.G. Voorhis Memorial Collection, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, Mo.

[10]Phone conversations between Jack Riddell and James J. Holmberg, 1999.

... a été J. Baptiste Brouvocher et la maraine Julie Brazeau...
Louis ... frère Urbain Guillet R. Tr.
Bap. + Brouvocher. Julie Brazeau
marque
Joseph Labady
...mille huit cent neuf le vingt six Décembre moi fr. Urbain Guil...
du Mon. de N.D. de Bon Secours près Cahokias territoire Illinois, ai bap...
enfant né le treize février de l'année précédente mille huit cent neuf
Joseph Labady et de Geneviève Labuche négresse libre tous les 2 de cet...
...e Le Parain a été Louis Trudeau et la Maraine Julie Mau...
...de cette Paroisse fr. Urbain Guillet R. Tr.
...is Trudeau Julie X Maurain
marque
Toussaint Charboneau
...n mille huit cent neuf le vingt huit Décembre moi fr. Urb...
...llet R. du Mon. de N. Dame de Bon Secours de la Trappe
Cahokias au territoire Illinois, ai baptisé un enfant né le onze
...de l'année mille huit cent ... Toussaint Charboneau de
...tte Paroisse et de ... sauvagesse de la nation des Serpents. Le Pa...
...Auguste Chouteau et la Maraine Eulalie Chouteau tous les deux de...
Urbain Guillet R. Tr.
...guste Chouteau eulalie chouteau
Toussaint + Charboneau père de l'enfant
marque
...n mille huit cent neuf le trente un Décembre moi fr. Urbain...
...let R. du Mon. de N.D. de Bon-secours de la Trappe...
...kias au territoire Illinois, ai baptisé un enfant né...

BAPTISMAL RECORD COURTESY JEFFERSON NATIONAL EXPANSION MEMORIAL; ENGRAVING OF CHURCH COURTESY MISSOURI HISTORICAL SOCIETY

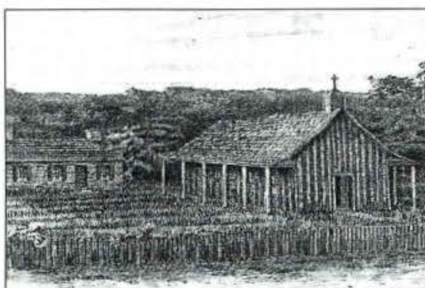
Above: detail from Pompey's baptismal record. Opposite: St. Louis's Catholic church, where the baptism took place in December 1809.

Pompey's Baptism

A recently discovered document sheds light on the christening of Jean Baptiste Charbonneau

BY BOB MOORE

On December 28, 1809, a small group of people gathered in the old vertical log church at St. Louis, near the site of today's Old Cathedral beneath the Gateway Arch. Prayers were said and the sign of the cross was made with holy water on the forehead of a four-and-a-half-year-old boy. Words were spoken in French. "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," intoned Father Urbain Guillet, a Trappist monk who stood before the group dressed in his plain white robe. Close by the young boy stood his father, Toussaint Charbonneau, and his mother, Sacagawea. Fifty-nine-year-old Auguste Chouteau, a co-founder of St. Louis, also was present as godfather to the child, along with his twelve-year-old daughter, Eulalie. Conspicuously missing were Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Governor Lewis had died tragically along the Natchez Trace on October 11, 1809, just over two months earlier. General Clark had left St. Louis in September to travel to Washington, D.C., and was still there on December 28, the date of the baptism.[1] After Charbonneau, Father Guillet, and the two Chouteaus signed the record book, Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, the little boy whom William Clark called Pomp or Pompey, the toddler who shared the perils and adventures of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, was a member of the Roman Catholic faith.



In researching the early records of St. Louis's Old Cathedral parish last winter, I stumbled upon the baptismal record that is my basis for the preceding paragraph. The record, in French, is interesting for what it says and for what it does not say. It appears below left in the original French; on the right is a translation by Frank Mares of the National Park Service.

What information can be gleaned from this record?[2] The birth of Sacagawea's baby at the expedition's Fort Mandan was chronicled by Meriwether Lewis in his journal on February 11, 1805. Subsequently, as Toussaint Charbonneau, Sacagawea, and the child shared in the trials and adventures of the expedition, traveling to the Pacific Coast and back in 1805-06, Clark

L'an mille huit cent neuf le vingt huit Décembre, moi, Fr. Urbain Guillet R + du mon de N. Dame de Bon Secours de la Trappe pris Cahokia, au Territoire Illinois, ai baptisé un enfant né le onze fevrier de l'année mille huit cent quatre de Toussaint Charboneau domicilié de cette patoisse et de ____________ Sauvagesse de la nation des Serpents. Le parain a été Auguste Chouteau et la maraine Ulalie Chouteau tous les deux de cette paroisse.

Urbain Guillet R + 7r.te
Auguste Chouteau [signature]
Eulalie Chouteau [signature]

Toussaint X Charboneau père de l'enfant
(sa / marque)

The year eighteen hundred nine the twenty-eighth of December, I, brother Urbain Guillet Reu of the Trappist monastery of Our Lady of Good Help near Cahokia, in the Illinois Territory, baptized a child born the eleventh of February in the year eighteen hundred four of Toussaint Charboneau, living in this parish and of ____________ savage of the Snake Nation. The godfather was Auguste Chouteau and the godmother Ulalie Chouteau both of this parish.

Urbain Guillet R + Tr.te
Auguste Chouteau [signature]
Eulalie Chouteau [signature]

Toussaint X Charboneau father of the child
(his / mark)

took a particular interest in the boy. Upon the party's return to the Mandan villages, located near modern Stanton, North Dakota, the Charbonneaus chose not to continue to St. Louis. As Clark recorded in his journal on August 17, 1806: "we offered to convey him [Toussaint Charbonneau] down to the Illinois if he chose to go, he declined, proceeding on at present, observing that he had no acquaintance or prospects of making a liveing below, and must continue to live in the way that he had done. I offered to take his little son a butiful promising child who is 19 months old to which they both himself & wife wer willing provided the child had been weened. They observed that in one year the boy would be sufficiently old to leave his mother & he would then take him to me if I would be so friendly as to raise the child for him in such a manner as I thought proper, to which I agreed &c."[3]

In reading this account, one might wonder why the Charbonneaus did not bring Pomp downriver in 1807, as Clark indicated they might do. It is well known that the Charbonneau family did not arrive in St. Louis until 1809 or 1810 to bring the boy to Clark to receive his promised education. The Charbonneaus were probably prevented from traveling to St. Louis by the hostilities of the Arikara nation, whose principal villages were located below the Mandan and Hidatsa villages, near modern Wakpala, South Dakota. This hypothesis makes even more sense in the light of the discovery of Pomp's baptismal record, which seems to pinpoint the arrival of the Charbonneau family in St. Louis in the autumn of 1809.

Auguste Chouteau, Pompey's godfather and a cofounder of St. Louis.

Circumstantial evidence suggests that Charbonneau wanted his son to be baptized. St. Louis at that time was predominantly irreligious, and because we know the town had no resident priest in 1809, it took some effort to have the baptism performed. The man who did so, Father Urbain Guillet, was a Trappist monk who had to travel to St. Louis from an area near present-day Collinsville, Illinois, a winter journey of nearly 20 miles involving a crossing of the frozen Mississippi River. The Old Cathedral parish records show that Father Guillet was in St. Louis only between December 24 and 31, 1809, probably to celebrate Christmas Mass and perform any baptisms or weddings needed by parishioners. Therefore, the Charbonneaus had to make an extra effort to arrange Pomp's baptism on December 28, which was probably the soonest date after their arrival in St. Louis that the sacrament could have been administered. This means that the Charbonneaus must have arrived in St. Louis sometime between the visit of the priest from the Ste. Genevieve parish in the late summer of 1809 and the last week in December, when Father Guillet was in town.

Complications in river travel

There also may be a tie between the appearance of the Charbonneaus in St. Louis and Pierre Chouteau's expedition of 1809 up the Missouri River to return Sheheke, a Mandan chief who had journeyed to St. Louis with the Corps of Discovery on its homeward journey in 1806.

Pierre, a half-brother of Auguste Chouteau, returned to St. Louis on November 16, 1809, just one month before the baptism.[4] For the previous two years, passage on the Missouri River had been blocked by the Arikaras, who were angry about the death of their chief, Ankedoucharo, during his 1805-6 visit to Washington, D.C. As a result, parties from St. Louis had been unable to travel upriver and parties at the Mandan villages—including the Charbonneaus—had been prevented from descending in safety.

The problems had started in September 1807, when Sergeant Nathaniel Hale Pryor, a former member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, had been promoted to ensign and given responsibility for delivering Sheheke to his people. Pryor's party was attacked by the Arikaras and forced to turn back.[5] In his capacity as governor of Louisiana, Meriwether Lewis in the

spring of 1809 sent Pierre Chouteau on a second mission to deliver Sheheke. This involved chartering a private fur company, which was paid in part with government funds totaling $7,000. Lewis's action prompted Secretary of War Eustis to warn him that the government would no longer honor his letters of credit. This led in part to Lewis's trip to Washington, D.C., to clear his name—the trip on which he died at Grinder's Stand.

In a letter to Pierre Chouteau dated June 8, 1809, Lewis stated that Chouteau's primary mission was to return Sheheke, whether he had to fight his way through the Arikaras or use diplomacy to restore peaceful relations with them.[6] Choosing diplomacy, Chouteau was successful in his mission, arriving at the Mandan village on September 24. The people of the Mandan and Hidatsa villages, as well as the traders from St. Louis, must have been overjoyed that the river was open once again. As the expedition prepared to return downriver, it seems likely that the Charbonneaus would have sensed that the time was right to go to St. Louis. If they took passage on the return trip with Chouteau's large, well-armed corps of soldiers and trappers (he had at least 125 men), their safety would be better assured than if they attempted to make the trip alone or with a smaller party.[7]

Pierre Chouteau, friend of Clark, who led the failed expedition to return Chief Sheheke to the Mandans.

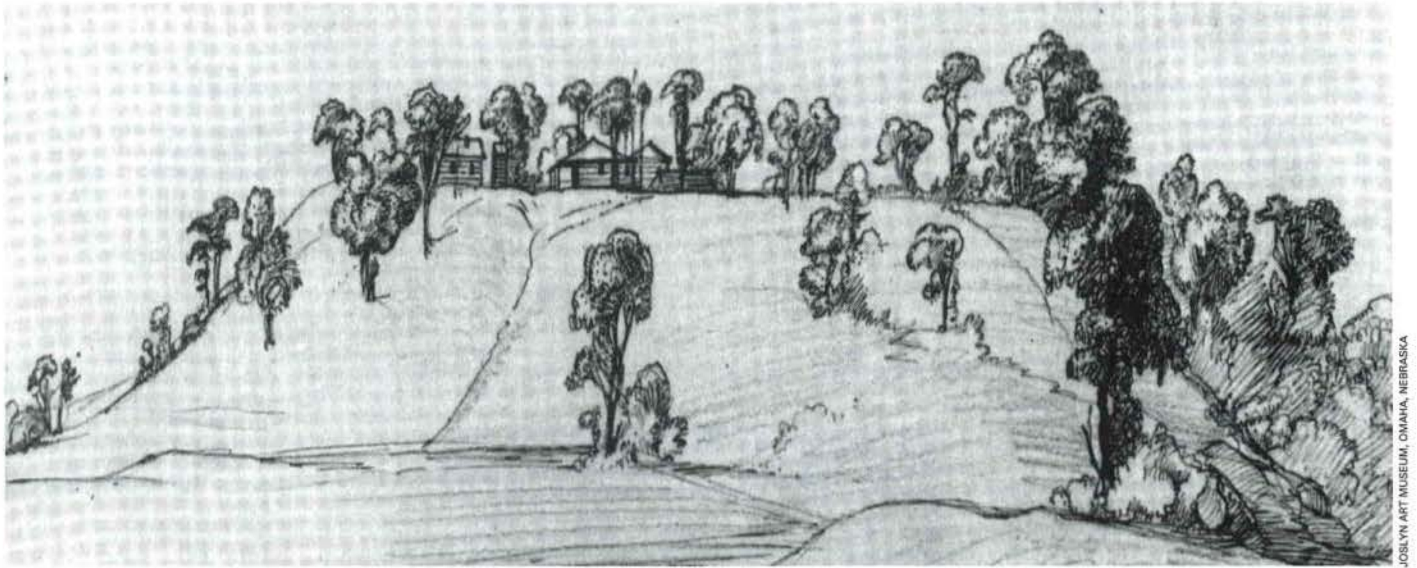
Trappists on the Mississippi

In addition to added information and conjecture on the Charbonneau family, Pomp's baptismal record also sheds light on a little-known facet of St. Louis history: How and why did a Trappist monk come to be in St. Louis in 1809, and why was there no resident priest in the village? When the Spanish officially relinquished political control of St. Louis to the United States on March 10, 1804, the former governor, his staff, a small company of soldiers, and the village priest were out of work. Under the Spanish regime, parishioners had not been asked for contributions for the upkeep of the church or to pay the living expenses of the priest, for these costs were provided by the government. With no money for upkeep and the fate of the province uncertain, particularly in matters of religion, the resident priest departed with the Spanish authorities and the St. Louis church grew silent. Priests from surrounding parishes came to St. Louis sporadically to say an occasional mass, hear confessions, or perform baptisms, funerals, and marriages, but there was no resident priest in the village until the arrival of Bishop Louis William Valentin DuBourg in 1818.[8]

In July 1808 Father Urbain Guillet arrived in the St. Louis area with his Trappist brothers.[9] They had left the Abbey of Val Sainte near Fribourg, Switzerland, in 1802 intending to set up a monastery for their order in America. They tried two locations before moving to the Mississippi River Valley, first at Pigeon Hills, Pennsylvania, and later at Pottinger's Creek, Kentucky. Upon arrival in the St. Louis area, they first set up their quarters at Florissant, west of St. Louis. After a few months they moved east across the Mississippi River to an area near modern Collinsville, Illinois, where they built a temporary log monastery complex on top of an ancient Indian mound, today called Monk's Mound because of their presence.[10] The land was claimed by Nicholas Jarrot of the village of Cahokia and given to the Trappists by him for their monastery.[11] Many accounts state that the monks moved to Illinois in 1810, not 1809, yet Guillet's eleven baptismal records of December 1809 at the Old Cathedral of St. Louis all clearly state that his monastery was "near Cahokia, in the Illinois Territory."

The monastery, which they named Notre Dame de Bon Secours, was described by traveler Henry M. Brackenridge in 1811: "The buildings which the Trappists at present occupy, are merely temporary: they consist of four or five cabins, on a mound about fifty yards high, and which is perhaps one hundred and fifty

ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY JEFFERSON NATIONAL EXPANSION MEMORIAL



JOSLYN ART MUSEUM, OMAHA, NEBRASKA

Carl Bodmer's 1833 drawing of Monks Mound, site of a Trappist monastery in the early nineteenth century.

feet square. Their other buildings, cribs, stables, etc., ten or fifteen in number, are scattered about on the plain below. . . . On entering the yard, I found a number of persons at work, some hauling and storing away the crop of corn; others, shaping timber for some intended edifice. The greater number were boys from ten to fourteen years of age."[12] The boys were on the site because it was intended as a school as well as a monastery.

Edmund Flagg also described the Monk's Mound site in his travel account entitled *The Far West*, published in 1838. Flagg took most of his information from Brackenridge and from the reminiscences of locals, for the monastery was long gone by the time of his visit:

> The buildings which they occupied were never of a very durable character, but consisted of about half a dozen large structures of logs, on the summit of the mound about fifty yards to the right of the largest. . . . Their outbuildings, stables, granaries, &c., which were numerous, lay scattered about on the plain below. Subsequently they erected an extensive structure upon the terrace of the principal mound, and cultivated its soil for a kitchen-garden, while the area of the summit was sown with wheat. . . . The society of the Trappists consisted of about eighty monks, chiefly Germans and French, with a few of our own countrymen, under governance of one of their number called Father Urbain. . . . Their discipline was equally severe with that of the order of ancient times. Their diet was confined to vegetables, and of those they partook sparingly but once in twenty-four hours: the stem vow of perpetual silence was upon them; no female was permitted to violate their retreat, and they dug their own graves.[13]

Flagg went on to relate that the monks were allowed to speak during a period of two hours each day, which accounts for their ability to perform holy services and sacraments in the neighboring communities. Apparently they found the mound site not to be a healthful one, as Flagg related: "During the summer months fevers prevailed among them to an alarming extent; few escaped, and many died."[14] The monks stayed in the Cahokia area only until 1813, when they were recalled by their superiors to Europe.[15] Today, the area of the monastery is administered by the State of Illinois as the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site.

Father Guillet was described by Bishop Martin Spalding as "a man of great piety, indefatigable zeal and activity, and of a singular meekness and suavity of manners."[16] Others were critical of Guillet, who maintained the rigid rules of his order despite the new and severe surroundings of the American wilderness.[17] Critics included Father Nerinckx, who traveled with Guillet in the wilderness and concluded that Guillet was "not a man in the right place."[18] Whatever his qualifications or drawbacks, Father Guillet was on the scene to baptize Jean Baptiste Charbonneau on December 28, 1809.

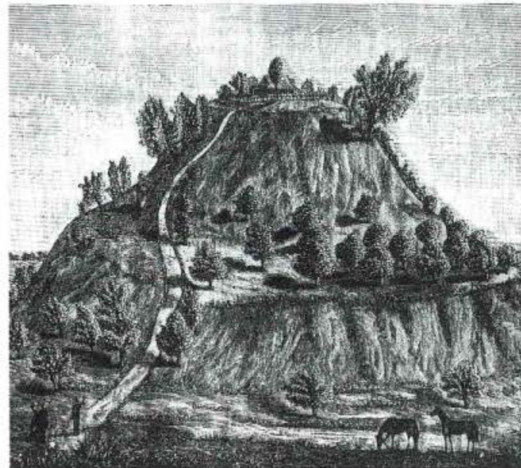
A wonderful account has been left by the Prior of Guillet's order, Fr. Joseph Marie Dumand, of a trip he made to St. Louis at Christmas 1808. Although Dumand traveled all the way from Kentucky, the final leg of his trip would have been similar to Guillet's a year later. Since Guillet unfortunately left no account of his trip,

perhaps Father Dumand's can give us some idea of the hardships he faced. Father Dumand recorded that he carried his own provisions, but

> even at that, I was exposed to starvation in this vast wilderness. The cold was extreme; the rivers were all frozen and the ground was covered with snow. Wishing to reach St. Louis by Christmas Day, I took a guide whom I made walk before me to sound the ice. It is the custom for a traveler to supply himself with a pole which he carries crosswise before him in order to keep him up, should the ice give way beneath his feet. I neglected this precaution, wishing no other staff for crossing than trust in God.[19]

Father Dumand had this to say about the river town's godlessness:

> Having arrived at St. Louis I found the district in a pitiful state. Deprived of priests and all spiritual aid, the morals of the people were entirely corrupt, and ignorance of religion was so general, that the inhabitants scarcely recognized the name Catholic. The small number of the better instructed rejoiced in their Faith. For the rest, some openly mocked at it and others behaved with perfect indifference. . . . I am not referring to the [French] natives of the country who, generally speaking, were good. It was through the incursion of foreigners [i.e., Americans] that irreligion and licentiousness had made their way into this distant land. Divided in language, sentiments and interests from the rest, the aliens worked against the community's good.[20]



A later view of Monks Mound. The Trappists abandoned the site in 1813 and returned to Europe.

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY CAHOKIA MOUNDS HISTORIC SITE; FROM "HISTORY OF MADISON COUNTY, ILLINOIS" (1882).

The church building in which young Pomp was baptized by Father Guillet bore little resemblance to today's majestic Old Cathedral. The first church to be built in St. Louis was a log structure, little more than a shack, erected in 1770 by Don Pedro Piernas, the Spanish lieutenant governor, on the northeast corner of the cathedral lot. In 1772, St. Louis ordered a bell for its church, which is today displayed in the Old Cathedral Museum. In 1776, the growing town received its first pastor, Bernard de Limpach, a Capuchin monk, and a second church was built. This was a larger, vertical-log structure which measured 60x30 feet. It faced Second Street, midway between Walnut and Market. It had a small bell steeple and was surrounded by a porch, or "gallerie." It was this second, vertical-log church in which Pomp was baptized.[21]

Errors in the record

To return to the baptismal record, sharp-eyed readers have probably noticed some discrepancies, all of which I think can be explained by the fact that Father Guillet, as a foreigner and a nonresident member of an ascetic sect of monks, did not know any of the people involved and probably misinterpreted or did not understand some of what he was told. Auguste Chouteau was probably not looked upon as a particularly important man by Guillet, nor did the Charbonneaus and their links with the Lewis and Clark Expedition mean anything to him. Thus, the date of Pomp's birth was recorded incorrectly as February 11, 1804, instead of the correct February 11, 1805. Chouteau's daughter's name, Eulalie, was misspelled by Guillet. And Sacagawea's name, which may have been past the point of translation for the monk, was left as a blank line. She was instead described as a "Sauvagesse de la nation des Serpents," a reference to the Snakes, or Shoshonis. The Charbonneaus are described, correctly, as "living in" or residing in the parish, while the Chouteaus are labeled as being "of this parish."

Auguste Chouteau was easily the most important and revered private citizen in St. Louis in 1809. It is a testament to the importance of Charbonneau and Sacagawea that Chouteau and his daughter were asked to stand as godparents to the child, and that they accepted. Eulalie, whose signature in the record book looks like that of the twelve-year-old girl she was, was the fifth of Auguste and Therese Chouteau's nine children. Her full name was Marie Therese Eulalie Chouteau, and she was born on May 3, 1797. She married René Paul, a thirty-year-old veteran of the Napoleonic Wars, in April 1812 (shortly before her fifteenth birthday), and they had ten children before her death in 1835.[22]

After the baptismal ceremony of December 28, 1809, little Jean Baptiste Charbonneau would have begun his

schooling in St. Louis. Clark returned from Washington and offered Toussaint and Sacagawea a plot of farmland on which to settle in Missouri. But Charbonneau found farming was not to his taste, and sold the land back to Clark after a few months.[23] Toussaint Charbonneau and Sacagawea remained in the St. Louis area until April 2, 1811, when they headed upriver with a party of fur traders led by Manuel Lisa. Henry M. Brackenridge was traveling with Lisa on that voyage, and recorded that "We had on board a Frenchman named Charbonneau, with his wife, an Indian of the Snake nation, both of whom had accompanied Lewis and Clark to the Pacific, and were of great service. The woman, a good creature, of a mild and gentle disposition, [was] greatly attached to the whites, whose manners and dress she tried to imitate, but she had become sickly, and longed to revisit her native country; her husband, also, who had spent many years among the Indians, was become weary of a civilized life."[24]

BOB MOORE

Still standing, the Holy Family Church in Cahokia is similar to the church of Pompey's baptism.

Charbonneau served sporadically as an interpreter for the Indian Bureau at the Upper Missouri Agency from 1811 to 1838, making an average of $300 to $400 per year—very good money at that time. He carried out diplomatic errands for the United States among the Missouri River tribes during the War of 1812. He was not at Fort Manuel when Sacagawea died there in 1812. In 1815 he joined an expedition to Santa Fe, where he was briefly imprisoned by the Spanish for "invading" their territory.

As far as is known, after his 1809-11 visit Toussaint Charbonneau did not return to St. Louis until 1839, when he was described by Superintendent of Indian Affairs Joshua Pilcher as "tottering under the infirmities of 80 winters."[25] He appeared in St. Louis to ask the Indian Bureau for back salaries. It is likely that Charbonneau lost his job as a government interpreter and his standing with the government upon the death of his patron, William Clark, in 1838. Pilcher's was the last entry about Toussaint Charbonneau (discovered thus far) to appear in the official records. It is thought that Charbonneau died at about age eighty-six, sometime around 1843, for it was in that year that his estate was settled by his son, Jean Baptiste.[26]

Pomp's later years

Little Pomp was left behind in St. Louis by his parents in 1811 and educated under William Clark's guidance into the 1820s. He studied French and English, classical literature, history, mathematics, and science. In June 1823, eighteen-year-old Jean Baptiste met Paul William, Prince of Württemberg, on the Kaw River in Kansas. The prince, traveling in America in much the same fashion as Maximilian of Wied-Neuwied would ten years later, convinced Toussaint Charbonneau to allow Pomp to return to Europe with him. As a result, Jean Baptiste lived for six years as a member of the prince's royal household, receiving a classical education in Germany. He returned to Missouri in 1829, worked as a free trapper in Idaho and Utah, traveled with mountain men Jim Bridger, Jim Beckwourth, and Joe Meek, and was a guide for the Mormon Battalion from Santa Fe to San Diego in 1846 during the Mexican War. He was briefly the alcalde (mayor) of Mission San Luis Rey in California and spent many years in the gold fields on the American River near Sacramento. It is doubtful that Jean Baptiste could have held his official position of alcalde without his baptism into the Catholic faith in 1809. Jean Baptiste probably did poorly in the California gold fields, for by 1861 he was listed as a clerk in the Orleans Hotel in Auburn, California. He headed for the newly opened Montana gold fields in 1866 but died en route, succumbing to pneumonia on May 16 in Inskip Station, Oregon. He was sixty-one. His grave site is located in Danner, Oregon, three miles north of Interstate 95.[27]

Bob Moore is the historian at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, in St. Louis.

NOTES

[1]See Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), pp. 468-469.

[2]The record is included in the Register of Baptisms of the Old Cathedral Parish. My research was conducted with the kind permission of Monsignor Bernard Sandheinrich, pastor of the Old Cathedral.

[3]August 17, 1806, Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press), Vol. 8, June 9-September 26, 1806.

[4]See the letter of Pierre Chouteau to Secretary of War William Eustis, December 14, 1809, in *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, edited by Clarence Edwin Carter (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949), Vol. XIV, p. 343. Chouteau mentions writing a letter to Eustis (since lost) on November 22, 1809, after his arrival in St. Louis. The *Missouri Gazette* of November 16, 1809, reported Chouteau's safe return. Pierre Chouteau, officially christened Jean Pierre, was born in New Orleans in 1758 and along with his half-brother Auguste was a power in the frontier fur trade for most of his life. He died in St. Louis in 1849. For more on Pierre Chouteau, see William E. Foley and C. David Rice, *The First Chouteaus* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983).

[5]Three men were killed and eight wounded, including George Shannon, who had to have his leg amputated as a result of his wounds. See Nathaniel Pryor to William Clark, October 16, 1807, in Donald Jackson, *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, with Related Documents*, 1783-1854. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962, pp. 432-438.

[6]See Gov. Meriwether Lewis to Pierre Chouteau, June 8, 1809, and Pierre Chouteau to the Secretary of War, December 14, 1809, in *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, edited by Clarence Edwin Carter (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949), Vol. XIV, pp. 343-352.

[7] Foley and Rice, pp. 143-148.

[8]The one exception to this fact was the presence of an itinerant priest named Thomas Flynn from mid-1807 to January 1808. Flynn signed a contract with the St. Louis parishioners for a sum of money and provisions of food and drink to act as the parish priest for a period of one year. He was without orders to do so from his bishop, and resigned before his contract expired, after which he was lost to recorded history.

[9]The monastery of La Trappe was founded in 1122, and made a branch of the Cistercian order in 1148. Trappist monks take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They wear white robes instead of the traditional black or brown of most orders.

[10]Monk's Mound is today part of Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, near Collinsville. It stands 100 feet tall and covers four acres of ground, the largest man-made structure built north of Mexico before the advent of the Europeans.

[11]Jarrot was the nominal owner of the land where Lewis and Clark set up Camp Wood in 1803-04, and it is thought that he suggested that site to the co-commanders, There is some question about Jarrot's actual ownership of the Monk's Mound site in 1809.

[12]Henry M. Brackenridge, "Visit to Cahokia, " quoted by J. Thomas Scharf in *History of St. Louis City and County* (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts & Co., 1883), Vol. I, p. 99.

[13]Edmund Flagg, *The Far West: Or, A Tour Beyond the Mountains*, originally published in 1838, republished in Reuben Gold Thwaites, *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846* (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1966), Volume XXVI, pp. 192-194. A good deal of Flagg's information came from Henry M. Brackenridge's *Views of Louisiana*, published in Pittsburgh in 1814, appendix V. This appendix is unfortunately not republished with the rest of Brackenridge's account in the *Early Western Travels* series.

[14]Edmund Flagg, *The Far West*, in Thwaites, Vol. XXVI, p.194.

[15]Paul C. Schulte, *The Catholic Heritage of Saint Louis* (St. Louis, 1934), pp. 77-81.

[16]M.J. Spalding, *Sketches of Early Catholic Missioners of Kentucky* (Louisville, 1944).

[17]See Rev. John Rothensteiner, *History of the Archdiocese of St. Louis* (St. Louis, 1928), Vol. 1, pp. 219-220.

[18]Quoted in Rev. John Rothensteiner, *History of the Archdiocese of St. Louis*, Vol. 1, p. 219.

[19]The so-called Diary of Father Joseph Dumand was published in the *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society*, Vol. XXVI; see especially pp. 332 and 333; excerpts were also printed in Schulte, pp. 77-79.

[20]Schulte, p. 79.

[21]See Gregory M. Franzwa, *The Old Cathedral* (Gerald, Mo., The Patrice Press, 1980), for more on the history of the four buildings which have stood on the site of the Old Cathedral. The present Old Cathedral was built between 1831 and 1834. The vertical log church built in 1776 and standing in 1809 probably bore a strong resemblance and was similar in its dimensions to the still-standing Holy Family Church of Cahokia, Illinois, built in 1799.

[22]See Mary B. Cunningham and Jeanne C. Blythe, *The Founding Family of St. Louis* (St. Louis: Piraeus Publishers, 1977), pp. 5-7.

[23]St. Louis Court Records show that Charbonneau bought a tract of land from William Clark on October 30, 1810, and sold it back on March 26, 1811 for $ 100. The land was in St. Ferdinand Township. See Stella M. Drumm's edition of *Journal of a Fur-Trading Expedition on the Upper Missouri, 1812-1813*, by John C. Luttig, originally published in 1920, republished in New York by Argosy-Antiquarian, Ltd., in 1964 on p. 138, and Russell Reid, *Sakakawea: The Bird Woman* (Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1986), pp. 14-15. Drumm also notes that Charbonneau purchased fifty pounds of bequit (biscuit or hard tack) from Auguste Chouteau on March 23, 1811, probably in anticipation of his trip up the river.

[24]See the *Journal of a Voyage Up the River Missouri*, performed in 1811, by H. M. Brackenridge, in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1904), Vol. VI, pp. 32-33.

[25]This quote is from a letter of Superintendent of Indian Affairs Joshua Pilcher to T. Hartley Crawford, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, quoted at length in Stella M. Drumm, *Journal of John C. Luttig* (New York: Argosy-Antiquarian, Ltd., 1964), pp. 132-140. For reprinted excerpts from documents dealing with Charbonneau's career as a government interpreter, see *Chardon's Journal at Fort Clark, 1954-1859*, edited by Annie Heloise Abel (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), pp. 278-282.

[26]See Moulton, Vol. 3, footnote 1 on pp. 228-229 for a good summation of Toussaint Charbonneau's life. See also Irving W. Anderson, "A Charbonneau Family Portrait," *American West Magazine*, March/April 1980, especially pp. 13 and 16.

[27]See Anderson, especially pp. 14-19.

Charbonneau

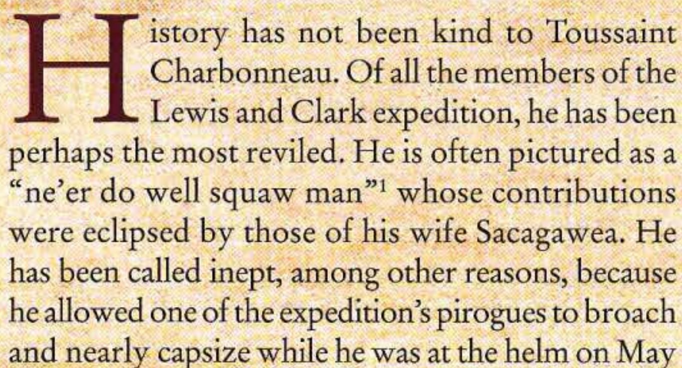
In John Clymer's painting "Up the Jefferson," Charbonneau (with bandanna) walks behind Clark.

COURTESY MRS. CLYMER AND THE CLYMER MUSEUM OF ART, ELLENSBURG, WASH.

Reconsidered

BY RITA CLEARY

Students of Lewis and Clark have often dismissed Sacagawea's husband as a cowardly, bumbling incompetent, but there's evidence — including a letter from William Clark — to suggest otherwise



History has not been kind to Toussaint Charbonneau. Of all the members of the Lewis and Clark expedition, he has been perhaps the most reviled. He is often pictured as a "ne'er do well squaw man"[1] whose contributions were eclipsed by those of his wife Sacagawea. He has been called inept, among other reasons, because he allowed one of the expedition's pirogues to broach and nearly capsize while he was at the helm on May 14, 1805, when the Corps of Discovery was making its way up the Missouri toward the Great Falls. He has been labeled an abusive husband because he struck his wife on August 14, 1805. He has been characterized as selfish and irresponsible because he saved himself before thinking of his wife and child on June 29, 1805, when, with Clark, they were caught in a flash flood near the Great Falls and barely escaped with their lives. His loyalty and resolution have also been

Charbonneau helps Sacagawea and Clark escape a flash flood in a ravine at the Great Falls.

questioned because he wavered in his decision to join the expedition in the first place.[2] Charles G. Clarke sums up the conventional view of Charbonneau by stating, "Other than as an interpreter . . . , he was not of much value."[3]

How much of this view is grounded in the ethnic and cultural attitudes of the captains and the editors and writers who have interpreted the Lewis and Clark saga? Charbonneau, after all, was a Frenchman, born in Montreal, probably in 1758. Racially, culturally, and religiously, he was very different from Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. We have no Frenchman's journal of the expedition which might provide a kinder view of Charbonneau. He would have been brought up a Catholic, or as Lewis and Clark would have called him, a "Papist," not a complimentary term in an age when religious prejudice was rampant. Unlike the tall, ruddy, lean Captains, Charbonneau was short, dark, heavily muscled, and probably of Mediterranean stock. He trapped furs and lived at the Minitaree (Hidatsa) Village, on the Knife River. He was a "squaw man," another term of disdain. He had two wives and according to the moral strictures of the day was a bigamist. And Charbonneau worked for the British North West Company,[4] whose hegemony had extended into the Ohio Valley until the Revolutionary War, when George Rogers Clark, William's eldest brother, defeated the British and secured the region for the United States.[5]

Clark's view

It's clear that William Clark, whatever prejudices he might have had toward someone of Charbonneau's background, recognized his contributions to the expedition, entrusted him with important matters, and even came to regard him as a friend. The day before Clark left the Mandan villages on the last leg of the expedition's return journey to St. Louis, he asked Charbonneau to keep the Corps of Discovery's valuable blacksmithing tools and bellows and told him to instruct the Mandans and Hidatsas on how to use them. Clark paid Charbonneau $500.33 for his services as an interpreter, nearly twice as much as he paid any of the expedition's private soldiers, who served twice as long. Clark also offered to take Charbonneau's son, Jean Baptiste ("Pompey"), back to St. Louis to educate him and invited Charbonneau and his wife to join him there. But the father refused, claiming he could not make a living in St. Louis. So when the expedition departed from the Mandan villages on August 17, 1806, Charbonneau—along with Sacagawea and Pompey—stayed behind.[6]

Three days later, Clark wrote a letter to Charbonneau reiterating his proposal to educate Pompey and elaborating on several scenarios he presumably discussed with the Frenchman during their layover with the Mandans.[7] The letter [for its complete text, see box, page 21] is written with all the foibles of Clark's errant

"Wishing you and your family great suckess"

Clark's letter to Charbonnneau

On Board the Perogue near the Ricara Village
August 20th 1806,
Charbono
Sir

Your present situation with the Indians gives me some concern. I wish now that I had advised you to come on with me to the Illinois where it most probably would be in my power to put you in some way to do something for yourself. I was so engaged after the Big White had concluded to go down with Jessome as his Interpreter, that I had not time to talk with you as much as I intended to have done. You have been a long time with me and have conducted yourself in such a manner as to gain my friendship, your woman who accompanied you that long dangerous and fatiquing rout to the Pacific Ocean and back deserved a greater reward ~~than~~ for her attention and services on that rout than we had in our power to give ~~as there was~~ her at the Mandans. As to your little son (my boy Pomp) you well know my fondness for him and my anxiety to take and raise him as my own child. I once more tell you if you will bring your son Baptiest to me I will educate him and treat him as my own child. I do not forget the promis which I made to you and shall now repeat them that you may be certain, Charbono, if you wish to live with the white people, and will come to me I will give you a piece of land and furnish you with horses cows & hogs. If you wish to visit your friends in Montrall I will let you have a horse, and your family shall be taken care of untill your return. If you wish to return as an Interpreter for the Menetarras when the troops come up to form the establishment, you will be with me ready and I will procure you the place — or if you wish to return to ~~on~~ trade with the Indians and will leave your little son Pomp with me, I will assist you with merchendize for that purpose ~~from time~~ and become my self concerned with you in trade on a small scale that is to say not exceeding a perogue load at one time. If you are desposed to accept either of my offers to you and will bring down your Son your famm Janey had best come along with you to take caare of the boy untill I get him. Let me advise you to keep your Bill of Exchange and what furs and pelteries you have in possession, and get as much more as you can, and get as maney robes, and big horn and cabbra skins as you can collect in the course of this winter, and take them down to St. Louis as early as possible in the Spring. When you get to St. Louis enquire of the Governer of that place for a letter ~~to you~~ which I shall leave with him for you. In the letter which I shall leave for the governer I shall inform you what you had best do with your firs pleteries and robes &c. and derect you where to find me. If you should met with any misfortune on the river &c when you get to St. Louis write a letter to me by the post and let me know your situation. If you do not intend to go down either this fall or in the spring, write a letter to me by the first oppertunity and inform me what you intend to do that I may know if I may expect you or not. If you ever intend to come down this fall or the next spring will be the best time. This fall would be best if you could get down before the winter. I shall be found either in St. Louis or in Clarksville at the Falls of the Ohio.

Wishing you and your family great suckess & with anxious expectations of seeing my little dancing boy Baptiest I shall remain

Your Friend
William Clark

Keep this letter and let not more than one or 2 persons see it, and when you write to me seal your letter. I think you best not determine which of my offers to accept untill you see me. Come prepared to accept of either which you may chuse after you get down.

Mr. Teousant Charbono
Menetarras Village.

FROM THE CLARK FAMILY COLLECTION: WILLIAM CLARK PAPERS, MISSOURI HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ST. LOUIS.

More on Toussaint Charbonneau

The May 1980 issue of *We Proceeded On* included an article by the late Robert E. Lange in which the author, like Rita Cleary, takes a more charitable view toward Toussaint Charbonneau. Lange notes that some of the bad press directed toward Sacagawea's husband may originate from the vitriol heaped on him by the opinionated Elliott Coues, who in 1893 edited the Biddle/Allen narrative of the journals. To cite just one example of such editorializing, in a footnote regarding an incident on July 26, 1805, when Clark rescued Charbonneau from drowning, Coues comments, "On most occasions Captain Clark showed himself possessed of rare judgement and fortitude. Today, however, he was not up to the mark, and the cowardly wife-beating tenderfoot still lived."

Lange points out that in addition to his role as an interpreter, Charbonneau served the expedition as a cook, messenger, camp tender, guard, and horse trader. Lewis passed judgment on him only a few times. Commenting on the May 14, 1805, swamping of a pirogue, the captain characterized Charbonneau as "perhaps the most timid waterman in the world." On June 19, 1805, he rebuked Charbonneau for allowing Sacagawea, who was recuperating from an illness, to eat raw breadroot and dried fish. Two months later, on August 14, he noted without comment that Clark severly reprimanded Charbonneau for striking Sacagawea—the one recorded incident of the Frenchman's "wife-beating." In his letter of January 15, 1807, to Secretary of War Henry H. Dearborn remarking on the "respective merits" of the expedition's members, Lewis rated Charbonneau a "man of no peculiar [particular] merit," who was "useful as an interpreter only, in which he discharged his duties with good faith." That statement nothwithsanding, Lewis seems to have regarded him as a good cook—in his journal entry for May 9, 1805, the captain noted approvingly of Charbonneau's recipe for *boudin blanc*, a "pudding we all esteem one of the great delicacies of the forrest."

Another of Charbonneau's defenders is Gordon Speck, whose book *Breeds and Half-Breeds* is a principal source for Lange's article. Speck notes that Chabonneau couldn't swim and mortally feared water—nearly every incident of his alleged cowardice occured on the river; when faced with the threat of drowning, he invariably lost his head. Any judgment of Charbonneau should recall that he was hired as an interpreter, not as a boatman (a job at which he was indeed inept); nothing in the journals suggests he was anything other than an able translator.

Whem Charbonneau showed up in St. Louis in 1839 to collect back pay , Joshua Pilcher, Clark's successor as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, judged the old squaw man "a faithful servant of the government—though in a humble capacity," who "figured conspicuously in the expedition of Lewis and Clark to the Pacific."

For more on the abused Frenchman, see Robert E. Lange's "Poor Charbonneau!" (WPO, May 1980, pp. 14-16), and Gordon Speck's *Breeds and Half-Breeds* (Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., N.Y., 1969), pp. 96-148.

—J. I. Merritt

grammar and spelling, and Clark's gratitude toward Charbonneau shines through. In his words, "You have been a long time with me and have conducted yourself in such a manner as to gain my friendship."

Clark goes on to express his concern for Charbonneau's future. He offers the squaw man a farm and livestock in Upper Louisiana (Missouri) and says he will help finance a visit to Charbonneau's "friends" (and presumably family) in Montreal and care for Sacagawea and Pompey until his safe return. If Charbonneau prefers to stay on the upper Missouri, Clark says he will secure for him a position as interpreter for the Minitarees or will supply him with merchandise to stock a trading post. Whichever option Charbonneau chooses—settling in Missouri or remaining with the Indians—he will still come to St. Louis, and he will bring furs. Clark wants to advise him where and when to sell his furs so as to obtain the highest price, and he points out the quantity and variety of skins that are marketable, advising him to "get as maney robes, and big horn and cabbra [pronghorn] skins" as he can.

One can argue that Clark's generosity to Charbonneau was primarily inspired by concern for the welfare of Pompey and Sacagawea (whom he refers to by her pet name, "Janey"), and what may have been his desire to see them settled permanently in Missouri. This may be partially true. However, Clark could not be certain that the Indian woman would stay with Charbonneau rather than return to her people. Clark could not known whether the marriage, founded on the purchase of a captive slave, would survive. He could not know whether Sacagawea would adapt to life on a farm or trading post or even whether Charbonneau would choose to bring his wife with him. Charbonneau did send Pompey to St. Louis to be educated. Beyond this, there is no evidence that Charbonneau accepted any of the rewards offered him by Clark.

Charbonneau's post-expedition career

We know little of the life of Toussaint Charbonneau after the expedition. Sacagawea almost certainly died in 1812. Her husband lived at least until 1839, long after most of the other expedition members had died. We know he chose to live among the Mandans and Hidatsa

and not among the whites at Fort Clark, a trading post farther upriver where often conducted business.[8] He worked from 1819 until 1838 as an interpreter for the U.S. government at the Mandan villages. F. A. Chardon, Fort Clark's factor, mentions him frequently in the journal he kept. Charbonneau was old when Chardon knew him, but vigorous and alert. On July 1, 1837, while in his late seventies, he rode through rain, lightning, and hail to retrieve stolen horses.[9] He relayed news and goods regularly between the village of the Gros Ventres and the white traders at Fort Clark.

On July 25, 1837, smallpox struck the Mandans.[10] The epidemic was a cataclysmic event for the tribe, which a previous epidemic, in 1780, had reduced from nine villages to two. In his introduction to *Chardon's Journal*, William R. Swagerty calls the 1837 devastation "the highest historic decline in a single epidemic episode in North American history."[11] The epidemic proved equally cataclysmic for Charbonneau.

On his deathbed the Mandan chief, Four Bears, blamed the "white dogs" for the plague, and the Mandans threatened to kill white men for bringing it to them.[12] That included Charbonneau, who, fearing for his family, on August 19 led them to safety with the Gros Ventres. On September 6, his wife succumbed to the pox in spite of his precautions. He remained with the Gros Ventres through the rest of the year. On December 31, 1837, he reported to Chardon that 117 in the Gros Ventre village had died and only ten lodges remained, while the smallpox still raged.[13]

Charbonneau disappears from Chardon's journal from June 9 to October 26, 1838. It's possible he went to St. Louis. If so, he might have attended the funeral of William Clark, who died on September 1, 1838, at age sixty-eight, and was buried with full military honors in a ceremony attended by a many mourners.

Charbonneau's last marriage

In 1839 Charbonneau reappears in Chardon's journal. The factor reports that the old interpreter had married yet again. Charbonneau was probably eighty, and his new wife was a fourteen-year-old Assiniboine captive.[14] The white traders at Fort Clark viewed the old man's marriage as scandalous. But the Indians saw it as a flaunting of death and held a rousing celebration in the couple's honor. In the eyes of Anglo culture Charbonneau was suspect, but he was long past caring what white men thought of him. He had suffered the deaths of loved ones and friends. The language he had translated for so many years was dying along with the Mandans, his adopted people, and their culture. Even in advanced old age, however, he never lost his ability to absorb tragedy and get on with life. His old would-be patron, William Clark, had also died, but Clark's letter survives—and with it our knowledge of Toussaint Charbonneau's service to the Corps of Discovery.

Foundation member Rita Cleary, a novelist living in Oyster Bay, New York, is on the board of the Western Writers of America. Her novel River Walk, *about the Lewis and Clark expedition, focuses on Private John Collins, one of her ancestors; it will be released by Thorndike Press in June. Her* Spies And Tories *was recently nominated for the James Fenimore Cooper Prize in historical fiction, sponsored by Columbia University and Barnard College.*

Notes

[1] John Bakeless, *The Journals of Lewis and Clark* (New York, 1964), p. xii.

[2] Gary Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, Vol. 3 (Lincoln, Neb., 1988), p. 312.

[3] Charles G. Clarke, *The Men of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Glendale, Calif., 1970), p. 148.

[4] Ibid. According to Clarke, Charbonneau was born in French Canada about 1758 and worked as a trader for the North West Company. On February 25, 1779, the twenty-four-year-old George Rogers Clark led a small force of frontiersmen in a daring capture of Vincennes and British Fort Sackville, thus insuring the area north of the Ohio River (the future states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin) for the United States.

[5] George F. Scheer and Hugh F. Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats* (New York, 1957), pp. 345-350.

[6] Ibid., p. 307.

[7] Letter of William Clark to Toussaint Charbonneau, August 20, 1806. William Clark Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.

[8] F. A. Chardon, *Chardon's Journal at Fort Clark, 1834-1839* (Lincoln, Neb.,1997), p. 69.

[9] Ibid., pp. 119-120.

[10] Ibid., p. 123.

[11] Ibid., p. x.

[12] Ibid., p. 125.

[13] Ibid., p. 145.

[14] Ibid., p. 173.

BONE MAN

The gentle-souled Caspar Wistar taught Meriwether Lewis about fossils and straightened out Jefferson on Megalonyx

By Nancy M. Davis

Caspar Wistar, a physician, anatomist, and paleontologist, was one of several Philadelphia mentors who, in 1803, gave Meriwether Lewis his crash course in natural history before the explorer set off for the West.

There's a story about Wistar that tells much about his generous spirit. In his medical practice, he had treated a man through a severe illness. Some time later, when the former patient called at his office to pay him, Wistar asked how much money he had brought and was told he had ten dollars but would return when he had more. At that, Wistar pulled a ten-dollar note from his own pocket and gave it to him, saying, "There, my man, now you have twenty dollars: go home, and make a good use of them; and let me hear from you again, should you, in any way, need my assistance."[1]

Wistar was beloved by his patients. Kindly and attentive, with a polite and soothing manner, he was more concerned with their welfare than with his own. A colleague observed on Wistar's death that "the attachment of his patients to him [was] perhaps unparalleled."[2] His fees were modest, and once, during a severe illness, he instructed that his ledgers be burned should he die: "The account between me and my patients, is already balanced. By their kindness towards me, and the praises they have bestowed on me, beyond what I merited, they have made ample returns for any services I rendered them."[3]

Born in Philadelphia on September 13, 1761, Wistar was the fifth of eight children of Quakers Richard Wistar and Sarah Wyatt.[4] His grandfather, another Caspar Wistar, had emigrated from Germany in 1717 and built the first glass factory in the colonies.[5] Wistar received a classical education at the Public School of Philadelphia, now Penn Charter School. A brilliant student, he became a fluent writer and speaker of Latin.[6]

The young Quaker came of age during the Revolutionary War. He was sixteen when he tended to wounded soldiers at the Battle of Germantown, fought northwest of Philadelphia on October 4, 1777. The experience led to his decision to study medicine.[7] Wistar apprenticed to Dr. John Redman, a distinguished physician, and later to Dr. John Jones, a surgeon practicing in Philadelphia during the British occupation of New York.[8] In 1779 he entered the University of Pennsylvania.[9] Regarded even today as one of the most gifted students in the school's history, Wistar obtained his bachelor's degree in 1782.[10]

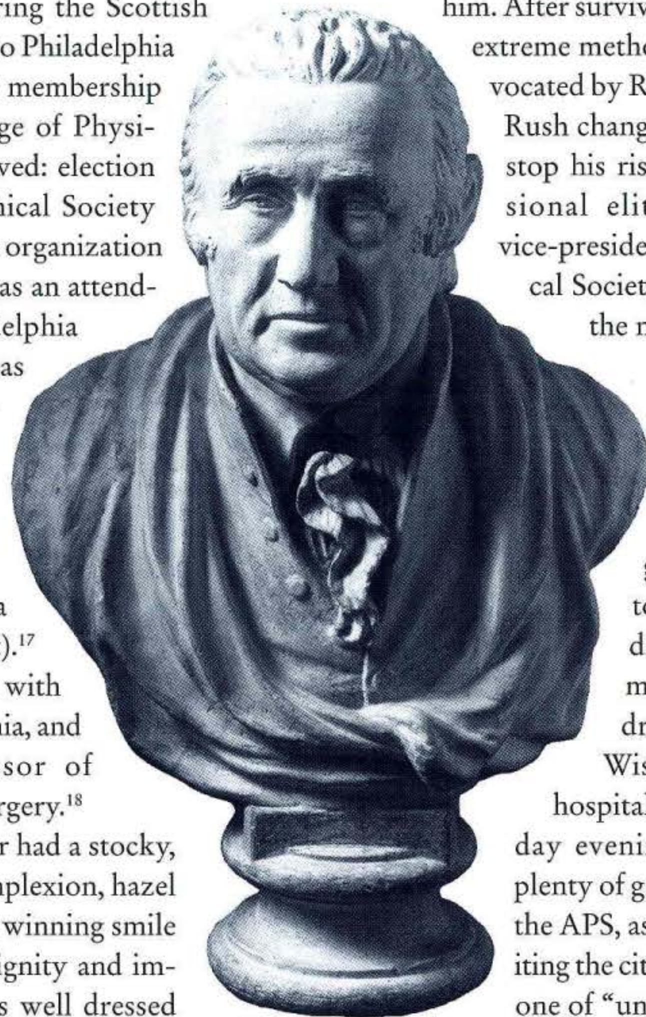
After graduation, when he applied for Quaker permission to go abroad, he had to overcome some resistance because he had fought in a duel.[10] Wistar had a temper, and he was by no means oblivious to faults in others or offenses to himself. He worked to conquer his temper: friends maintained that they never heard him say a harsh word against anyone who offended him and invariably offered an excuse on the person's behalf.[11]

To complete his medical education, Wistar in 1783

went to Great Britain.[12] He studied anatomy for a year in London before moving on to the University of Edinburgh, which awarded him an M.D. in 1786. Wistar's years in Edinburgh coincided with the Scottish Enlightenment, and it's a measure of his intellect and the esteem in which the faculty and his fellow students held him that they elected the young American to the presidency of both the Royal Medical Society and the Edinburgh Natural History Society.[13]

In 1787, after twice touring the Scottish Highlands, Wistar returned to Philadelphia and was quickly tapped for membership in the newly formed College of Physicians.[14] Other honors followed: election to the American Philosophical Society (APS), the premier scientific organization of its day, and appointment as an attending physician at the Philadelphia Dispensary.[15] In 1789 he was named professor of chemistry at the College of Philadelphia,[16] succeeding Dr. Benjamin Rush (another of Lewis's mentors, whose laxative pills would become a staple in his medicine chest).[17] In 1792 the college merged with the University of Pennsylvania, and Wistar became a professor of anatomy, midwifery, and surgery.[18]

Of medium height, Wistar had a stocky, muscular build, a ruddy complexion, hazel eyes, an aquiline nose, and a winning smile that enhanced his natural dignity and impeccable manners.[19] He was well dressed and notably neat in appearance. Wistar worked hard at his teaching and combined a charismatic delivery with a thorough knowledge of his subject.[20] His anatomy lectures were celebrated, and as his classes grew larger, Wistar innovated. He began to use large-scale models of small body parts and divided his students into smaller groups, giving each a collection of bones to study and classify. Wistar's "bone classes" were famous among his students, who felt the same affection toward the good doctor as did his patients.[21]



Caspar Wistar, Philadelphia anatomist and paleontologist. Bust by William Rush.

COURTESY MÜTTER MUSEUM, COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA

In 1793 Wistar became curator of the APS and a physician at Pennsylvania Hospital.[22] That same year, Philadelphia, serving as both the state and federal capitals, suffered one of the worst yellow-fever epidemics in its history, with one out of every ten residents perishing. More than half the population, including President Washington and Governor Mifflin, fled the city.[23] Wistar stayed in town, assisting his friend Dr. Rush, but when Wistar himself fell ill, he asked Dr. Adam Kuhn to treat him. After surviving the fever, Wistar rejected the extreme methods of bleeding and purging advocated by Rush. Though his friendship with Rush changed forever,[24] this did nothing to stop his rise among Philadelphia's professional elite. In 1795 he was elected vice-president of the American Philosophical Society, a position he would hold for the next twenty-one years.[25]

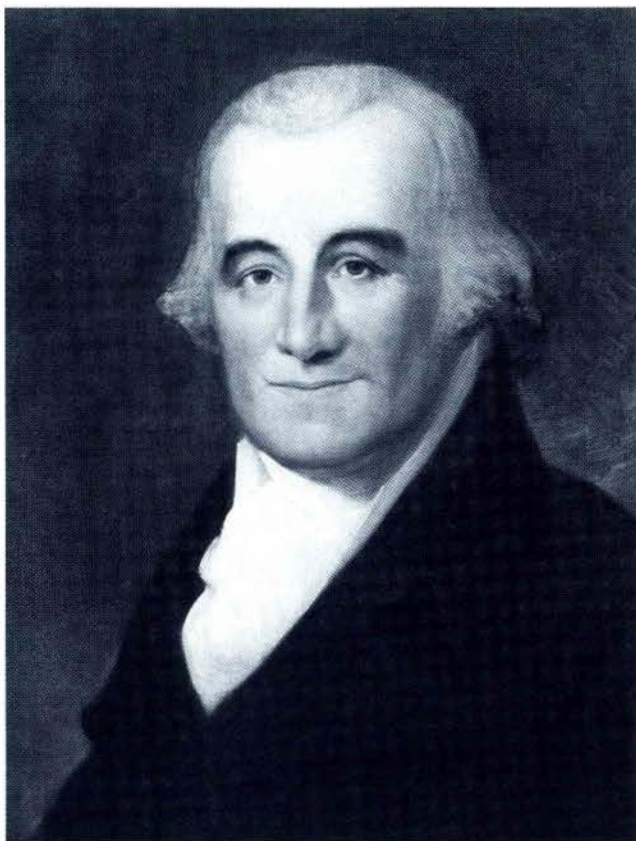
In 1798, the thirty-seven-year-old Wistar bought a house at the corner of Fourth and Prune Streets and married Elizabeth Mifflin, a niece of the governor.[26] (It was his second trip to the altar, his first wife having died in 1790, after two years of marriage.)[27] They had three children, a girl and two boys.[28] The Wistars became famous for their hospitality, opening their house on Sunday evenings, serving cakes, wine, and plenty of good conversation to members of the APS, as well as to notable strangers visiting the city.[29] The tone of the evenings was one of "unstudied ease and unostentatious style" reflecting Wistar's "social instincts and kind affections." [30] Though he could easily have done so, the learned but unfailingly gracious host avoided dominating conversations; Wistar preferred listening to speaking, and directed the topics of conversation to subjects in which his interlocutor excelled.[31]

Meriwether Lewis comes to town

In the spring of 1803, Wistar received a letter from his friend Thomas Jefferson. In preparation for his expe-

dition across the continent, Meriwether Lewis was journeying to Philadelphia to tap the brains of its leading citizens in science, and the President asked Wistar to allow Lewis to call on him.[32] Wistar said that he would put together a list of questions for Lewis that might contribute to the expedition's success as a scientific endeavor. Wistar evidently sent this list to Jefferson in July, but regrettably it is lost to history.[33]

Wistar and Jefferson had collaborated on a number of scientific projects, including the collection and identification of the bones of the extinct ground sloth, *Megalonyx*, which Jefferson had initially (and erroneously) regarded as the fossil remains of a giant cat.[34] No record remains of the conversation between Wistar and Lewis. However, it's reasonable to assume that they spoke of fossils, with the Philadelphia sage advising the Virginian to look for them in eroding bluffs along the Missouri River. They may also have discussed the possibility, advanced by both Wistar and Jefferson, of finding mastodons and other ice-age mammals still roaming the vast unknown land Lewis was about to explore.[35]



"Wistar's peers regarded him as intellectually 'strong rather than brilliant'—a lover of truth who was patient in uncovering it and generous in sharing it." The wistaria (below) was named in his honor.

WISTAR PORTRAIT BY WAUGH, AFTER BASS OTIS; COURTESY MÜTTER MUSEUM, COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA
WISTARIA DRAWING FROM FIELDBOOKOF NATURAL HISTORY, BY E.L. PALMER AND H.S. FOWLER (MCGRAW-HILL, 1975)

Less than two months after Lewis left Philadelphia, the news broke that the United States had acquired the territory of Louisiana from France. Although controversy surrounded the purchase, Wistar endorsed Jefferson's decision and wrote the President a note "on the very happy acquisitions you have made for our Country. . . . the most important & beneficial transaction which has occurred since the declaration of Independence, & next to it, most like to influence or regulate the destinies of our Country."[36]

Wistar capped his academic career in 1808 with appointment to the chair of anatomy at the University of Pennsylvania.[37] Along with his new professional duties he continued his good works—helping, for example, to found a society to promote vaccination, which included inoculations for Native Americans.[37]

In 1810, after sixteen years as a staff physician, Wistar resigned from Pennsylvania Hospital.[38] The next year, he completed *A System of Anatomy for the Use of Students of Medicine*.[39] The first American textbook on anatomy,[40] it was hailed at the time as "without rival, in any language."[41] Its material was well organized, the writing clear, and the descriptions short and precise.[42] Wistar's other writings include several papers on anatomy and descriptions of fossils found at Big Bone Lick, Kentucky, [43] a site visited by Lewis in October 1803 during his trip down the Ohio.

Wistar assumed the presidency of the APS from Thomas Jefferson in 1816, but he was only to hold the position for two years. He had heart trouble that caused him, to his great regret, to curtail and finally to end altogether his medical practice.[44] During his final illness, so many people stopped by his house to inquire about his condition that, twice daily, his doctor wrote a report that he placed on the

hall table for visitors to read. When Wistar died, at age fifty-six, on January 22, 1818, the city's cultural and scientific institutions closed until after the funeral. His medical students bore his body to the grave.[45]

At the time of his death, Wistar was president of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society[46] and a member of the Literary and Philosophical Society of New York as well as many other scientific and professional organizations at home and abroad.[47] Over the years, he had assembled a large anatomical collection, which his family donated to the University of Pennsylvania.[48]

Wistar's peers regarded him as intellectually "strong rather than brilliant"—a lover of truth who was patient in uncovering it and generous in sharing it. In a eulogy, William Tilghman wrote that Wistar's strongest characteristic was his sincere benevolence, "not that useless sympathy which contents itself with its own sensations."[49] One of Wistar's contemporaries, the botanist Thomas Nuttall, named in his honor a climbing vine with clusters of delicate blue flowers: the Wistaria.[50]

Foundation member Nancy M. Davis lives in Philadelphia and is an interior designer. This is the second in a series of articles by the Foundation's Philadelphia chapter on the Pennsylvania mentors of Meriwether Lewis.

NOTES

[1]Charles Caldwell, *An Eulogium on Caspar Wistar, MD., Professor of Anatomy* (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson & Son, 1818), p. 12.

[2]Ibid, p. 11.

[3]Ibid., pp.14-18.

[4]"Caspar Wistar," *Dictionary of Scientific Biography (DSB),* Vol. XIV, 1976, p. 456.

[5]"Caspar Wistar," *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography*, Vol. V1, 1889, p. 583.

[6]Caldwell, p. 7.

[7]*DSB*, p. 456.

[8]William Tilghman, *An Eulogium in Commemoration of Doctor Caspar Wistar, Late President of the American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge* (Philadelphia: E. Earl, 1818), p. 974.

[9]*DSB*, p. 456.

[10]Ibid., p. 7.

[11]Caldwell, pp. 14-15.

[12]William D. Sharpe, *Caspar Wistar* On Depression *1786: An Eighteenth Century Psychiatric M.D. Dissertation*, 1963-64, Vol. 31, 299.

[13]*DSB*, p. 456; *Appleton's*, p. 583; *Dictionary of American Biography (DAB)*, Vol. X, 1936, pp. 433, 456.

[14]*DAB*, p. 433.

[15]*Appleton's*, p. 583.

[16]*DAB*, p. 433.

[17]Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), p. 89.

[18] *DAB*, p. 433.

[19]Caldwell, pp. 21-26.

[20] Ibid., p. 22.

[21]*Appleton's*, p. 583; *DSB*, p. 456.

[22]*DSB*, pp. 433, 456.

[23]4F. Weigley, ed., *Philadelphia: A 300 year history* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), pp. 180-188.

[24]*DSB*, p. 456.

[25]Paul Russell Cutright, "Contributions of Philadelphia to Lewis and Clark History," WPO Publication #6 (Portland, Ore.: Lithco, 1982), p. 14.

[26]*History of the Wistar Association* (Philadelphia: Press of The Wistar Institute, 1945), p. 8.

[27]*DSB*, p. 456.

[28]Ibid.

[29]*Wistar Association*, p. 6; *DSB*, p. 456.

[30]*Sketch of the Wistar Party of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1976), p. 5.

[31]Tilghman, p. 985.

[32]Donald Jackson, ed., *Letters of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, With Related Documents, 1783-1854* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962), pp. 17-18.

[33]Cutright, pp. 14-15.

[34]Joseph A. Kastner, *A Species of Eternity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), pp. 126, 150.

[35]Cutright, pp. 14-15.

[36]Ambrose, p. 102.

[37]Caldwell, p. 19.

[38]Tilghman, p. 980; D*SB*, p. 456.

[39]*DSB*, p. 456.

[40]*DAB*, p. 437.

[41]Tilghman, pp. 981, 986.

[42] Ibid., p. 980.

[43]*DSB*, p. 456; Cutright, p. 33.

[44]Caldwell, pp. 18-19.

[45]Ibid., p. 26.

[46]Ibid., pp. 19-20.

[47]*DAB*, p. 433.

[48]Tilghman, pp. 983, 985.

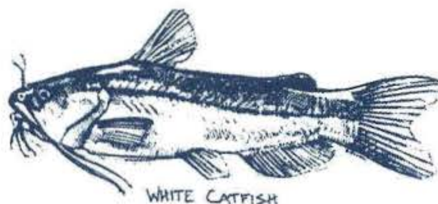
[50]*DAB*, p. 433. Although "wistaria" is correct, this member of the pea family is now more commonly spelled wisteria. Its drooping clusters of blue flowers make it a popular ornamental.

Lessons from the mighty Missouri

Passage of Discovery

Daniel B. Botkin

Perigee/Penguin Putnam
247 pages
$15.95 paperback



Environmental biologist David B. Botkin has written a thoughtful follow-up to his 1995 *Our Natural History: The Lessons of Lewis and Clark*. This latest rumination on the country encountered by the Corps of Discovery is nominally a guidebook (sponsored by the conservation group American Rivers), but one that is different from any other L&C Baedeker I've seen.

Passage of Discovery is really an extended environmental essay. It takes the reader vicariously on Botkin's journey up the Missouri from St. Louis to Three Forks, Montana. Along the way the author stops at forty-two sites. He describes what Lewis and Clark saw there and the changes since their day—some of them made by nature (rivers, as he reminds us, are always in flux, destroying and creating in their relentless push toward the sea). But mainly they are made by man, who in the two centuries since Lewis and Clark has labored mightily to tame the great river and tap its water and power for his purposes.

Botkin, a professor of biology at George Mason University, is a wise teacher, who explains and analyzes and avoids preaching, although it's clear that he views how man has changed the river as both nature's loss and ours. His lessons touch on earth history, hydrology, biology, prairie and riverine ecology, and fisheries and wildlife management. He offers clear and engaging sketches of the life histories of many of the wild creatures encountered by Lewis and Clark, among them antelope, deer, prairie dogs, buffalo, wolves, and grizzlies.

I've been reading and writing about the natural history of the American West for nearly three decades, yet *Passage of Discovery* was full of revelations. For example, I didn't know (or had forgotten) how glaciers changed the course of the ancestral Missouri, which once flowed north and entered into Hudson's Bay; the Milk River now follows a part of the Missouri's ancient bed—as Botkin puts it, "a young river in an old river's arms."

I was reminded, too, of the unnatural shocks that rivers are heir to—channelization, pesticide runoff, the destruction of wetlands. Even seemingly benign acts, such as the removal of snags and overhanging trees for the benefit of barge traffic, have negative consequences: snags slow the river's flow and create temporary dams, resulting in more-varied habitat, and the leaves of bankside trees feed insects, which in turn are fed on by fish. Between 1940 and 1983 the Missouri's commercial yield of catfish declined more than 60 percent. In this example and others, the author's subtext is the interconnected-ness of a river and the land through which it flows: they are all part of an organic whole. As he observes, "the river farms the land. It deposits fresh soil in some places, and there trees and prairie grow. Elsewhere the river undercuts and harvests. The prairie feeds the river, but the river harvests the prairie, it harvests the floodplain forests."

The author's subtext is the interconnectedness of a river and the land through which it flows.

Throughout his environmental musings Botkin doesn't forget the first—and in many ways still the best—chroniclers of this landscape. He finds that he can learn much about the natural history of the American West through a combination of reading the Captains' journals and reading the landscape itself: "The journals were more than the interesting history of an adventure. They provided an accurate account of the landscape and its plants and animals almost two hundred years ago, a description difficult to obtain elsewhere because few made such careful notes as Lewis and Clark."

—J. I. Merritt

A selection from Passage of Discovery *titled "What Happens When We Stop a River's Meandering" appeared in the August 1999* WPO.

Drawings by Garry Pound of buffalo sightings and catfish (top) from *Passage of Discovery*.

A fictional tale of the Deep South

The Meriwether Lewis Murder

Malcolm Shuman

Avon Books

262 pages

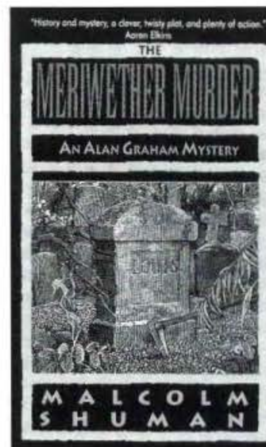
$5.99 paperback

What if Lewis didn't die, but escaped a murder attempt and lived until the 1860s on a Louisiana plantation, an amnesiac recalling only fragments of his former life?

Recent years have witnessed an increasing interest in Lewis and Clark, the Corps of Discovery, and facets of their story in various media. Books, articles, film, television, music, and even cartoons have all focused on this most famous exploring venture in American history and the people who accomplished it. Books about Lewis and Clark have not focused solely on the historical aspects of the expedition. Two recent ones deal with the death of Meriwether Lewis. Ron Burns's *The Mysterious Death of Meriwether Lewis* (WPO, August 1994) was a mystery and made no pretensions to being factual. Another, David Chandler's *The Jefferson Conspiracies* (WPO, August 1995), masqueraded as fact and investigative reporting but in reality was an error-riddled, tabloid-style denunciation of Thomas Jefferson and other leaders of the period.

The most recent author to take up the "what if" possibilities of Lewis's death along the Natchez Trace in 1809 is Malcolm Shuman. What if Lewis did not really die? What if he escaped a murder attempt and lived until the 1860s on a Louisiana plantation; an amnesiac who only remembered fragments of his former life?

Using the character of Alan Graham, an archaeologist with a nose for murder and sleuthing, Shuman poses that alternative to Lewis's death. The premise is intriguing, and Shuman takes the reader on an enjoyable little read. The story maintains a lively pace and engages the reader's imagination with its plot. Archaeologist Graham, rival archaeologist and girlfriend Pepper Courtney, various co-workers, friends, villains, and characters become involved in a case of historically important journals, forgery, an old plantation, and murder. Was the "Louis" mentioned in the journals of plantation owner John Clay Hardin really the famous Meriwether Lewis? Who will prove he was? Why are people being murdered? Do they know the truth about "Louis," or about the journals? Are the journals authentic or a plant by a talented forger? What about other documents discovered that seem to prove that the famed explorer did indeed reside at Désirée plantation along the Mississippi near Baton Rouge? Shuman answers all these questions in an interesting and plausible fashion.



Criticisms of the book are few. Because it is fiction, believability can be suspended and the imagination allowed to run loose. One does wish Shuman would have been more careful regarding contradictory statements and historical facts. "Louis's" death date changes from July 3, 1863 (page three) to July 10, 1861 (page eighteen). Hardin's journals mysteriously move from Graham's locked desk drawer at work to his study at home (page eighteen). A permanent party of thirty-three journeyed to the Pacific, not forty-seven. Thomas Jefferson was President until March 1809, not 1807. Mistakes such as these do not seriously affect the story Shuman tells, but they are a bit jarring to those who know better and pass along misinformation to those who do not. Characters' relationships sometimes seemed rather contrived or inconsistent. Some of the characters' decisions and actions seem rather illogical and unlikely. If I received major news regarding a murder case that involved both my girlfriend and me, as Graham does, my reaction would be to call her immediately to let her know, not call her that night and ask if she had seen it on the news.

While mistakes and shortcomings such as these limit the book somewhat, it still makes for an interesting read. Shuman gives the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation a prominent thank-you for sending him back issues of *We Proceeded On*. He also thanks authors whose earlier works were helpful to him. It is clear that Shuman has been influenced by the conspiracy theorists and murder adherents. While giving an interesting twist to such theories, he perpetuates the claim that James Wilkinson and James Neelly were villains and Thomas Jefferson chose the politically expedient route of supporting the claim that Lewis committed suicide even though he knew it was not true. No evidence indicates that they were involved in either Lewis's death or a cover-up.

As the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition nears, other books undoubtedly will join *The Meriwether Murder* and its predecessors in speculating about the death of one of history's greatest explorers. It is one of history's controversies and a magnet for conspiracy enthusiasts. Books such as this fill a niche in the history of the expedition and its members, and all in all, reading them is an interesting way to spend a few hours.

— **James J. Holmberg**

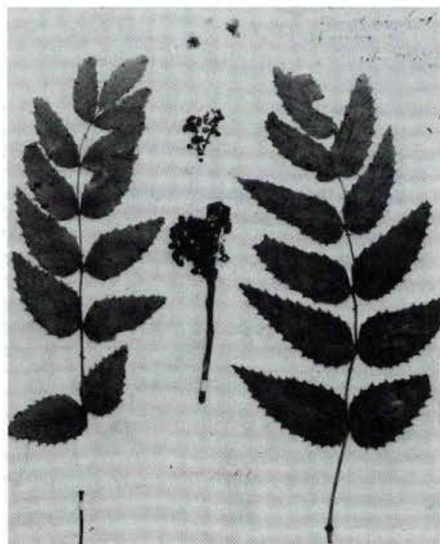
Meriwether Lewis: not a bad botanist

Herbarium Journal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Gary E. Moulton, Ed.
University of Nebraska Press
357 pages
$75 hardcover

This twelfth and final volume of the monumental *Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition* focuses on the plants collected by Meriwether Lewis during the Corps of Discovery's twenty-eight-month odyssey across the continent and back. Lewis, as editor Gary Moulton notes in his succinct and informative introduction, was for practical purposes the Corps's sole botanist—of the 239 Lewis and Clark plant specimens that have survived both the ravages of time and the vagaries of curators often ignorant of or indifferent to their historical value, only one was collected by someone other than Lewis. That was Clark, whose single contribution to what's known as the Lewis and Clark Herbarium was a wildflower that goes by the popular name of snow-on-the-mountain, which he gathered on the Yellowstone River on July 28, 1806, while separated from Lewis.

This handsome volume consists



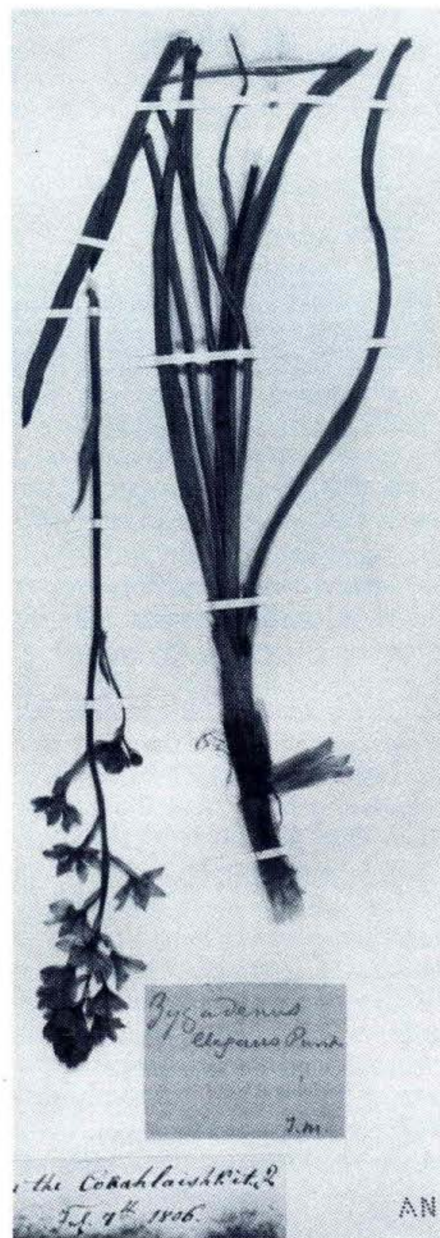
Dull Oregon grape (October 1805)

"Moulton sketches an engaging tale of the Diaspora of Lewis's collection following the expedition's return."

mainly of full-page photographs of dried plants mounted on sheets and representing the 177 distinct species gathered by the Corps of Discovery. Attached to each sheet are labels and notes appended over the years by curators. Eleven sheets include labels in Lewis's hand, cut from his botanical field journals, mainly remarking on when and where he found the specimen. Moulton has done his usual thorough job of scholarly annotation and cross-referencing. Tables he's compiled make it easy, for example, to look up species alphabetically or by the date and place collected.

Lewis's role as the expedition's naturalist came to him—well, naturally. As Moulton observes, he "was blessed with those qualities most important in a naturalist: an unquenchable curiosity, keen observational powers, and a systematic approach to understanding and describing the natural world." His abilities as a botanist were honed by the teachings of three mentors: his mother, Lucy Meriwether, "a recognized herbalist in Albemarle County, Virginia," from whom he leaned about the medicinal qualities of plants; Thomas Jefferson, who for more than fifty years kept a "garden book" detailing his plantings at Monticello; and Benjamin Smith Barton, the leading botanist of his day and one of the Philadelphia *philosophes* who, before Lewis's departure for the West, instructed him on the science he would need to know in the field.

Jefferson, "the American pragmatist," as Moulton calls him, emphasized the practical side of botany. It was the usefulness of plants that interested him most, and Lewis appears to have ab-



White camass (July 7, 1806)

sorbed that viewpoint. Although Lewis left no written record about his criteria for deciding which plants to collect, Moulton deduces that he concentrated on those with potential value as pharmaceuticals or ornamentals.

Moulton sketches an engaging tale of the Diaspora of Lewis's collection following the expedition's return. Part of it wound up in the hands of Frederick Pursh, a German émigré botanist working with Barton in Philadelphia. When Pursh left the United States for England he took many of the

specimens with him. While abroad he wrote and illustrated his *Flora Americae Septentionalis (Flora of North America)*. Published in 1813, this first major survey of the continent's native plants depended crucially on the type specimens collected by Lewis. The plants in Pursh's possession wound up in the hands of gentleman botanist A. B. Lambert. In 1842, after Lambert's death, his collections were auctioned by Sotheby's. An American named Edward Tuckerman purchased one of two lots containing Lewis specimens. The high bidder on the other lot was a London bookseller named William Pamphlin, who passed them on to botanist William Jackson Hooker, who in turn deposited them in the Royal Botanic (Kew) Gardens. Apparently, neither Pamphlin nor Hooker knew (or would have cared) that the lot contained specimens collected on the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Lambert eventually donated his Lewis trove to the Academy of Natural Sciences (ANS) in Philadelphia. Hooker's lot, meanwhile, remained at Kew Gardens; only in the 1950s did an American botanist, Joseph Ewan of Tulane University, discover that it contained Lewis specimens.

Lewis gave some of his plants to the American Philosophical Society, which later placed them on permanent loan with the ANS (which now holds the bulk of the Lewis and Clark Herbarium, 227 sheets; Kew Gardens has 11). The single sheet outside the ANS and Kew Gardens is an errant specimen that wound up in a museum in Charleston, South Carolina; its provenance was uncovered in the 1990s. Other Lewis specimens are still being "discovered" in collections by various scholar-sleuths—among them Gary Moulton. In 1995, while investigating collateral collections at the ANS, he found two. "The connection of the specimens with the expedition was easily apparent: who else was collecting plants on the Columbia River in March 1806 or at the head of Clark's River (now the Bitterroot) in July of the same year?"

—J. I. Merritt

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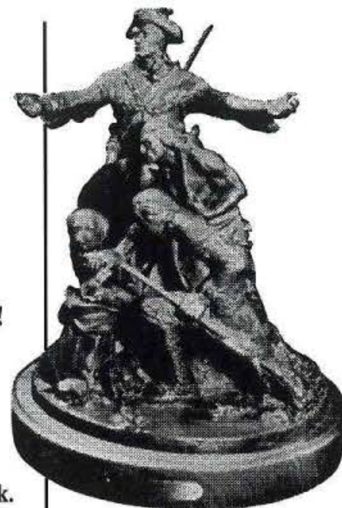

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Chapter News

Thanks to the efforts of the **Ohio River Chapter**, the **Gerald Ford Museum** in Grand Rapids, Michigan, will open a Lewis and Clark exhibit on March 25. It will run through October 29.

•

The **Portage Route Chapter** reports that **Gary Moulton**, editor of the Journals of Lewis and Clark Expedition, will spend five weeks in June and July as scholar-in-residence at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Great Falls, Montana. The chapter has established an endowment fund to sponsor a nationally recognized L&C scholar each summer at the center.

•

In November, **Oregon Chapter** member Roger D. Wendlick visited the gravesite of **Jean Baptiste Charbonneau** (Pompey) in remote Jordan Valley, Oregon. He noted that better signs are needed to direct people to the site. The site also should be cleared of brush, and the turnout for cars needs improving. Wendlick is applying to agencies for funds to develop a rest stop and additional interpretive signage.

•

Last September 26, the **Greater Metro St. Louis Chapter** visited the grave of Pompey's father, **Touissant Charbonneau**, in Richwoods, Missouri.

•

The **Travelers' Rest Chapter** reports that the Travelers' Rest campsite has been designated an official project of **Save America's Treasures**. A joint public-private partnership between the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the White House Millennium Council, the project "works to recognize and rescue the enduring symbols of American tradition that define us as a nation."

•

Through its Adopt-a-School program, the **Minnesota Chapter** is now helping four elementary schools teach youngsters about the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The chapter has aided in the purchase of the *L&C Curriculum Guide* and other educational materials and has donated books to school libraries.

J.I. MERRITT

Lemhi Pass, on the Montana-Idaho border, looking west toward the "immence ranges of high moutains" seen by Meriwether Lewis as he first gazed on the watershed of the Pacific.

Lewis and Clark at the Great Divide

Meriwether Lewis and three other members of the Corps of Discovery (George Drouillard, Hugh McNeal, and John Shields) reached the Continental Divide at Lemhi Pass on August 12, 1805. They were at the western limits of the Louisiana Purchase and were about to leave United States soil.

The small stream they followed on the west slope of the divide is now called Agency Creek, which flows into the Lemhi River, a tributary of the Salmon River. Lewis made no mention of a name for the pass they crossed. The name Lemhi wasn't used 1855, when Mormon settlers moved into the valley. Lemhi is derived from "Limhi," a name found in the Book of Mormon. The Mormons built a fort in the valley which they abandoned in 1858 after an Indian attack.

Lemhi Pass was part of a major trail used by the Shoshonis. It was later part of a stagecoach route between Red Rock, Montana, and Salmon, Idaho. Lemhi Pass is a National Historic Landmark and the location of Sacagawea Memorial Park.

—Charles Cook
President, Camp Fortunate Chapter

Lemhi Pass is just one of the spots to be visited during the Foundation's annual meeting in Dillon, Montana, August 13-16. To register, contact the Foundation at P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403 (888-701-3434).

From the Archivist

Goals set for 2000

The Archives Library Committee has set its course for this year. Committee members include Jane Weber, Ella Mae Howard, and Don Nell from Montana; Doug Erickson and Kelly Janes from Oregon, Bob Moore from Missouri, and Jane Henley from Virginia. As archivist, Julianne Ruby serves as an ex-officio member of the committee.

The committee has finalized its mission statement and goals for the year. The mission of the Archives Committee is to *provide direction on the acquisition and management of archival materials for the Lewis and Clark Trail*

Heritage Foundation. The committee has held teleconference meetings every two months to develop the year's goals and assign tasks. Following are the major goals set for 2000:

- Finalize the Collections and Use Policy Handbook.
- Identify items needed in the collection and develop a plan to acquire them.
- Identify inappropriate items and develop a plan to deaccession them.
- Develop information for the Foundation's Web page.
- Prepare quarterly WPO articles to update membership.
- Establish a Friends of the Library organization.
- Support the Scholar in Residence Program.
- Continue to catalogue slides, books, photographs, professional papers, and related articles on Lewis and Clark.
- Prepare for the future by anticipating personnel and equipment needs for the library.

An important goal is to keep the Foundation membership informed of the accomplishments and activities of this committee. The list of goals is a healthy workload, but essential if the library is to establish itself as a national resource on Lewis and Clark and related subjects. Future information in WPO will include an update on the committee's progress.

For members traveling to Great Falls, Montana, our summer hours are 1 to 5 P.M. Tuesday through Saturday. Winter months, the library is only open to the public on Wednesday and Saturday. The library can be opened for members by appointment.

The library collection is dynamic, thanks to donations made by our members and collectors who are devoted to engaging others in the excitement of a scholarly journey. For more information about the library or the committee's work, contact Jane Weber, chairman, at 406-727-8733, or Julianne Ruby, archivist, at 406-761-3950 ((library@lewisandclark.org); or write to the Foundation offices.

—Julianne Ruby
Archivist, LCTHF

Robert Weir's L&C collectibles on display

Traveling to Dillon, Montana, this August to attend the Foundation's annual meeting? Consider extending your stay to include a side trip to Great Falls for a special evening at the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center on Friday, August 18.

In preparation for the bicentennial commemoration of the explorers' journey, the center is hosting a reception, lecture, and viewing of *Montanans Honor Lewis and Clark: Memorabilia of the Robert Weir Collection.* This display of collectibles provides a glimpse into how Americans celebrated the 100th and 150th anniversaries of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

The exhibit showcases a lifetime passion of Robert Weir, chairman of the Foundation's Bicentennial Committee and professor of education at the University of Scranton, in Pennsylvania. A scholar of the expedition, Dr. Weir has amassed a large selection of memorabilia from the 1904-05 Lewis and Clark Centennial and some interesting objects from the 1950s. Many pieces are from the Centennial Exhibit, held in Portland, Oregon, at the turn of the century. Collectibles range from commemorative photo albums, paperweights, coins, and spoons to souvenir coffee mugs and pennants. Dr. Weir's exhibit premiered for a brief showing at the University of Scranton last spring; the showing at the Great Falls interpretive center marks its first traveling venue.

The evening's events will culminate with two scholarly presentations by Dr. Weir and David Walter. Dr. Weir will explore "Memorabilia of Lewis and Clark: Our Continuing Fascination with Epic Tales," a retrospective on the expedition and its significance to all cultures. David Walter, librarian at the Montana Historical Society, will present "Montanans Commemorating Lewis and Clark: Two Centuries of Societal Change."

We invite all members of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation to attend this private celebration. Please RSVP us at 406-761-3950 (library @lewisandclark.org).

—Julianne Ruby
Archivist, LCTHF

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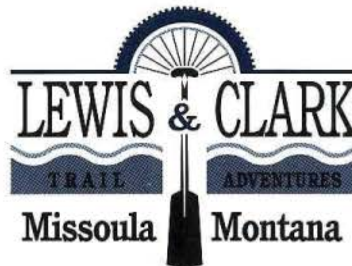

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Catalogs available upon request

The Mythic Lewis and Clark

Soundings continued from page 36

telecast in 1988. Filmmaker George Lucas credited Campbell's writings about the place of myth in society as the inspiration for his *Star Wars* saga (the closest thing we have in the United States to a late twentieth-century myth). Campbell revived scholarly interest in myths and argued that we need them to survive.[1]

Although the Captains are historical figures whose story is documented by their journals, one can argue that much of their story's appeal springs from its mythic elements. These include Lewis as flawed hero, like Jason and Ulysses.

L&C as hero tale

The Lewis and Clark story falls into a subcategory of myth, that of the "hero tale." In contrast to myths, hero tales are narratives that are longer and more complex in their structure. Campbell developed a theory that nearly all hero tales, from all periods of time and all cultures, conform to a pattern. To describe this phenomenon, he adopted a term from James Joyce and dubbed his hero-myth pattern the "monomyth." As Campbell described the monomyth,

> The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: separation-initiation-return.... A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.[2]

In his book *Joseph Campbell: An Introduction*, Robert A. Segal explained that Campbell tried to show that the uniform meaning of all hero myths is at once psychological and metaphysical: hero myths describe not the outward, physical adventures of legendary or historical figures but the inward, mental adventures of adherents to the myths. Rather than the discovery of a lost continent by some famous figure, a hero myth describes the rediscovery of a lost part both of the human personality and the cosmos.[3]

Campbell stated that heroism has two facets—a hero does what no one else can do or dares to do, and he does it for the good of others rather than for self-aggrandizement.[4] Further, the hero, in exploring a strange new world of reality, finds another strange world within his own mind, leading to an understanding of his true identity. The hero's discovery of another reality offers a model for others to emulate. Campbell explained that "within each person there is what Jung called a collective unconscious . . . . We penetrate to this level by getting in touch with dreams, fantasies, and traditional myths; by using active imagination."[5]

Although the Captains are historical figures whose story is documented by their extensive journals, one can argue that much of their story's appeal springs from its mythic elements. These include Lewis as flawed hero (like Jason or Ulysses), the extraordinary luck of the explorers in finding native peoples to help them, the incredible coincidence of Cameahwait's sibling relationship to Sacagawea, the death of just one member of the crew, and the heroism of individuals. In the mythic version of the tale, the characters become less complex and more representative of types: Charbonneau and Cruzatte offer comic relief, Drouillard is the man of the wilderness, the Field brothers represent hunting and athletic prowess, and Sacagawea and her baby recall the homes and hearths left behind.

The real-life story of the Corps of Discovery parallels famous myths and hero tales, and I believe this is the root of its popularity. Like other myths, the Lewis and Clark saga defines us as a people. It's a tale of courage, tenacity, expansiveness, cultural chauvinism, pioneer spirit, curiosity, and a willingness to aspire to lofty goals—all qualities pervading the American character. Our story is their story, and whatever our backgrounds, most of us can relate to one or more of the expedition members. In addition to Anglo-Americans like Lewis and Clark, the Corps of Discovery included an immigrant (John Potts), a child (Pomp), a Native American (Sacagawea), mixed bloods (Drouillard, Labiche, and Cruzatte), and an African-American (York).

There is more to the mythic Lewis and Clark. Joseph Campbell hoped to show that people, whatever their cultures or religions, are not that different from each other—that all human beings, by examining their similar myths and hero tales, can find a common humanity. Myths can, he believed, take us back to those primitive campfires shared by our ancestors as they defined their place in the universe.[6]

We need to keep all this in mind as we look forward to the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The power of myth can bring people together in a spirit of reconciliation. And the "myth" of Lewis and Clark can promote an understanding by Americans of their own culture, while helping others to understand us.

Bob Moore is the historian at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, in St. Louis.

NOTES

[1]See Joseph Campbell with Bill Moyers, *The Power of Myth* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), pp. 8-9 and 95.

[2]Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (New York: Pantheon, 1949), p. 30.

[3]Robert A. Segal, *Joseph Campbell: An Introduction* (New York: Mentor/Penguin, 1990), p. 27.

[4]*Hero*, pp. 30-3 1.

[5]Joseph Campbell, interview with Sam Keen in *Voices and Visions* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p. 73.

[6]*Hero*, pp. viii, 4, and 121.

The Mythic Lewis and Clark

Their story helps define us as a nation — and connect us to cultures around the world

By Bob Moore

Jason and the Argonauts — parallels with the Corps of Discovery?

FROM THE VOYAGE OF THE ARGONAUTS, BY JANET RUTH BACON (METHUEN, 1925)

Once upon a time, a young man was sent away to be educated by a wise sage. After the completion of his education, he was given a perilous and seemingly impossible mission to perform. He gathered around him the bravest and the best men in the land, and ordered a special vessel to be built to carry them on their quest. On their journey, the small band of heroes faced many fearsome creatures that had to be defeated, met people of new and unimagined cultures, and in the end brought back the information and the objects they were sent to find. The young leader of the mission was received with joyous acclaim by his people upon his return, but within a few short years he died, either by his own hand or by murder.

Obviously, readers can understand this to be the story of Meriwether Lewis and the expedition he led into the American West in 1804-06. In this bare-bones version of the tale, the wise sage is President Jefferson, the special vessel the keelboat built near Pittsburgh, the impossible tasks the record of scientific knowledge and the act of crossing a continent, the fearsome creature the grizzly bear, the new cultures those of Native Americans. However, this same description also relates the story of Jason, the famous Greek hero of myth and legend. Jason was educated by the centaur Chiron, sent to find the Golden Fleece in his special ship, the *Argus*, fought creatures like the Cyclops, and later died by his own hand of grief after his wife, Medea, killed their children in a fit of jealous rage.

Although not exact in all its particulars, the story of Jason and the Argonauts closely resembles that of Lewis and Clark. Is this a coincidence? Certainly. Although there may have been a historical person named Jason, his story is in the realm of what are popularly called myths. As we know, Lewis and Clark documented their activities in a painstaking fashion, and their journals survive, acquainting us with the historical occurrences of their journey. Although Lewis and Clark are real figures on a historical quest, an argument could be made that much of the appeal of their story springs from its mythic elements.

Similarities to the Lewis and Clark story can be found in portions of other hero tales from world cultures, including Yudhishtira (India), Gilgamesh (Mesopotamia), Yuriwaka (Japan), Tokahe (Lakota), Parsifal and the Holy Grail (Germany), the Hero Twins (Maya), the Brave Quest (Blackfeet), Maui (Polynesia), Mary Bryant (Australia), Kupe (Maori), and Sadko (Russia). Parts of the stories of Leif Eriksson, El Dorado, and the Fountain of Youth also parallel those of Lewis and Clark.

Myths are the world's oldest form of literature. They go back to man's beginnings and attempt to answer in story form our basic questions about life and nature: How was the world created, who are we as human beings, who or what is God, why do humans experience beauty, ugliness, love, hatred, birth and death? For thousands of years, myths were told and retold around firepits and hearths. They were a culture's entertainment and its link to its place in the cosmos.

With numerous retellings, myths and hero tales become streamlined, fast-paced stories that tell us much about a culture. For instance, the Arthurian legends of Great Britain are about much more than a king, a magic sword, a doddering wizard, an unfaithful queen, and the betrayal of a friend. They are about Britain itself, and each character represents a facet of the British national character, the relation of the people to their land, and the transition from the era of pagan magic and living within nature to a new era of science, learning, and Christianity, wherein people live on the land and put the land to the use of mankind.

The theories of Joseph Campbell (1904-1987), the famous student and teacher of myths, can tell us much about the mythic elements of Lewis and Clark. Campbell became exceedingly popular during the 1960s, and gained even greater fame as the result of a six-hour Public Broadcasting Service series with journalist Bill Moyers called *The Power of Myth*,

Soundings continues on page 35

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