



The Official Publication of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. May 2000 Volume 26, No. 2



## The Mystery of Clark's Nightingale

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*A quest for a bird  
offers a lesson in  
reading the Journals*

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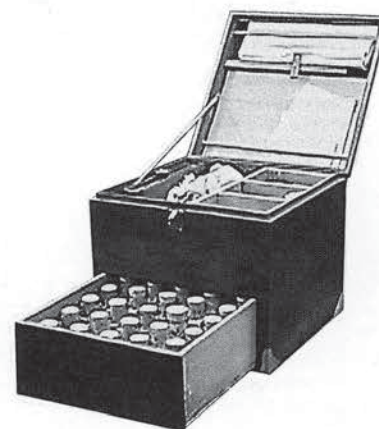
By Dan Slosberg

## On the cover

John James Audubon's rendering of the chuck-will's-widow, an elusive dusk-feeding bird in the nightjar family, is writer James Wallace's choice for the avian singer heard by William Clark when the Corps of Discovery camped near the site of future Jefferson City, Missouri, on June 3, 1804. For more on Wallace's quest for the mystery bird and the creek named for it, see his story beginning on page 18. The 1829 hand-colored engraving by Robert Havell is a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Walter B. James to the National Gallery of Art. Photographed by Ricardo Blanc and used by permission (© 2000).



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## Letters

# Reconsidering Charbonneau

I was interested in Rita Cleary's article "Charbonneau Reconsidered" in the February WPO. It has always mystified me why so many writers gave Charbonneau such a bum rap. I find it hard to believe that such a good-for-nothing (as he is often depicted) could have survived into his 80's on the harsh frontier. Cleary is probably right in her view that cultural attitudes have colored our impression of Charbonneau. I suspect that similar mind-sets were at work in creating romanticized views of Sacagawea which overstate her role in the expedition.

Another good source on Charbonneau is an article by Dennis R. Ottoson in the Spring 1976 issue (Vol. 6, No. 2) of *South Dakota History*. Ottoson covers much the same ground as Cleary, but in more detail.

Thanks for helping set the record straight on "a common and durable man."

PHIL SCRIVER  
*Great Falls, Mont.*

### Seaman's fate

I enjoyed James Holmberg's article "Seaman's Fate?" in the February issue. I can think of two reasons for suspecting that Seaman was left with Gass's party at the Great Falls on the return journey. On the way up the Missouri in 1805, Lewis wrote that he began leaving Seaman in the boats when he (Lewis) walked on shore because the prickly pear cactus hurt the dog's feet. While planning his exploration of the Marias, wouldn't Lewis have anticipated traveling through a lot of cactus? Also, when the explorers camped at the Great Falls in the summer of 1805, Lewis wrote that they would not have gotten much sleep at night had it not been for Seaman's guarding the camp against grizzly bears. I think Lewis would have left Seaman with Gass at the Great Falls so the dog could chase away bears.

The possibility that Seaman may have been at Grinder's Stand when Lewis died leads to speculation. If the dog was in the



cabin with Lewis, would his master have been so deranged that he would have shot himself in front of his pet? And if someone attacked Lewis, wouldn't the dog have barked and tried to stop the attacker? It's possible this happened and that because of Seaman's efforts the attacker fired inaccurately, inflicting a wound that caused a lingering death. Or maybe the dog was sleeping with the servants in the barn when Lewis was shot. If Seaman was at Grinder's Stand at all, why didn't any of the witnesses to Lewis's injuries comment about his presence?

The story about Seaman lying down on the grave sounds awfully like romantic fiction. At Fort Benton, Montana, there's a statue by sculptor Robert Scriver of a dog that followed his master's coffin to the train station, then remained there for years awaiting his master's return. As a dog person I want to believe any wonderful dog story. But I hate to imagine the possibility that Seaman was in the cabin to see Lewis shoot himself. I prefer to think that when Lewis departed for Washington he left Seaman with Clark in St. Louis and that Clark later sent the dog's collar to the Masonic lodge in Alexandria, Virginia, after Seaman died peacefully of old age.

DEAN NORMAN  
*Cleveland, Ohio*

### Fiction reviews

As a member of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and therefore a financial contributor to *We Proceeded On*, I object to WPO's publishing reviews of works of fiction. Reviewing *The Meriwether Lewis Murder* in the February issue, James Holmberg states his opinion that "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." I disagree.

The expedition itself, the events that led up to it, and the known events that followed it, are what WPO should focus on. The story of the Lewis and Clark adventure is fascinating enough without having to spice it up with fiction. There is all too much misinformation being published today by writers who want to

jump on the Lewis and Clark bandwagon to make a fast buck. That kind of junk belongs in pulp magazines, not in *We Proceeded On*. If we want to educate the public, then let us do so with facts, not someone's weird assumptions.

JOHN L. STONER  
*Townsend, Mont.*

### Sacagawea golden dollar

The U.S. Mint calls the new Sacagawea dollar coin "the Golden Dollar." It is golden in color and one of the most beautiful coins ever minted. It also presents a golden opportunity to members of the LCTHF to stimulate nationwide interest in the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

All of us can work locally to call attention to the Sacagawea dollar and the Lewis and Clark story by taking part in a grassroots effort to promote the coin. Charles Cook, the president of the Foundation's Camp Fortunate Chapter, asked the commissioners of Beaverhead County, Montana, to pass a resolution declaring their county a Sacagawea Dollar Coin County—and they did! Other people are asking their legislatures to declare themselves Sacagawea Dollar Coin States. Schools have joined the Honor Roll of Sacagawea Dollar Coin Schools.

Every organization that associates itself with the Sacagawea dollar encourages its use in daily life, cutting down on the millions it costs each year to replace worn-out paper bills. It will save vending-machine companies over \$100 million a year and will work in the subways of all major U.S. cities. Blind people will recognize it by touch. It honors Sacagawea, a key member of the Corps of Discovery, and by extension all Native Americans and their contributions to our country.

I can supply a sample county resolution and information on the Honor Roll of Sacagawea Dollar Coin Schools (POB 2863, Jackson, WY 83001-2863; 1-800-525-7344; kenthomasma@blissnet.com). More information on the Sacagawea dollar can be found on the U.S. Mint's Web page ([www.usmint.gov](http://www.usmint.gov)).

KENNETH THOMASMA  
*Jackson, Wyo.*

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

## From the Directors

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### Partnering into the future

Now that we have passed the half-way mark of our Foundation year, it's an appropriate time to take our "institutional pulse" and evaluate where we are headed as an organization. I would like to share with you some of the significant issues the board and leadership have identified as important to the Foundation's viability as we chart a course for the future.

We view organizational and strategic issues as a continuum, all of them linked in one way or another and part of the Executive Team's responsibilities. Grappling with these issues often demands a great deal of soul-searching and debate. What is the most important thing we can do for you, our members, within the context of our mission statement, and what is our most pressing need? As an organization should we stay small, or should we aggressively recruit thousands of others to join our Lewis and Clark family? What do we want the Foundation to look like when the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial draws to a close in 2006, and what do we want it to become as we proceed on, deeper into the new century? How can we broaden our representation to better reflect our nation's diversity?

Because we do not make our decisions in a vacuum, we need to ask how our partners can help us set this course. As a board we believe that our relationships with the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council, government agencies, and sovereign tribal nations are critical to the health and viability of our organization. Additionally, the kinds of projects we choose to support, such as a conclave of sovereign nations associated with Lewis and Clark and a proposed documentary on York, help to define our organizational future.

The team efforts of our leadership contribute to this definition as well. This year, for example, members of the archives committee have been active developing a professional research library at the interpretive center in Great

Falls. They have established library-use policies, catalogued collections with the Library of Congress, formed a new Friends of the Library group, and will soon hire a full-time professional librarian. Their efforts speak to our commitment to the protection of this important physical and educational asset.

Another critical extension of our organizational mission relates to trail stewardship. The recent designation of the route followed by the Corps of Discovery as a National Millennium Trail encourages partnerships between the public and private sectors to protect the trail, and as part of that continuing effort we are partnering with the National Geographic Society (we will report further on this development in a future issue of WPO). The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail needs our help as increasing numbers of visitors threaten its fragile ecosystems and its neighboring tribal and ranching cultures. Successful stewardship—that which ensures the sustainable use of the trail for future generations—is paramount to a successful celebration of the bicentennial. It is also a profound responsibility, for if we lose the physical component of the Lewis and Clark experience we lose the interpretation of the Lewis and Clark story.

Linking these pieces together results in an organizational matrix of daunting complexity. Making it work requires sophistication and political and historical sensitivities few could have envisioned back in 1978, when the Lewis and Clark Trail became part of the national system of historic trails and our Foundation, incorporated nine years earlier, became its primary steward. Your board voluntarily grapples with these issues on a regular basis. It is a lot of work that is occasionally frustrating but also a great deal of fun, and deeply satisfying.

We'd like to hear from you.

—**Cynthia Orlando**  
*President, LCTHF*

## Moving from vision to reality

The work of the National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council continues to shift from the “vision” to the “reality” of the upcoming commemoration. New partnerships continue to be forged. New initiatives have been undertaken. The enormous task of taking the bicentennial to the corporate community for sponsorship support has begun. What has been a dream for the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation for a decade or more is now being fulfilled, and we’re still three years away from the launch at Monticello!

We are thrilled to announce that board member Allen Pinkham, who has served as our tribal officer, has now been selected at the tribal liaison for the Council, an official position funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Allen, who will continue to serve on our board, will now work full time with the 52 “Lewis and Clark” tribes, both on and off the trail. His primary task will be to ensure that as many tribes as possible participate in both the commemorative planning and benefits of the bicentennial.

We have been blessed with three energetic new board members this past year. Landon Jones, the vice president for strategic planning at Time Inc. and a long-time Foundation member, joined us several months ago. Most recently, Amy Mossett, an educator and enrolled member of the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation, and Jack Mountcastle, the director of tourism development at the Virginia Tourism Corporation, have come on board. Amy is a nationally recognized authority on the life of Sacagawea. Jack’s “eastern” connections will be of great value to the Council.

The Council leadership has been spending a lot of time in Washington, D.C., in recent months, culminating on March 2 with the delivery of more than 300 potential Lewis and Clark Bicentennial projects to the joint House and

Senate Lewis and Clark caucuses. The Council served as facilitator for a morning session of the group, which included co-chairs Senator Byron Dorgan of North Dakota and Rep. Doug Bereuter of Nebraska.

The inventory of projects, from almost every state along the trail and 16 tribes, was requested by Congress, and the Council directed its development and delivery. This is the best example yet of the unique and vital role that the Council plays in bicentennial planning—serving as the conduit between the federal government and the states, tribes, and private sector. It is a responsibility we take seriously.

There is so much more going on than this column space will allow. Check the August WPO for a report on our annual planning workshop, held in Kansas City in late April. Stay tuned as the adventure continues!

—David Borlaug  
Michelle Bussard

## Dillon meeting update

Plans are moving ahead for the annual meeting of the LCTHF, to be held in Dillon, Montana, in August. Here is a tentative and still incomplete schedule. To register, contact the Foundation at P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403 (888-701-3434).

### Friday, August 11

Bicentennial Committee meeting, Main Hall, Western Montana College (WMC).

### Saturday, August 12

Directors meeting, Main Hall. Early registration, Matthews Hall. Reception.

### Sunday, August 13

10 A.M.–6 P.M.: Registration; living-history re-enactment, Clark Canyon Reservoir (21 miles south of Dillon on I-15, private transportation). Di-

rectors meeting, Main Hall. Vendors fair, Matthews Hall.

1:15–3 P.M.: Flag ceremony, introductions, general meeting and awards, WMC auditorium.

3–4:30 P.M.: Panel tribute to Donald Jackson, John Logan Allen, Gary Moulton, Dayton Duncan, and James Ronda.

6:00 P.M.: Load buses for pitchfork fondue at Rattlesnake Cliffs.

### Monday, August 14

6–8 A.M.: breakfast, WMC dining room.

7 A.M.: Load buses for field trip A to Lemhi Pass, lunch at Salmon, Idaho, Lost Trail Pass, dinner and mountaineer encampment in Jackson, Montana. This trip returns to Dillon at approximately 9 P.M. after covering about 220 miles of the Lewis and Clark Trail. The tour will be accompanied by Wilmer Rigby and Hadley Roberts.

8 A.M.: Load buses for field trip B to Twin Bridges, Beaverhead Rock, Clark’s Lookout, Lewis and Clark Diorama, lunch, and on to Camp Fortunate for a presentation by Dayton Duncan. Return to Dillon for dinner and entertainment by the Dillon Junior Fiddlers.

### Tuesday, August 15

Same tours as Monday, but with Monday’s Group A taking trip B and Monday’s Group B taking trip A.

### Wednesday, August 16

Various meetings and presentations by Barry Gough, Ron Loge and Gary Lentz, Allen Pinkham and Harvey Gibson, Joe Mussulman, and Hal Stearns, Jr. 7:30 P.M.: Banquet (Albert Furtwangler, speaker).

### Thursday and Friday, August 17–18

Post-convention tours of Bannack, Nevada City, and Virginia City.

NOTE: Due to the logistics of Monday’s and Tuesday’s field trips, the meeting’s organizers can accommodate only five buses, with a total capacity of 470. The **Children’s Camp** is a reduced-rate alternative for participants bringing their kids. For more information, contact Charles Cook (406-683-2750). ■

# CORPS OF DISCOVERY GRAVESITES

Only 12 are known for sure — let's find the others!

by Bob Moore



Many years ago, I worked my way through college in an enjoyable job as the caretaker of a cemetery in upstate New York. Ever since those long, languid summers of mowing, pruning, and trimming the landscaped lawns and groves, I've been interested in cemeteries and their histories. Markers denoting military service particularly move me. The cemetery where I worked held the remains of veterans of the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and nearly every other conflict our nation has endured.

As a professional historian, I am intrigued by the notion of using cemeteries for educational purposes. Most carved headstones include the names of the deceased and their dates of birth and death, but nothing about lifetime accomplishments. If the deceased was a veteran, however, we often know it by flags placed on the grave. The Grand Army of the Republic, a veterans organization of the Civil War, may have started this practice with simple cast-iron flag holders, imprinted with the initials G.A.R., that were planted in front of the headstones of Union veterans. Later, the Daughters of the American Revolution created flag holders bearing a special logo and words identifying the graves of patriots who had fought in the War for Independence. Other veterans

organizations followed suit, marking the graves of Confederate veterans and of those who served in the World Wars and Korea. On Memorial Day each year across the country, tens of thousands of little American flags fly from these holders, identifying those men and women who placed themselves in danger so that our nation might live.

The members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition should be similarly honored for their great journey of exploration. Although 33 people went to the Pacific and back, the expedition numbered 59 if one includes in the count engagés, interpreters, and soldiers who never got farther than the Mandan villages.<sup>1</sup> Yet the resting places of only 12 members have been unequivocally identified, and not all of these are marked, even with headstones.<sup>2</sup> With the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial approaching, it would be wonderful to see a special effort made to locate as many of the other gravesites as possible and to mark them in an appropriate way. To do so would honor the deceased, of course, but it would also educate present and future generations about the Corps of Discovery and what it accomplished for the nation.

Following is a brief summary of the 12 known Corps of Discovery gravesites and two that are disputed:<sup>3</sup>



TOM WILLIAMS

*William Bratton*



MIKE VENSO

*Pompey*



BOB MOORE

*William Clark*



DAVID JACKSON

*Charles Floyd*

### **William Bratton**

Born in 1778 in Augusta County, Virginia, Bratton served the expedition as a gunsmith, blacksmith, and hunter. He married Mary Maxwell when he was 41 years old, and the couple had eight sons and two daughters. Bratton died on November 11, 1841, at age 63, and lies buried in the Pioneer Cemetery, in Waynetown, Indiana. The grave is marked with a monument that reads, “Went with Lewis and Clark in 1804 to the Rocky Mountains.”<sup>4</sup>

### **Jean Baptiste Charbonneau (“Pompey”)**

Born to Sacagawea on February 11, 1805, two months before the expedition’s departure from the Mandan villages, Pompey in adult life became a fur trader, guide, and miner. He died of pneumonia at Inskip Station, Oregon, on May 16, 1866, while en route to gold fields in Montana. He is buried in Danner, Oregon, three miles north of Interstate 95.

### **William Clark**

Born in 1770 in Caroline County, Virginia, Clark finished out his long and productive life in St. Louis. In January 1808, a year and three months after the expedition’s return, the 38-year-old explorer married 16-year-old Julia Hancock, with whom he had five children. In 1813, he was appointed the first governor of the newly created Missouri Territory, and was re-appointed three times, until Missouri achieved statehood in 1821. Julia Hancock Clark died in 1820, and in November 1821 Clark married Harriet Kennerly

Radford, a widow who was also a cousin of his first wife. His most important post-expedition service was his long tenure as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the West. He died after a brief illness on September 1, 1838, at age 68, in the St. Louis home of his son Meriwether Lewis Clark; today, the site is noted with a plaque within a commercial building at 200 North Broadway.

After a grand funeral procession that stretched over a mile, Clark was buried with Masonic and military honors outside the city, on the farm of a nephew, Colonel John O’Fallon. In the 1850s, his body was moved to the new Bellefontaine Cemetery, on the north side of the city. A son by Clark’s second wife, Jefferson Kearny Clark, bequeathed money for a monument over the grave, an obelisk erected in 1904.<sup>5</sup>

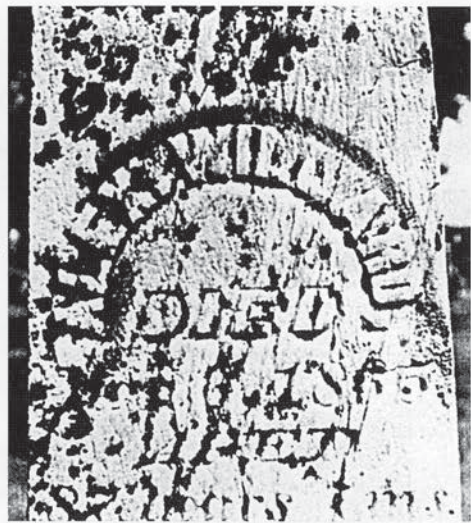
### **John Colter**

The man who is credited with being the first European-American to see the thermal wonders of what is now Yellowstone National Park was probably born in 1774 or 1775 in Staunton, Virginia. Older biographies, including that of Burton Harris, state that Colter died of jaundice in 1813 and was buried near Dundee, Missouri, at a place later pierced by a railroad tunnel and called Tunnel Hill. A descendant, the late Ruth Colter Frick, found evidence indicating that he died on May 7, 1812, and was buried near New Haven, Missouri, on private land.

A group calling itself the Tavern Bluff Party marked



*Meriwether Lewis*



*Alexander Willard*



*Toussaint Charbonneau (disputed)*

the New Haven site of Colter's grave in 1988 with a stone that mentions his service with Nathan Boone's Rangers in the War of 1812 but says nothing about his deeds with the Corps of Discovery or his adventures as a fur trapper following the expedition.<sup>6</sup>

### **Charles Floyd**

The only man to die on the expedition, Floyd succumbed from what was probably sepsis resulting from a burst appendix on August 20, 1804, as the Corps was proceeding up the Missouri.

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, in about 1782, Sergeant Floyd was just 21 years old at the time of his death, which occurred somewhere along the river below the future site of Sioux City, Iowa—either near today's Sergeant Bluff, Iowa, or on the opposite bank, in Nebraska. The Captains took his body up the river to the next area of high bluffs, in what is now within the city limits of Sioux City, and erected a cedar post over the grave with Floyd's name carved on it. In 1806, on their return down the Missouri, the explorers noted that the grave had been disturbed (by Indians, they thought, although the digging had probably been done by animals). They reinterred the remains.

"Floyd's Bluff" became a river landmark, but by 1857 the Missouri began to undermine it, and some of Floyd's remains were lost. Local residents rescued what they could and reburied the bones 600 feet southeast of the original site, marking them with wooden head and foot boards.

In 1895, following publication of the recently discovered journal kept by Floyd, his remains were relocated—after some effort, for the 1857 markers had disappeared—and interred for a fourth time. A 100-foot-tall obelisk was erected over the grave in 1901. (Floyd, who traveled the shortest distance of any member of the Corps of Discovery, is honored with the largest monument.) In 1960 the site was designated a National Historic Landmark.<sup>7</sup>

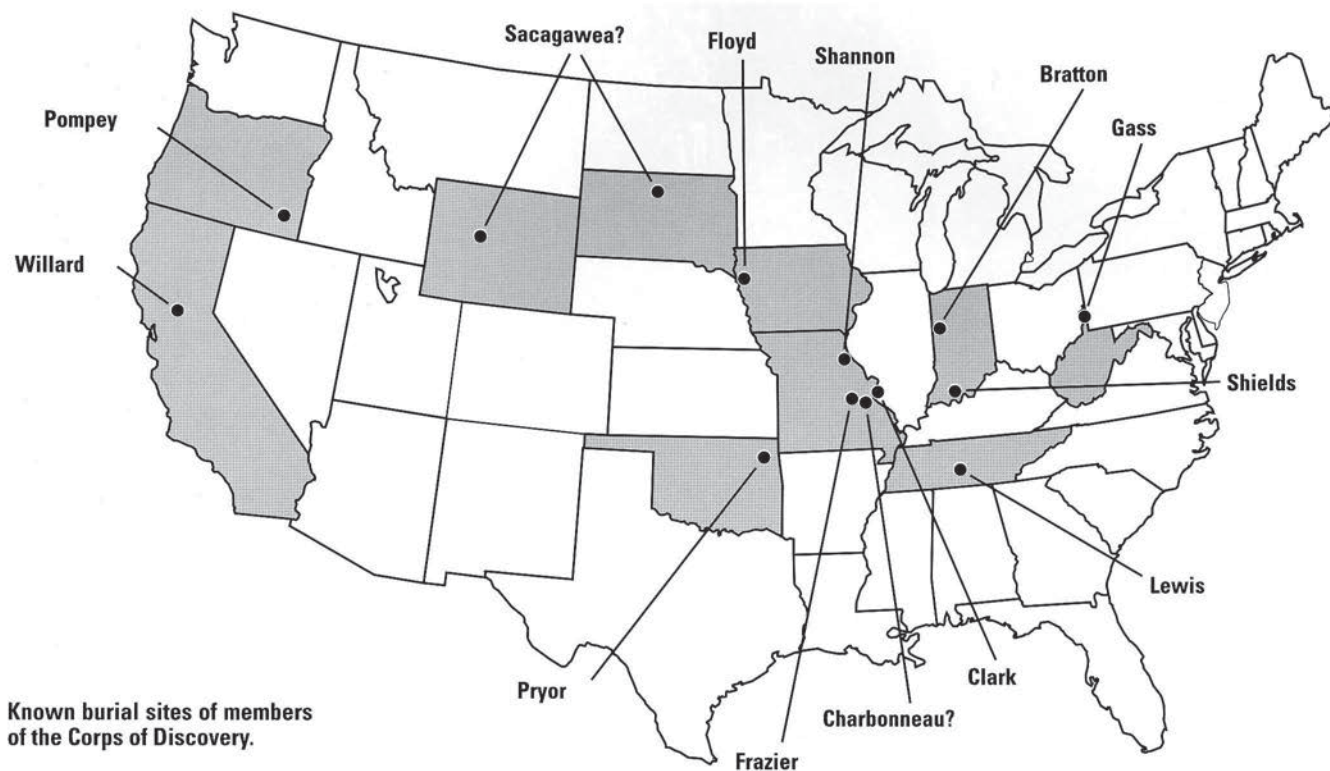
### **Robert Frazier**

A transfer to the expedition from an unknown Army unit, Frazier was born in Augusta County, Virginia. After the expedition's return he lived in the St. Louis area until 1815. He died in Franklin County, Missouri, in 1837, and is buried in a family plot near Washington, Missouri. His grave is unmarked.

### **Patrick Gass**

One of the oldest members of the expedition and the last to die, Gass is buried in Brooke Cemetery, in Wellsburg, West Virginia. He was born in 1771 in Pennsylvania, became a carpenter, and enlisted in the Army in 1799. He was a private in the First Infantry when he joined the expedition at Fort Kaskaskia, Illinois. Upon the death of Charles Floyd, Gass was elected one of the Corps's sergeants. After the expedition, he continued in the Army and lost an eye in the War of 1812. He married at age 60 and was nearly 100 when he died, in 1870. His grave is marked with a granite headstone.<sup>8</sup>





### Meriwether Lewis

Born on August 18, 1774, on the family plantation called Locust Hill, in Albemarle County, Virginia, Lewis died at age 35 on October 11, 1809, in a lonely cabin along the Natchez Trace, where he had stopped while en route from St. Louis to Washington, D.C. To this day it is not completely certain what happened. It is known that Lewis died of two gunshot wounds, one to the head, the other to the chest. Most historians believe he committed suicide due to depression exacerbated by problems in his career and personal life, although a few argue that he was murdered, perhaps by his political enemies.

The explorer was buried not far from where he died, and today a memorial along the Natchez Trace National Historic Trail near Hohenwald, Tennessee, pays tribute to the co-leader of the Corps of Discovery.<sup>9</sup>

### Nathaniel Hale Pryor

Born in Virginia, probably in 1772, Pryor was recruited by Clark at Louisville. He left the Army as a second lieutenant in 1810, traded on the upper Mississippi, then re-enlisted to fight in the War of 1812. With his Osage wife he lived out his days at a trading post on the Arkansas River in present-day Oklahoma. He died on June

1, 1831, and is buried in Pryor, Oklahoma, which is named for him. A monument stands over his gravesite.

### George Shannon

The youngest member of the expedition—he was just 18 when he joined Lewis at Maysville, Kentucky, on October 19, 1803—Shannon was born in 1785 in Pennsylvania. He lost a leg in a fight with the Arikara in 1807 as a member of the party led by Nathaniel Pryor sent to return Chief Sheheke to the Mandans. Shannon later practiced law and served as a judge in Kentucky and Missouri. He died in 1836 at age 51 and is buried in a cemetery in Palmyra, Missouri, but his actual gravesite has not yet been positively identified.

### John Shields

Born in Virginia in 1769, Shields was the oldest of the Corps's soldiers. After the expedition he spent a year trapping with Daniel Boone, a relative. He later moved to Indiana, where he died in December 1809. In *The Men of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, Charles G. Clarke states that Shields is “probably buried among some of his brothers” in Little Flock Baptist Burying Grounds, south of Corydon, Indiana. His grave is unmarked.<sup>10</sup>

MAP BY MEG DAVIS

## Alexander Hamilton Willard

Born in New Hampshire in 1778, Willard was the only permanent member of the expedition recruited from the Corps of Artillery. He later served in the War of 1812, sired 12 children, and emigrated to California in 1852. He died in Franklin, California, on March 6, 1865, at age 87, and is buried in the town cemetery.<sup>11</sup>

## DISPUTED GRAVESITES

### Toussaint Charbonneau

The husband of Sacagawea and the Corps of Discovery's interpreter, Charbonneau is reputedly buried in St. Stephens Catholic Cemetery, in Richwoods, Missouri, about 40 miles southwest of St. Louis. However, few Lewis and Clark scholars believe that the headstone marked "Toussaint Charbonneau, 1781-1866" belongs to the Corps interpreter, who was born about 1758 and died no later than 1843, when his will was probated. His place of death is unknown. It is possible that the Toussaint Charbonneau buried in Richwoods is a son, nephew, or other relation to the Charbonneau of Lewis and Clark fame.<sup>12</sup>

### Sacagawea

Pompey's mother and the Shoshone wife of Toussaint Charbonneau, Sacagawea probably died in 1812, at about age 25, at Fort Manuel on the Missouri, in present-day Corson County, South Dakota. Since 1978, the National Register has listed the fort's location as the place of her death, but no specific gravesite has been found. (It may lie under the waters of impounded Lake Oahe.)

A rival site for the Bird Woman's resting place is on the Wind River Reservation, in Wyoming. According to biographer Grace Hebard, who based her claim largely on the oral traditions of the Shoshone, the grave of a woman who lived to be nearly 100 and died on April 9, 1884, is that of Sacagawea. Most historians, however, support the written evidence—an entry in the journal kept by John Luttig, a clerk at Fort Manuel, and a statement by William Clark—for the earlier date.<sup>13</sup>

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

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Charles G. Clarke, *The Men of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1970), p. 71.

<sup>2</sup>Although it is known where and when John Potts and George Drouillard were killed, they were most likely never buried and have no known graves. Both men died violently at the hands of Blackfeet Indians in the Three Forks area of Montana, in 1808 and 1810, respectively.

<sup>3</sup>Unless otherwise noted, these biographical sketches are based on information in Clarke, *The Men of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* and Appendix A: Members of the Expedition, in Volume 2 of *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, edited by Gary Moulton (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988).

<sup>4</sup>An illustration of Bratton's gravestone and its inscription may be seen in Robert E. Lange's article "William Bratton—One of Lewis and Clark's Men," in *We Proceeded On*, February 1981, pp. 8-11.

<sup>5</sup>"The William Clark Monument," *We Proceeded On*, August 1993, p. 14.

<sup>6</sup>Ruth Colter Frick, "John Colter R.I.P.," *We Proceeded On*, February 1994, pp. 20-24. The article includes information on the Tavern Bluff Party.

<sup>7</sup>Paul R. Cutright and Michael J. Brodhead, "Dr. Elliott Coues and Sergeant Charles Floyd," *We Proceeded On*, July 1978, pp. 6-10; see also Strode Hinds, "Monument for a Sergeant," *We Proceeded On*, August 1995, pp. 18-19 and 30. For a thorough review of Floyd's life, death, and four burials, see James J. Holmberg, "Monument to a 'Young Man of Much Merit'" *We Proceeded On*, August 1996, pp. 4-13.

<sup>8</sup>Information about the Gass gravesite and efforts to get Congress to mark it with a headstone during the 1920s can be found in "David B. Weaver Would Have Monument Erected to the Memory of Patrick Gass," *We Proceeded On*, August 1998, pp. 20-23.

<sup>9</sup>See also Dwight Garrison, "Lewis is Not Alone," *We Proceeded On*, November 1987, pp. 10-11.

<sup>10</sup>Clarke, p. 54. Clarke's statement is based on family Bible and court records furnished by a descendant, Mrs. Dorothy Shields Lollier, and probate records from the Corydon County Courthouse in Indiana.

<sup>11</sup>Wilbur Hoffman, "The Gravesite of the Expedition's Alexander Hamilton Willard," *We Proceeded On*, May 1980, pp. 20-21.

<sup>12</sup>Moulton, *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, Vol. 3, pp. 228-229.

<sup>13</sup>Moulton, Vol. 3, p. 229. A clerk at Fort Manuel, John C. Luttig, kept a journal, and on December 20, 1812, he noted that "This evening the wife of Charbonneau, a Snake squaw, died of putrid fever. She was a good and the best woman in the fort, aged about twenty-five years. She left a fine infant girl." The journal is reprinted in John C. Luttig, *Journal of a Fur-Trading Expedition on the Upper Missouri 1812-1813*, edited by Stella M. Drumm (New York: Argosy-Antiquarian Ltd., 1964), p. 139. The statement by Clark that Sacagawea was dead by 1825-28 is found in "Clark's List of Expedition Members" in Donald Jackson's *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1783-1854*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962), pp. 638-639.

# Meriwether Lewis's MEDICINE CHESTS

## Outfitting the compleat physician's field kit of 1803

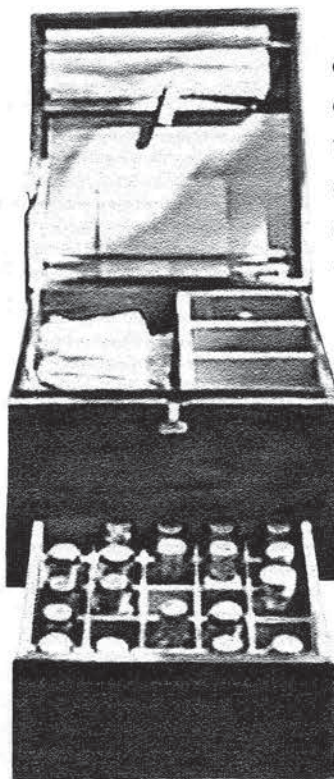
BY GARY LENTZ

Imagine planning a trip that will last more than two years. During that time you will not see a doctor, a hospital, a clinic, or any other health-care provider. You must make all the decisions about your medical needs and your family's. You must decide what medicines and instruments to take, then purchase them yourself and learn how to use them—for you will be both pharmacist and physician.

Meriwether Lewis did just that nearly 200 years ago for the more than 50 members (temporary and permanent) of the Corps of Discovery. As field physicians during their 28 months in the wilderness, he and his co-leader, William Clark, dealt with a staggering range of ailments—boils, head colds, toothache, malaria, frostbite, snowblindness, syphilis, dysentery, snakebite, exhaustion, and heatstroke, to name just a few. They were also responsible for the well-being of a young Indian mother, Sacagawea, and her infant son, Pompey. Only one member of their party, Sergeant Charles Floyd, died during the expedition, probably of complications from a burst appendix.

Lewis did his medical outfitting for the expedition in Philadelphia under the guidance of the eminent Dr. Benjamin Rush, and he purchased his medical supplies from the apothecary of George Gillaspay and Joseph Strong.

Several years ago, as part of a living history project, I



decided to re-create Lewis's medicine chests. The chests themselves—the boxes that Lewis carried with him to the Pacific and back—have not survived, so my reconstruction of them was based on the medicine chest of Thomas Jefferson, which has.<sup>1</sup>

I stocked the chests (each made of wood, like the originals, and with removable compartments) with medical supplies listed on the Gillaspay & Strong invoice.<sup>2</sup> (See box, p. 13.)

Lewis's drugs included astringents, which check the flow of blood or other secretions by shrinking tissues; diaphoretics, which promote sweating; diuretics, which increase the flow of urine; emetics, which induce vomiting; expectorants, which loosen phlegm; and purgatives, which evacuate the bowels (laxatives can be classified as mild purgatives).

Some of Lewis's drugs, including laudanum and opium, are classified today as controlled dangerous substances, and in such cases I substituted facsimile materials resembling the originals in texture and color. Most of the other materials can be legally procured, and many of the medicinal plants on Lewis's list are available from herbal suppliers or can be collected from the wild or grown at home. Some of the medicines are easy to make from simple ingredients. For example, I was able to compound yellow basilicum from hog lard, beeswax, and pine resin, just as it was made in Lewis's day.

The following descriptions are compiled from a variety of sources that helped me identify Lewis's medicines, some of the medical conditions they were used to treat, and recommended dosages.<sup>3</sup> Lewis probably measured doses with a small brass or iron scale. The drugs were usually administered orally or topically. Gunpowder, onions, mineral water, sage tea, and rattlesnake rattles were a few of the local remedies he also drew upon as needed.

Lewis bought some drugs in large quantities—he ordered a supply of opium, for example, for nearly 2,800 doses, enough for three dispensings a day for the entire two years and four months of the expedition. I assumed he kept small portions of such drugs in the chests for ready dispensing and stored the bulk in other, less accessible, containers. He may also have planned to cache some of these medicines at strategic locations along the route.

In the United States, medicinal plants, chemicals, and compounds were first listed in a single publication in the 1820 edition of *U.S. Pharmacopeia*. The first USP included 207 items, many of which Lewis acquired in 1803.

#### GILLASPAY & STRONG MEDICINES

##### Peruvian Bark (Pulv. Cort. Peru)

The dried stem and root bark of cinchona, a Peruvian evergreen, and the source of quinine. It was used to reduce malarial fever (often called “ague”) and as a bitter to assist digestion and a tonic to restore tissue tone. Lewis mixed it with gunpowder to make a poultice for snakebites and gunshot wounds (including his own, after Pierre Cruzatte accidentally shot him through the lower buttocks).<sup>4</sup> Listed in the 1820 USP. Dosage: 15 to 60 grains, yielding 2,800 doses.

##### Jalap (Pulv. Jalap)

Jalap is the root of the Mexican plant *Exogonium jalapa*. Used primarily as a laxative, it produces a watery discharge from the bowels. Jalap also aids digestion by increasing the flow of bile. Listed in the USP of 1820. Dosage: 15 to 30 grains, yielding 140 doses.



##### Rhei (Pulv. Rhei)

The powdered root of *Rheum officinale*, better known as edible rhubarb. Most commonly used as a laxative, it also served as an astringent, digestive aid, and a topical ointment for hemorrhoids. Listed in the USP of 1820. Dosage: 2 to 30 grains, yielding 190 doses.



##### Ipecacuan (Pulv. Ipecacuan)

The dried rhizome and root of *Cephaelis ipecacuanha*, a rubiaceaceous plant of South America related to coffee, cinchona, and gardenias. Most commonly taken as syrup of ipecac, an emetic. Smaller doses stimulated appetite. It also was a diaphoretic. Listed in the USP of 1820. Dosage as an emetic: 15 to 30 grains, yielding 90 doses.

##### Cream of Tartar (Crem. Tart.)

The chemical compound potassium bitartrate. A laxative, it was also used as a diuretic. Clark treated 15-month-old Pompey with it on May 22, 1806. Dosage: 15 to 60 grains, yielding 280 doses.

##### Camphor (Gum Camphor)

The hard gum of *Cinnamomum camphora*, an evergreen native to China and Japan. Often used as a topical salve for rashes. A mild irritant, it was applied to the chest to produce sweating and to relieve respiratory distress. Many modern over-the-counter medications contain this aromatic ingredient. Listed in the USP of 1820 and the only drug purchased by Lewis found in the current USP.

##### Assafoetic

A household spice derived from a resinous plant, *Ferula foetida* (“fetid gum”). Applied as a poultice or taken internally (orally or as an enema) to relieve colic. Its unpleasant odor was said to ward off disease—by keeping visitors at bay, it may have actually reduced the spread of airborne germs. Found today in specialty food stores as an ingredient in some East Indian dishes.

Listed in the USP of 1820. Dosage: 6 grains in pill form and 60 grains in 100 cc of water as an enema. Approximate number of enema doses: 100.

### Opium (Opii Turk. opt)

An air-dried milky substance derived from the poppy flower, *Papaver somniferum*. Originally grown in Turkey and the source of narcotics such as morphine, heroin, and codeine. Used as a pain reliever and sleeping potion, it also calmed muscle and gastrointestinal spasms. Listed in the USP of 1820. An average dosage of one grain yielded 2,800 doses.



### Tragacanth

Dried, gummy sap from the Asian shrub *Astragalus gummifer*. Mixed with lard and other ingredients as an ointment for chapped skin. Listed in the USP of 1820.

### Glauber's Salts (Sal Glauber)

Both Glauber's and Epsom's salts were commonly used as laxatives. Glauber's salts are sodium sulfate; Epsom's salts are magnesium sulfate. Epsom's salts, often used for soaking feet, are available at most modern drug stores. Epsom's salts are listed in the USP of 1820. Internal dosage varied between 4 and 32 grams, yielding 1,750 doses.

### Saltpeter (Sal Nitri)

Saltpeter is another name for potassium nitrate, an ingredient of gunpowder. A diuretic and diaphoretic, used mainly to internally cleanse the body. Clark noted that on July 7, 1804, Lewis gave Robert Frazier a dose of "Niter" for relief of sunstroke (he also bled him). Listed as "Nitrate of Potass" in the USP of 1820. Dosage: 5 to 15 grains, yielding 1,000 doses.

### Copperas

Its name notwithstanding, copperas contains no copper. Also known as green vitriol, it is a ferrous sulfate used as an astringent to combat diarrhea. Some over-the-counter remedies still contain it. Listed as "Sulphate of Iron" in the USP of 1820. Dosage: 1 to 5 grains, yielding 3,000 doses.

### Lead Acetate (Sacchar. Saturn. opt)

Also known as sugar of lead ("Sacchar." = sugar, "Saturni" = lead), it was mixed with alcohol as a topical

treatment for poison ivy. Diluted in water, it served as an eyewash. It was also injected into the urethra to treat venereal disease.

### Calomel

Calomel—mercurous chloride—was the best treatment of its time for symptoms of syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases. Also a strong purgative, it quickly evacuated the bowels. It is a white, tasteless powder mixed with water or compounded into pills.

Mercury (but not calomel) is listed in the USP of 1820. Doses varied from .1 to 2 grains (it was given to a patient until he salivated). An average dosage of 1 grain yielded 1,750 doses.

### Tartar

Potassium tartrate, a colorless crystal soluble in water, was used as an emetic and expectorant. (Not to be confused with cream of tartar—potassium bitartrate—which was used as a laxative and diuretic.) As a topical treatment tartar was applied to boils. Listed as "Supertartrate of Potass" in the USP of 1820.

### White Vitriol (Vitriol Alb.)

Also known as zinc sulfate, white vitriol served as an eyewash, tonic, emetic, and astringent. Clark used it to treat the Walla Walla Indians at Chief Yelleppit's village on the Columbia, where eye problems were common, on April 28, 1806. Listed as "Sulphate of Zinc" in the USP of 1820. Emetic dosage: 10 to 30 grains, yielding 175 doses.

### Root of Colombo (Colombo Rad.)

Colombo—*Menispermum palmatum*—is a plant native to Africa. Its powdered root was used primarily to treat dyspepsia, sometimes referred to as "imperfect digestion." Mixed with water, and very bitter. Listed in the USP of 1820 as "Root of Colombo" and "American Colombo." Dosage: 10 to 30 grains, yielding 130 doses.

### Sulfuric Acid (Elix. Vitriol)

Used in Lewis's day as an astringent for colic and diarrhea, sulfuric acid was generally mixed in a 10-percent solution with alcohol, then diluted further with water and neutralized with magnesia or baking soda. A dose

## MEDICAL MATERIALS PURCHASED FROM GILLASPAY & STRONG

15 lbs	Pulv. Cort. Peru	\$30.00	1/4 lb	bals. Copaiboe	.37
1/2 lb	" Jalap	.67	1/4 lb	" Traumat.	.50
1/2 lb	" Rhei (Rhubarb)	1.00	2 oz	Magnesia	.20
4 oz "	Ipecacuan	1.25	1/4 lb	Indian Ink	1.50
2 lb "	Crem. Tart.	.67	2 oz	Gum Elastic	.37
2 oz	Gum Camphor	.40	2 oz	Nutmegs	.75
1 lb	" Assafoetic	1.00	2 oz	Cloves	.31
1/2 lb	" Opii Turk. opt	2.50	4 oz	Cinnamon	.20
1/4 lb	" Tragacanth	.37	1 Set	Pocket Insts. small	9.50
6 lbs	Sal Glauber	.60	1 Set	Teeth " "	2.25
2 lb	" Nitri	.67	1	Clyster syringe	2.75
2 lb	Copperas	.10	4	Penis syringe	1.00
6 oz	Sacchar. Saturn. opt	.37	3	Best Lancets	2.40
4 oz	Calomel	.75	1	Tourniquet	3.50
1 oz	Tartar Emetic	.10	2 oz	Patent Lint	.25
4 oz	Vitriol Alb.	.12	50 doz	Bilious Pills to Order of Dr. Rush	5.00
1/2 lb	Rad. Columbo	1.00	6 Tin	Canisters	1.50
1/4 lb	Elix. Vitriol	.25	3 8 oz	Gd. Stopt. bottles	1.20
4 oz	Laudanum	.50	5 4 oz	Tinctures "	1.85
2 lb	Ung. Basilic Flav.	1.00	6 4 oz	Salt Mo.	2.22
1 lb	" e lap Cailmin	.50	1	Walnut Chest	4.50
1 lb	" Epispastic	1.00	1	Pine Chest	1.20
1 lb	" Mercuriale	1.25		Porterage	.30
1 lb	Emplast. Diach.S.	.50			
1/4 lb	Ess.Meth. pip	.50			\$90.69

### Abbreviations (Latin unless otherwise noted)

Alb	....	"albus": white.	Gum.	....	A sticky substance that dries brittle and dissolves in water to become gum.
Bals.	....	"balsum": a soft resinous compound.	Mo.	....	"mollis": soft. <i>Salt Mo.</i> was loose salt (i.e., in granulated rather than block form).
Cort.	....	"cortex": bark or outer layer.	Opt.	....	"optimus": best or preferred.
Crem.	....	"cremor": a thick, cream-like juice.	pip	....	"pippin": Old English for seed.
e lap	....	"ex": "ex lapis": compounded from stone.	Pulv.	....	Pulverized or powdered.
Elix	....	"elixus": drunk, inebriated. Usually any drug dissolved in pure alcohol.	Rad.	....	"radix": root.
Emplast.	....	"emplastrum": plaster. Something that sticks to the skin.	Sacchar.	....	"saccharo-": sugar.
Ess	....	"essentia": essence.	Sal.	....	"sal": salt.
Flav	....	"flavens": yellow.	Ung	....	"unguentum": ointment.
Gd.	....	Good, as in "good, better, best."			

was followed by raw eggs or some other soothing substance. Listed in the USP of 1820. Dosage: 15 grains (one gram), yielding 120 doses.

### Laudanum

Laudanum is tinctured (alcohol-diluted) opium. Bitter and colorless, it was used as a painkiller and sedative. It was usually bottled, and Lewis could have replenished the small amount he purchased (4 ounces) from his store of alcohol and opium. At Fort Clatsop on February 15, 1806, he administered 35 drops to George Gibson.

### Yellow Basilicum (Ung. Basilic Flav.)

An ointment made from 50 parts hog lard, 35 parts pine resin, and 15 parts yellow beeswax, basilicum (also spelled basilicon) was applied externally to treat eczema, ringworm, itching, and other skin eruptions.

### Calamine (Ung. e lap Cailmin)

This is the familiar calamine, a salve made from ferric oxide and calamine ore, whose main components are zinc silicate and carbonate. Calamine lotion is still compounded today, but with the addition of the antihista-

A tourniquet with a screw-type device for adjusting tension was used to control blood flow during amputations or when administering therapeutic bleeding.



The kit of pocket instruments carried by Lewis for minor surgery was probably similar to this one.



mine benadryl. Used to relieve insect bites and skin eruptions such as poison ivy. Listed in the USP of 1820.

### Epispastric

Epispastrics are blistering agents. Red mercuric iodide, a common one, was used for drawing out splinters, thorns, and other objects imbedded in the skin. An agent's crystals were mixed with lard and wax to make a salve. Several such agents are listed in the USP of 1820, but the one compounded for Lewis is unknown.

### Mercury Ointment (Ung. Mercuriale)

Most likely mercury chloride in a salve that could have been used as a topical treatment for syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases.

### Emplast (Emplast. Diach. S.)

Lead monoxide or lead carbonate mixed with olive oil and used to treat burns. ("Diach. S." = Diachylon Saturni, a lead compound.) Similar lead compounds are the active ingredients in styptic sticks, used for stopping minor bleeding.

### Wintergreen or Peppermint (Ess. Meth. pip)

As an oil or "essence," wintergreen and peppermint [pictured] were used topically as cooling agents and internally as stomach sedatives. They were also added as flavoring to medicines. When taken internally, they were usually dissolved in warm water; for topical treatments they were mixed with alcohol.

Peppermint is listed in the USP of 1820. Dosage: two or three drops, yielding approximately 640 doses.



### Copaiboe

A plant native to South America, *Copaifera officinalis* produces a bitter, aromatic resin used as a diaphoretic, diuretic, and expectorant. It was also prescribed for gastrointestinal irritation and milder forms of venereal disease. The resin was dissolved in alcohol and taken in drop form. Listed as "Copaiba" in the USP of 1820.

### Benzoin (Traumat.)

A "traumatic" (for treatment of cuts and abrasions), compound tincture of benzoin was applied to the skin. It is an ingredient in some over-the-counter medicines today. As a topical medicine the amount purchased by Lewis (four pounds) seems small for an expedition expected to last several years. Most likely he planned to resort to yellow basilicum or other medications he could make in the field. Listed in the USP of 1820.

### Magnesia

Commonly known as milk of magnesia, hydrated magnesium carbonate is a white powder used as an antacid and laxative. Listed as "Carbonate of magnesia" in the USP of 1820. Dosage: as an antacid 4 grains, as a laxative 45 grains. The small amount purchased by Lewis (two ounces) would have yielded just a few doses.

### Indian Ink

India ink—used by the Captains for map-making—isn't a medicine, of course, but it was generally sold in apothecaries in dry (block) form. Made from lampblack, it was much more resistant to fading than inks made from oak galls or other botanical sources.<sup>5</sup>

A tooth key, for extracting molars, was probably included in Lewis's set of "teeth instruments."



A clyster pipe, or enema syringe. Lewis purchased one and probably carried it with him, but there is no evidence he ever used it on his men.



### Gum Elastic

A crude rubber compound most likely used as an eraser. (The Corps's journal keepers wrote in both ink and pencil.)

### Nutmeg

The kernel of the seed of *Myristica fragans*, a tree native to the East Indies. Grated, it was used for flavoring and as a mild laxative. Listed in the USP of 1820.

### Cloves

Another common spice, cloves are the dried flower buds of an East Indian evergreen tree, *Syzygium aromaticum*. Used as a flavoring (cloves are found in some recipes for portable soup) and also—when applied as an oil or directly to the gum around an aching tooth—as a pain killer. Listed in the USP of 1820.

### Cinnamon

This spice is made from the dried inner bark of the East Indian shrub *Cinnamomum camphora*, a member of the laurel family. Used as a flavoring to mask the bitterness of other medicines. Like nutmeg and cloves, it was usually purchased in a whole, dried state and pulverized or reduced as needed. Listed in the USP of 1820.

### Bilious Pills

Dr. Rush's pills (a.k.a. "thunderbolts") contained 10 to 15 grains of calomel and an equal amount of jalap. Unsurpassed as a purgative. Rush recommended to Lewis that two pills be given every four hours until the patient's bowels "operate freely."<sup>6</sup> Lewis took along 50 dozen (600).

### OTHER MEDICINES

The following medicines were included on a list compiled by Lewis before he made his purchases at Gillaspay & Strong.<sup>7</sup> He may have acquired some of them en route at military outposts or from other sources, including those at St. Charles, Missouri.<sup>8</sup>

#### Borax (8 ounces)

Sodium borate is a white powder that, applied topically, relieved fever by evaporation. Taken internally, it was a diuretic. Also used as a mouthwash and gargle. Dosage ranged from 5 to 30 grains, yielding 175 doses.

#### Flower of Sulfur (1)

Sulfur had been used for centuries as a laxative, a diaphoretic, and a topical for skin problems. Patients breathed its fumes to stimulate the lungs and swallowed it to purge intestinal worms. Lewis used it to treat Pompey on May 22, 1806, while camped on the Clearwater. "Flowers" were produced by dropping molten sulfur into water to remove impurities. The cooled drops, resembling a yellow rosette, could be stored and later pulverized as needed. Listed in the USP of 1820.

#### Turlington's Balsam (4 ounces)

Turlington's Balsam was a brand name for a compound whose main ingredient was tincture of benzoin (see p. 14, right column). It came in a distinctively shaped bottle.

#### Symple Diachylon (2 sticks)

See "emplast" (p. 14, left column).

#### Blistering Ointments (1 pound)

Like epispastics, these ointments formed skin blisters



## LEWIS'S DRUGS BY USAGE

### Astringents (for checking the flow of blood or other secretions)

- rhei
- copperas
- white vitriol
- sulfuric acid

### Cholagogues (digestive aids)

- rhei
- copaiboe

### Diaphoretics (sweating agents)

- ipecacuan
- saltpeter
- copaiboe
- flower of sulfur

### Diuretics (for increasing urine flow)

- cream of tartar
- saltpeter
- copaiboe
- borax

### Emetics (vomiting agents)

- ipecacuan
- tartar
- white vitriol

### Expectorants (for loosening phlegm)

- tartar
- copaiboe

### Purgatives (for evacuating bowels)

- calomel
- bilious pills

### Laxatives (mild purgatives)

- jalap
- rhei
- cream of tartar
- Glauber's salts
- magnesia
- nutmeg

### Eyewash

- lead acetate
- white vitriol

### Treatments for venereal disease

- calomel
- mercury
- copaiboe

### Treatments for stomach ailments

- Peruvian bark (digestive disorder)
- assafoetic (colic)
- colombo (dyspepsia)
- wintergreen/peppermint
- copaiboe
- magnesia (antacid)
- flower of sulfur (worms)

### Pain relievers

- opium
- laudanum
- cloves (toothache)

### Treatments for skin problems

- camphor (rashes; other)
- tragacanth (chapped skin)
- yellow basilicum
- calamine
- epispastic
- emblast (burns)
- benzoin
- flower of sulfur

### Treatments for fever

- Peruvian bark
- wintergreen/peppermint
- borax

### Flavoring

- wintergreen/peppermint
- nutmeg
- cloves
- cinnamon

### Treatment for hemorrhoids

- rhei

to ease the removal of foreign objects such as splinters.

### INSTRUMENTS AND OTHER ITEMS

The instruments bought by Lewis from Gillaspay & Strong included three lancets and a tourniquet (probably one with a screw-type device to adjust the tension). These were used for blood-letting, one of three procedures prescribed in a Latin dictum for physicians of the period: "*Primo Sanguare, Deinde Pugare, Postea Clysterium Donare*" ("First bleed, then purge, finally give a clyster.")<sup>9</sup> A treatment predating recorded history, blood-letting was advocated for any number of illnesses and was frequently prescribed for fevers. At various times the Captains applied the lance to Sacagawea, Frazier, George Drouillard, Joseph Whitehouse, and each other.<sup>10</sup>

Lewis bought a kit of small pocket instruments for minor surgery. These kits usually contained a pair of scissors, a scalpel, forceps, and other items for probing wounds. He also acquired a set of dental tools, which almost certainly included a tooth key for extraction.

The four penis syringes bought by Lewis were used to irrigate urethras inflamed by venereal disease. The Journals are silent on whether the Captains ever used them, although given the number of venereal cases treated they almost surely did.<sup>11</sup> His medical equipage also included at least one clyster pipe, or enema syringe. There is no evidence that Lewis ever administered an enema to the men, although he did give one to Pompey; for relieving the bowels, purgatives like Dr. Rush's thunderbolts were the method of choice.

The three ounces of "patent lint" purchased by Lewis was used for making so-called tent bandages, a type of dressing that allowed a wound to heal from the inside out, without trapping fluids. The lint was scraped and softened cotton linen and had excellent absorbent qualities. Clark used it to treat Lewis's gunshot wound.<sup>12</sup>

The three stoppered bottles and five smaller bottles for tinctures purchased at Gillaspay & Strong would have been useful for preparing and storing eyewash and other medicines in solution.

With these basic medicines and instruments and a practical, albeit limited, knowledge of medicine as practiced two centuries ago, Lewis and Clark discharged their duties in lieu of a regimental surgeon with the same skill and care they showed in executing their many other responsibilities. Their medical know-how also served a diplomatic end, for they treated countless ailing Indians they met along the way.

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark have been called partners in discovery, but they were equally successful partners in medicine.<sup>13</sup>

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*Foundation member Gary Lentz is area manager of the Blue Mountain State Parks and the ranger at Lewis & Clark Trail State Park, near Dayton, Washington, and has been a member since 1982 of the Washington State Governor's Lewis & Clark Trail Committee. He and Dr. Ronald Loge will talk about Lewis's medicine chests and the medical aspects of the expedition at the LCTHF annual meeting in Dillon, Montana, August 13-16.*

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Eldon G. Chuinard, M.D., *Only One Man Died: The Medical Aspects of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Fairfield, Wash.: Ye Galleon Press, Western Frontiersmen Series 19, 1979; Fourth Printing 1989), p. 98.

<sup>2</sup>Donald Jackson, *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents 1783 - 1854* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1978), pp. 73-74. Although not listed here, the Corps of Discovery's medical supplies also included alcohol. The two reconstructed chests, like those purchased by Lewis, were made, respectively, of walnut and pine. By height, width, and length the walnut chest measured 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 11<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches. The pine chest measured 16<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 15<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 14 inches.

<sup>3</sup>When calculating the number of doses available, I used the apothecary's pound (in effect in the early 1800s) of 12 ounces. Dosages are in grains and grams. There are 15.43 grains to a gram and 28.375 grams to an ounce. I divided an average dose (determined by adding the highest and lowest recommended dosages and dividing by two) into the total supply of a medicine, then rounding off. These are just estimates, however, for I believe that Lewis may have leaned toward larger doses when purging or treating fever, pain, and sexually transmitted diseases. He also may have increased dosage to compensate for loss in a medicine's potency over time. I did not calculate doses for topical applications, since the amount varied greatly with body area covered. Sources on the composition and use of these drugs include Chuinard (*ibid.*), Jackson (*ibid.*), and the following:

Elliot Coues, ed., *The History of The Lewis and Clark Expedition*, (New York: Dover Publications, 1964; first published in 1893), Vols. 2 and 3.

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Robert G. Ferris, ed., *Lewis and Clark* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior; National Park Service, 1975).

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<sup>4</sup>Chuinard, p. 390. See also Moulton, Vol. 8, p. 158. All quotations or references to journal entries in the ensuing text are from Moulton, Vols. 2-11, by date, unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>5</sup>India ink flowed less freely from pens, especially ones with steel points, but it could be diluted. Lewis had acquired 100 quills from the Harpers Ferry arsenal, so he may not have been too concerned about this shortcoming. Lewis also acquired from Harpers Ferry six "papers of ink." This would have been finely powdered vegetable-based ink for journal keeping. The Lewis and Clark journals I have examined show the fading one associates with botanically based inks over time.

<sup>6</sup>Chuinard, p. 149.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 153; also Jackson, pp. 73-74.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 217. According to Chuinard, St. Charles tradition holds that the Captains purchased locally produced castor oil, a laxative.

<sup>9</sup>American College of Cardiology Web site.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 67, 71, 79, 286, 295, 356.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 393. See also Paul R. Cutright, *Lewis and Clark: Pioneering Naturalists* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), p. 285.

<sup>13</sup>I would like to thank the following for their help with this article: Gretchen Worden of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia; Dr. Ronald V. Loge of Dillon, Montana; Barb Kubik of Vancouver, Washington; Grant Lentz (my son), for letting me "bleed" him during numerous public presentations; and the late Dr. Eldon Chuinard, who inspired my interest in the medical aspects of the Corps of Discovery.

In this painting by L. Edward Fisher, the expedition's boats pass the future site of Jefferson City, Missouri, near the mouth of present-day Wears Creek, on June 4, 1804.



# The Mystery of Clark's Nightingale

A quest for a bird and a creek offers a lesson in reading the Journals

By James Wallace

In the summer of 1995, I was in Montana birdwatching, fishing, and occasionally crossing paths with William Least Heat-Moon, a friend from Columbia, Missouri, who was working his way across the continent on water. It was my first time to see the headwaters of the Missouri, and Heat-Moon was just finishing that segment of his journey for his book *RiverHorse*.<sup>1</sup> The beauty of the Missouri and his enthusiasm for it swept me along. I wanted to know more about it. Why not read Lewis and Clark, the first account of travel on America's longest river to its headwaters? I wanted to read Lewis and Clark not to find out about their accomplishments, but to learn about the Missouri.

Like so many people, I had seen only excerpts of the Journals in Bernard DeVoto's one-volume abridgment, which I was browsing in along the way.<sup>2</sup> But now I wanted the complete text. I found a reprint of Elliott Coues's 1893 edition of *The History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* in a bookstore in Helena.<sup>3</sup>

Although I began reading the Journals with the idea of learning about the river, only 14 pages into the work I became more interested in birds. On the night of June 3, 1804, the members of the expedition heard a "nightingale" about 50 miles from my home in central Missouri. Several pages later, Lewis and Clark mentioned pelicans, then parakeets. The birdwatcher in me was stunned. Of these three references to birds, one, the



nightingale, is not known to exist in America and another, the Carolina parakeet, is now extinct. From that point on, I began noting each reference Lewis and Clark made to birds. I also decided to figure out exactly what creature they heard that June night, the singer they called the nightingale.

Back home in Missouri that fall, Heat-Moon had finished his voyage, and I told him what I was doing. He suggested I might be reinventing the wheel by working with the Coues edition and ignoring modern scholarship: "If you're serious about the question, use Gary Moulton's edition of the Journals."

Unable to find quickly Volume II, in which the text of the Journals begins, I tried the Thwaites version instead and for a second time noted all references to birds.<sup>4</sup> Thwaites gives more documentation than Coues, but I still could not solve the mystery of what kind of bird the men heard the night of June 3, 1804.

When I finally located the Moulton edition of the Journals, I started over for the third time.<sup>5</sup> Without knowing it, I was tracing the history of this ornithological question. Now with the complete text before me, and a plethora of footnotes to ponder, the simple question I had posed became more complex, and the night-singing bird even more of an enigma.

Here is the text from Clark's field notes:

June 4th 1804 Monday, a fair Day Sent out 3 hunters, our mast broke by the boat running under a tree Passed an Islands on Stbd Side on which grow Seede[r] a Creek at [blank] miles on the Starbd Sd. Course N. 30 W 4ms. to pt. on St. Side below 2d Isd. passed a Creek on Lbd Side 15 yd. wide, I call *Nightingale* Creek. this Bird Sang all last night and is the first of the kind I ever herd, below this creek and the last.<sup>6</sup>

The Codex "A" version, Clark's notebook, differs slightly:

June 4th Monday 1804 a fair day three men out on the right flank passed a large Island on the St. Side Called Seeder Island, this Isd. has a great Deal of Cedar on it, passed a Small Creek at 1 ms. [NB: 1 mile] 15 yd. Wide which we named *Nightingale* Creek from a Bird of that discription which Sang for us all last night, and is the first of the Kind I ever heard.<sup>6</sup>

Sergeant John Ordway also mentioned the incident:

passed a Creek on the South Side about 15 yds wide which we name *Nightingale* Creek, this Bird Sung

all last night & is the first we heard below on the River.<sup>7</sup>

## THE MYSTERY BIRD

What bird sang that night? It is worthwhile to repeat Elliott Coues's answer to this question because part of it has been forgotten in subsequent discussions: "No species of *Nightingale* (*Daulias luscinia*) in any proper sense of the word, is found in North America. The so-called "Virginia nightingale" is the Cardinal redbird (*Cardinalis virginianus*)."<sup>8</sup>

Thwaites cites Coues, then adds a remark attributed to James N. Baskett: "The ordinary mockingbird sings in the night; so also, occasionally, do the catbird and the brown thrasher."<sup>9</sup>

Elijah Criswell, in his *Lewis and Clark: Linguistic Pioneers*, downplays the idea of both the mockingbird (mock-thrush) and cardinal because "one would have thought that Clark knew both birds well."<sup>10</sup>

Raymond Burroughs, in his *Natural History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, does not even list "nightingale" in the index, only the "Eastern" cardinal: "In this instance Clark called the bird a nightingale."<sup>11</sup>

In *Lewis and Clark: Pioneering Naturalists*, Paul Cutright adds nothing more, then dismisses the idea of the cardinal and concludes: "The bird in question is a mystery."<sup>12</sup>

Virginia Holmgren, in a special ornithological issue of *We Proceeded On*, advanced the idea of the hermit thrush.<sup>13</sup> It is true that this bird has an especially lovely song and is sometimes referred to as a nightingale.<sup>14</sup>

Moulton adds a suggestion from Paul Johnsgard, the whip-poor-will, but then points out that the Journals later refer to this bird by name.<sup>15</sup>

We have here six possible answers to the question, What bird sang that night? Which of the six is correct? Or are we dealing with another bird altogether? Here are the candidates, along with my objections to each:

**Cardinal** (*Cardinalis cardinalis*). It is inconceivable that either Lewis or Clark could have traveled in central Missouri in May and early June without hearing and seeing the cardinal dozens, if not hundreds of times. It is one of our most common and most notable sing



ers in the spring. Furthermore, on June 10, 1806, Lewis described the western tanager as “about the size of the Virginia Nightingale” (a common name for the northern cardinal in the early 19th century).<sup>16</sup> Certainly the Captains knew the cardinal well.

**Mockingbird** (*Mimus polyglottos*). Same objection.



The mockingbird is mentioned by name elsewhere in the Journals although sometimes lumped with the brown thrasher (brown thrush). Central Missouri birdwatchers know that the mockingbird often sings at night, especially if the moon is full. When I put the question to a Missouri state ornithologist, he said almost any bird will sing at night if the moon is full.

But the moon was in the last quarter that June night of 1804, just four nights from the new moon.<sup>17</sup>

**Catbird** (*Dumetella carolinensis*). On June 6, 1805, Lewis described a shrike as “about the size of the blue thrush or catbird.”<sup>18</sup> Again, same objection. The catbird is common in central Missouri and the explorers could have heard it many times before that night.



**Brown thrasher**  
(*Toxostoma rufum*).  
Same objection.

**Hermit thrush**

(*Catharus guttatus*). No ornithologist I know has ever heard this bird sing in central Missouri. People see it regularly during the fall migration, and if the winter is mild a few thrushes will stay around. The spring migration brings many back to this area, but they are long gone by June, in their breeding grounds much farther north. The latest recorded sighting for this species in Missouri in the spring is May 7. I cannot imagine the hermit thrush being the



bird the expedition heard that night.

**Whip-poor-will** (*Caprimulgus vociferus*). While it is a famous nightsinger, both Lewis and Clark mention it elsewhere in the Journals, and the men could have heard it many, many times before. For those reasons, almost everyone disregards this choice.



The commentary on this question simply does not provide a satisfactory answer. Season, time, and location of an ornithological observation are essential clues to any identification, so I turned to field work. I decided to try to duplicate Lewis and Clark’s experience.

On June 3, 1996, I set out to spend the night at the same spot where the men heard the mystery bird, at the mouth of the Moreau River, about five miles east of Jefferson City, Missouri. En route, I crossed paths with members of an expedition reenactment crew who were taking a keel boat upstream from St. Charles. The Missouri was in flood, as it often is in June, an occurrence so common we call it the June rise. The reenactment expedition could not stop at the June 3rd campsite and continued to a mooring in the capitol city. Because of the flood, water had backed up the Moreau so far I could not safely walk the two miles downstream to the original campsite, a place under several feet of water anyway. So I spent much of a rainy night hunkered under a highway overpass, the nearest point of access to the Moreau, listening to traffic and waiting for some unexpected bird to burst into song. But I heard nothing other than cars and trucks. I resolved to return the following June with a boat.

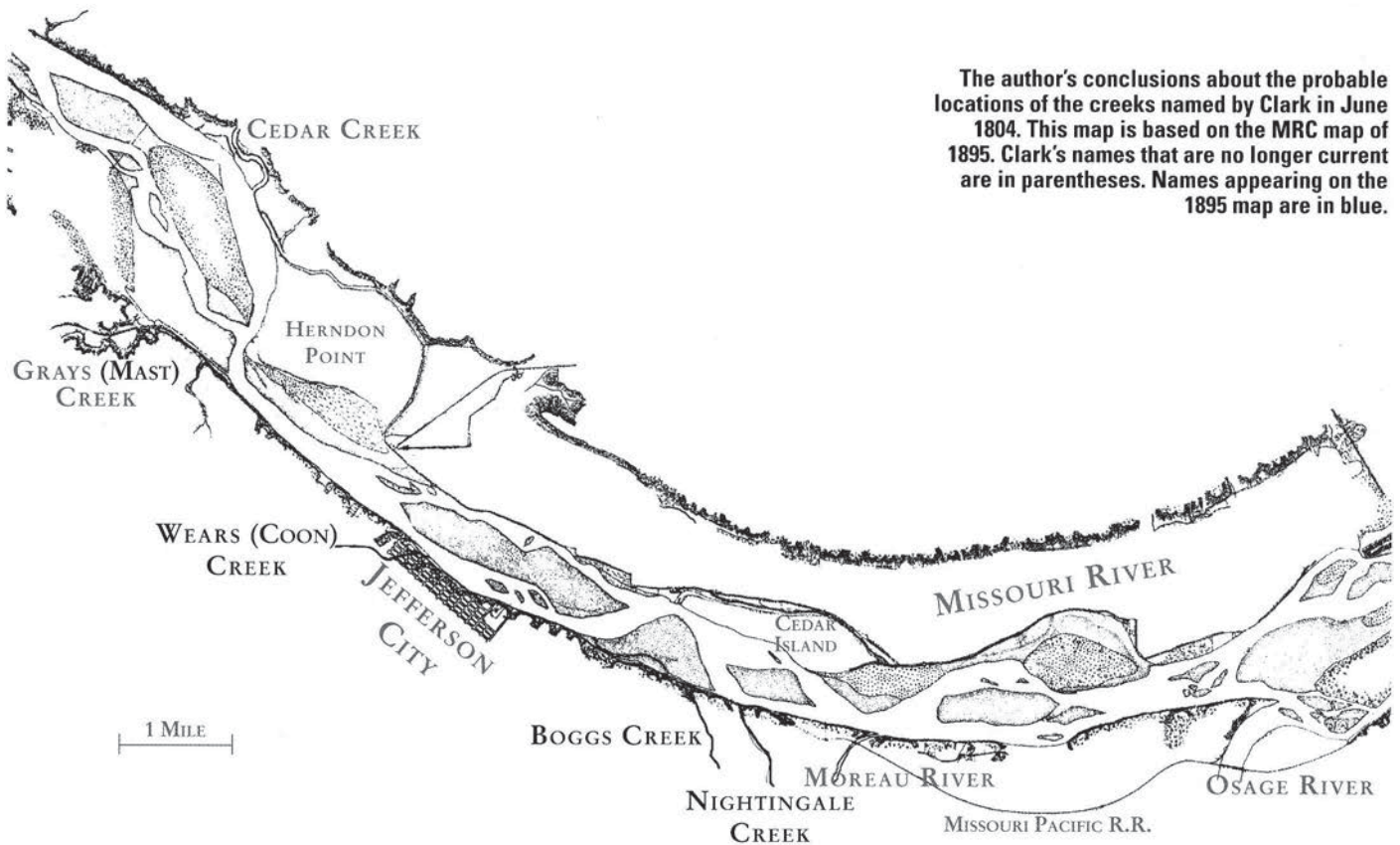
#### THE SEARCH FOR NIGHTINGALE CREEK

Since I had to wait at least a full year before my next attempt to hear the mystery bird on the same day of the month and at the same place as the Captains, I turned my attention to Nightingale Creek. I wanted to see it—what could be more simple?

You would think that Coues or Thwaites would tell us its location in their earlier annotated editions of the Journals. Moulton is the first, however, and his documentation is tantalizing: “Either Wears Creek or Coon Creek, both at Jefferson City.”<sup>19</sup>

ALL BIRD DRAWINGS ON THIS SPREAD FROM WITMER STONE, BIRD STUDIES AT OLD CAPE MAY (DOVER, 1985).

The author's conclusions about the probable locations of the creeks named by Clark in June 1804. This map is based on the MRC map of 1895. Clark's names that are no longer current are in parentheses. Names appearing on the 1895 map are in blue.



The 1895 map of the Missouri River Commission (MRC) shows Coon Creek to be approximately six miles west, or upstream, of the mouth of the Moreau River. With a magnifying glass I could see on the same map a small, unnamed stream going through central Jefferson City. Twentieth-century navigation charts of the Missouri apparently have dropped Coon Creek and now designate the central city stream as Wears Creek.

Lying about five miles from the mouth of the Moreau, Wears Creek today drains acres of parking lots around the capitol buildings, then funnels past an electric power substation to dump city runoff into the Missouri. For the time being at least (I would later change my mind), I took this urban gutter to be Nightingale Creek.

The Journal entries of Clark and Ordway are the only textual sources we have to help us pinpoint the exact location of Nightingale Creek, and there is some conflict between them. The first entry (from Clark's field notes) begins with the broken mast episode, which happened some seven or eight miles above the mouth of the Moreau River. Historians agree that Grays Creek is "Mast Creek," which Clark named for the incident. But Clark's second entry, the notebook record, first

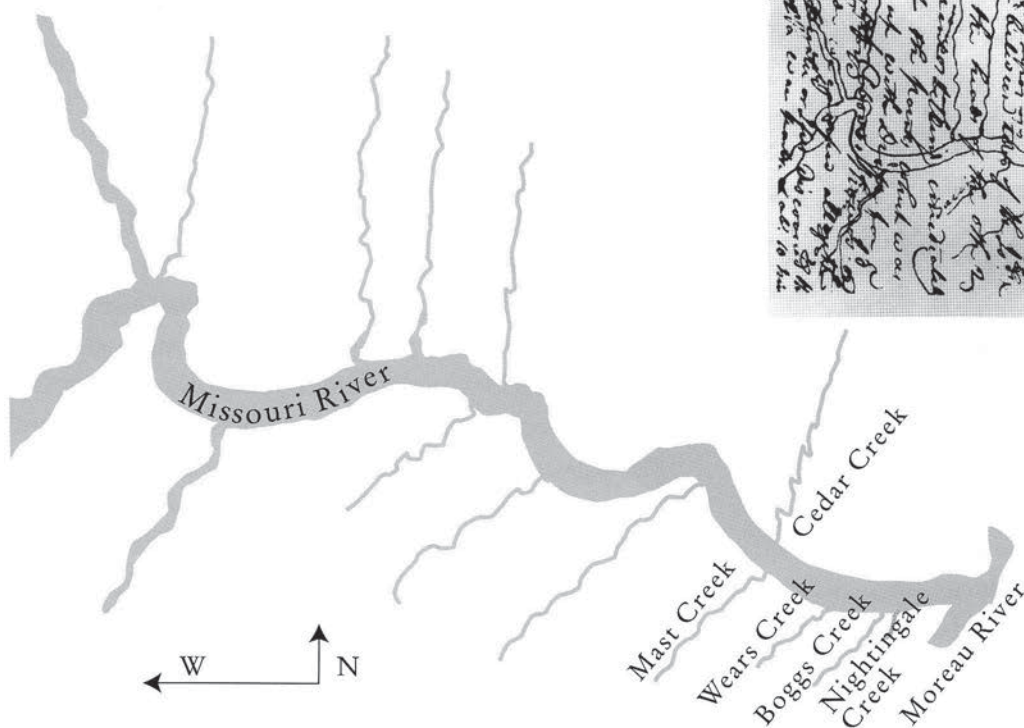
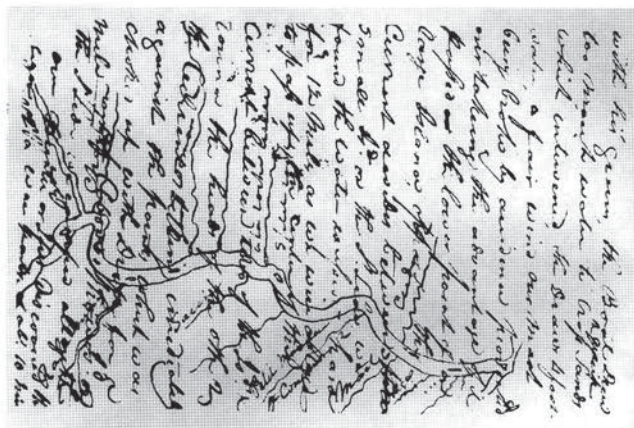
mentions a large island on the starboard side called "Seeder Island." Documenting the location of towheads (islands with trees) in the 1804 channel of the Missouri is impossible. But even the 1895 MRC map shows a large "island" named Cedar Island almost directly across the channel from the mouth of the Moreau River as well as a Cedar Creek several miles upstream and across the river from Grays (Mast) Creek.

If we read the notebook (not the field note) entry as our primary source, we have the following: Nightingale Creek is approximately one mile upstream (west) of the mouth of the Moreau River. But no map that I could find, including the current USGS topographical map, shows a creek a mile west of the Moreau. And that remained true until I looked again at a map Clark himself drew, one printed on page 297 of Volume 2 of the Moulton edition of the Journals.

Moulton's caption identifies this map as a depiction of the "Missouri River near the mouth of the Osage River and West." I believe, however, that the map shows the Missouri west from the mouth of the Moreau, not the Osage.

If you turn this map on its side (see top of next page) and look at it with a loupe, Mast Creek (already docu-

MAP BY MEG DAVIS.



Clark's field notes (above) with his map of the Missouri in the vicinity of present-day Jefferson City. His outline of the river has been excerpted (left) and labeled with the author's identification of tributary streams. Of the streams marked here, Clark's map identifies only Mast and Cedar creeks.

mented as lying some seven or eight miles west of the Moreau) is clearly shown across the Missouri from Cedar Creek. If this map indicates the mouth of the Moreau, three unnamed streams between it and Mast Creek are marked, and the first, a very small one, is about one mile west of the Moreau.

After driving around the streets of Jefferson City, maps in hand, trying without success to locate Nightingale Creek, I realized I could best approach this geographical problem from the river itself.

On June 3, 1998, Heat-Moon took a break from writing *RiverHorse* to join me in a boat on the Moreau River about two miles upstream of its mouth. We wanted to use the daylight hours to explore the Missouri from the Moreau to Jefferson City in search of the elusive Nightingale Creek. (On our drift down to the mouth we did some impromptu birding and registered 14 species—none of them, alas, a likely choice for our mystery bird.)

Once on the Missouri, we found, close to the mouth of the Moreau, river navigation marker 139. At almost exactly the 140-mile marker—that is, one mile upstream (west) of the Moreau—we came upon a small concrete

culvert dated 1926; a few yards upstream of that we came to a second culvert with steps leading to a steep wooded bank. Going ashore, we climbed the slope to some railroad tracks and, to our surprise and delight, beheld a large draw coming down toward the river. The “mouth” of this draw had been blocked by construction of the railway bed in about 1870, so water has been channeled past the grade to the two culverts. In times of high water, the river pushes back through the culverts and floods the draw. If we were correct in believing Nightingale Creek to be one mile from the mouth of the Moreau, we were looking at it.

We returned to the boat and proceeded upstream to the mouth of Boggs Creek, which is also marked by a culvert (dated 1919 on the landward side and 1937 on the river side) lying at mile 141.33—two and a third miles above the mouth of the Moreau. The culvert was wide enough and the water deep enough to accommodate our boat, so in we went, emerging in a backwater, where we found a small public park about three miles east of downtown Jefferson City.<sup>20</sup>

So if Clark's map is, in fact, of the Missouri from the Moreau upstream to Mast (Grays) Creek and beyond,



then Nightingale is the first little stream to the west, Boggs is the second, and Wears the third. That's my theory, at least—and I'm sticking to it.

So even an apparently simple geography question—Where is Nightingale Creek?—has a complex answer, one that depends on how you read the Journals. The probable site of Nightingale Creek deserves notice, because it is just the second creek named by the expedition.<sup>21</sup>

#### CLOSING IN ON THE BIRD

As Heat-Moon and I turned back toward the Moreau River for the second part of our expedition—the quest for the mystery bird—lightning flashed in the southwest, and it began to rain. It was almost dark by the time we snugged the boat against the mud bank of the Moreau. (The wind and rain at least saved us from the expedition's fate of being “tormented by Musquetors.”)

At the expedition's June 3rd campsite, on the south side of the mouth of the Moreau, an area we found recently logged and practically denuded, we sat and listened. We heard trains, planes, cars and trucks, cicadas, and a constant wind, but no birdsong. We had photocopies of the Journals and discussed the texts. What are these words supposed to mean, we wondered: “the first of the kind I ever herd, below this creek and the last”? Clark omitted that line in his notebook entry; he was probably starting a new sentence. But wait—Ordway says almost the same thing: maybe he was just copying Clark's field notes.

As our discussion continued into the night, Heat-Moon finally offered his theory about the bird in question. The idea had come to him, he said, one night about a month earlier, when he was working on his new book. His house is near the Missouri River about 30 miles from where we were, and he spoke of hearing the incessant call of a chuck-will's-widow coming from the very direction of the Moreau. He had heard a chuck-will calling from that direction—and only that direction—every June for the last 14 years. Yet the whip-poor-will was an even more insistent singer around his house. One night he tried to count the number of times it called without significant pause, but he lost track after some 180 repetitions. He gave up easily, I think. One observer counted 834 consecu-

tive calls by a chuck-will's-widow “on a warm June night;” another counted over 1,000 by a whip-poor-will.<sup>22</sup>

Heat-Moon believed the mystery bird was the chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*—cover and inset, below). Initially I resisted the idea. After all, the Captains were the first naturalists ever to describe the poor-will and they knew the whip-poor-will, both goat-suckers (*caprimulgi*) as is the chuck-will's-widow. Their calls are similar. Would they not have noted this?

They described the poor-will as a small, not common, whip-poor-will. One could describe the chuck-will's-widow as a large, not common, whip-poor-will.

In the hours we sat there talking we heard no bird at all. Not one. When rain and lightning became heavy about midnight, we headed home. As it turned out, it rained so much that night that the Moreau crested eight feet above flood stage the next day.

It seems that field work won't answer the question, either. The lower Missouri and its shores have changed too much ever again to replicate precisely the experiences of Lewis and Clark.

In June 1999, another possible piece of the puzzle turned up. Heat-Moon was reading Charles William Janson's *A Stranger in America* and found this passage, first published in 1807:

A traveller has confounded the mockingbird with the Virginia nightingale, and speaks of them as the same bird by different names; but they are very different, both in colour and song, The redbird of Virginia and the Carolinas, is by the English called the Virginia nightingale, a name not given by Americans to any bird of the woods. . . . If the name nightingale were to be given to any of the feathered race in the southern states, that called the “Whip-poor-Will,” is best entitled to it. This bird sings a plaintive note almost the whole night long, resembling the pronunciation of the words by which it is named.<sup>23</sup>

Janson's commentary is as close to the time of the singing of Clark's bird as one could expect. It is clear that the writer, an Englishman, knew the nightingale, and yet he did not hesitate to use the word for the whip-poor-will—a bird that sings at night. But as Coues, an ornithologist, noted, “No species of Nightingale (*Daulias luscini*) in any proper sense of the word is



found in North America.” Perhaps a “nightingale” is simply *any* bird that sings at night.

In central Missouri we have two birds that easily fit this requirement, especially in the spring. One is common throughout the state—the whip-poor-will. The other, less common—the chuck-will’s-widow—just about reaches its northern limit in central Missouri, and it fits all the requisites to become the nightsinger of June 3, 1804.

The mystery bird captured the attention of the expedition because of its song, its call, its noise in the night. Whip-poor-wills and chuck-wills are both nightjars, so called because of their penetrating, repetitious calls. The bird the expedition heard must have jarred the night. It could well have been a chuck-will’s-widow. That’s Heat-Moon’s theory—and I’m sticking to it.

I would like to think that Wears Creek, now merely a sorry and polluted drainage ditch, is not the stream graced with the name of an extraordinary bird. I would like to think that someday there will be a plaque or marker along the Missouri River east of Jefferson City pointing out the probable site of Nightingale Creek, the second stream named by the expedition.

Reading the Journals in a book-lined room, looking at maps, loupe in hand, and backtracking footnotes through a century of scholarship will never answer all the questions raised by the texts. Nor will field work resolve all the difficulties. The lower Missouri River has been so altered—brutalized, ripped, chopped, and channeled—that never again can we replicate the experiences of Lewis and Clark. But we can try.

Perhaps in so doing, we will attain a higher degree of understanding, if not appreciation, of their exploits. And it will make us more careful readers of the Journals.

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*Foundation member James Wallace lives in Fayette, Missouri, and is a seller of used, rare, and out-of-print books. He is a former professor of French literature at the University of Missouri.*

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>William Least Heat-Moon, *River Horse* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1999).

<sup>2</sup>Bernard DeVoto, ed., *The Journals of Lewis and Clark*, American Heritage Library (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1981).

<sup>3</sup>Elliott Coues, ed., *The History of the Lewis and Clark Expedi-*

*tion* (New York: Dover Publications, n.d.), 3 vols.

<sup>4</sup>Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition 1804-06* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1904-05), 8 vols.

<sup>5</sup>Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986-99, 12 volumes), Vol. 2, p. 275. “Stbd” and “Starbd,” of course, refer to the starboard or right (north) bank heading upstream, and “Lbd” the larboard or left (south) bank.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Moulton, Vol. 9, p. 10.

<sup>8</sup>Coues, Vol. 1, p. 14.

<sup>9</sup>Thwaites, Vol. 1, p. 39. I quote here from the reprint edition (The Antiquarian Press, 1959).

<sup>10</sup>Elizah Criswell, *Lewis and Clark: Linguistic Pioneers* (Columbia: University of Missouri Studies, Vol. 15, 1940), p. 59.

<sup>11</sup>Raymond D. Burroughs, *The Natural History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1961), pp. 257-58.

<sup>12</sup>Paul Russell Cutright, *Lewis and Clark: Pioneering Naturalists* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, Bison Books, 1989), p. 55.

<sup>13</sup>Virginia C. Holmgren, “Birds of the Lewis and Clark Journals,” *We Proceeded On*, Vol. 10, Nos. 2 and 3, May 1984.

<sup>14</sup>John K. Terres, ed., *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds* (New York: National Audubon Society, 1980), p. 632. The veery (a thrush) is also mentioned as a “nightingale.”

<sup>15</sup>Moulton, Vol. 2, p. 276.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 340.

<sup>17</sup>U.S. Naval Observatory (<http://tycho.usnonavymil/vphase.html>)

<sup>18</sup>Moulton, Vol. 4, p. 276.

<sup>19</sup>Moulton, Vol. 2, p. 276.

<sup>20</sup>A map drawn by Joseph Nicollet in 1839 (see Raymond Wood, “Joseph N. Nicollet’s 1839 Manuscript Maps,” *Illinois State Scientific Papers*, Vol. 24, 1993) shows one unnamed stream between the Moreau and Jefferson City, but one cannot tell whether this creek is Nightingale or Boggs Creek.

<sup>21</sup>Stephen Ambrose, in *Undaunted Courage* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996, p. 149), gets this wrong. He writes that when the Captains named a stream on July 4, 1804, it was the second time they had “bestowed a name.” In fact, the first was Cupboard Creek, on June 3. Second and third were Nightingale Creek and Mast Creek, on June 4. Fourth and fifth were Lead Creek and Sand Creek, on June 5.

<sup>22</sup>Terres, pp. 633, 635.

<sup>23</sup>Charles William Janson, *A Stranger in America 1793-1806* (London, 1807). I quote here from the reprint edition (New York: The Press of the Pioneers, Inc., 1935), p. 355.

# Life among the Nee Mee Poo

## Salmon and His People: Fish & Fishing in Nez Perce Culture

Dan Landeen and Allen Pinkham

Confluence Press

249 pages

\$29.95 paperback

The Lewis and Clark Expedition is more than just a story about some young American soldiers trekking across a tremendous succession of landscapes new to them. It's also a story about many native tribes who lived in those landscapes and helped those young soldiers pass through—and invariably came to regret it.

In the coming bicentennial of the expedition—2003 to 2006—millions of modern American citizens and foreign tourists will relearn the story, and for the first time in 200 years, both sides of the story will be told. It's appropriate that the tribes will get to tell their stories their own ways.

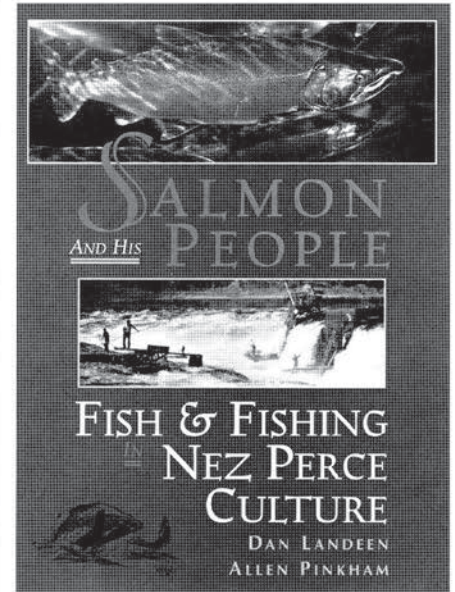
Many LCTHF members have already met one of those storytellers: Allen Pinkham, the affable and able Bicentennial Council representative of the Nez Perce.

The Nez Perce first looked on Lewis and Clark's ragged, starving men as "half human and half creature."

Pinkham has collaborated with Nez Perce wildlife biologist Dan Landeen on a splendid, informative, beautifully illustrated book, *Salmon and His People: Fish and Fishing in Nez Perce Culture*.

The publisher (part of Lewis-Clark State College, in Lewiston, Idaho) bills the book as a "nature guide," but it is much more than that. It is a folk history, a tract on tribal sovereignty, a fish taxonomy, modern chronicle, and introduction to a people who have, since Lewis and Clark, been helpful, honest, and fair with the invading culture. The only time the Nez Perce did battle with the U.S. Army was when they were forced to, and that time their leader, Chief Joseph, made the army look pretty foolish.

Lewis and Clark buffs tend to think of the Nez Perce in terms of their ex-



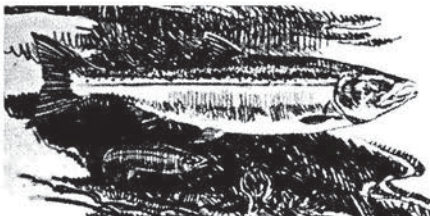
cellent horse herds rather than their fish, because that was a main hinge of the explorers' relationship with them. But salmon and other fish have long been both the food and spiritual sustenance of the Nez Perce.

The tribe's more recent battles have been over the white man's destruction of their fishing livelihood—legal battles with dam builders, state governments, river polluters, etc. *Salmon and His People* chronicles those battles, and without understanding them you can't understand who the Nez Perce people are today.

Though Landeen and Pinkham are named as authors, they acknowledge that the book is a production of the Nez Perce people, to whom it's dedicated. Many tribal members are quoted—wise, pithy, funny quotes from many interviews. Their remarkable knowledge of fish and fishing is fascinating; their recollection of the loss of traditional fisheries is heartbreaking.

Filled with sociological and environmental information and insights, the book nevertheless is readable, whimsical, and full of magic. Pinkham's retelling of the Creation stories is like Aesop's Fables, but better: in addition to the moral of any story, he can point out landmarks and natural formations that are relics of the storied event.

Oral traditions of the arrival of



Clockwise from upper left: Nez Perce fisherman, salmon run, chinook salmon, steelhead trout.

Lewis and Clark give us a less-than-glorious notion of how our heroes looked to others. In the first place, the coming of white men had already been prophesied, but when the Nez Perce first saw them, says Pinkham, "they did not know what to make of these ragged, starved, bearded beings who had eyes that looked fishlike. The tribe described them as "half human and half creature."

Some Nez Perce thought they should be killed. But an old woman named Wetxuwiss, whom white traders had once befriended, argued that they should be treated well, and from then on they were treated well indeed. Nez Perce hospitality was legendary.

But since Lewis and Clark, white men in general have not been well-behaved guests in Nez Perce country. Carla HighEagle, a well-known Nez Perce spokesman, says: "The doctrine of Manifest Destiny proposes a philosophy that man needs to conquer nature instead of living with nature. I think that this is not the case because as we destroy nature we destroy ourselves."

Soon, white men were hogging the Nez Percés' land and resources, even begrudging them their age-old right to fish in their traditional places. Dams and pollution took more toll. The sacred fishing ways diminished.

"Declining salmon runs are destroying native culture," says Allen Slickpoo, Sr. "The sense of loss is like going to church and all of a sudden somebody has removed all the Bibles."

Readers will squirm when they see how well the Nez Perce understand everything that's been done to them. The book is very candid.

But the Nee Mee Poo, as they call themselves, are still a generous, proud, dignified people, and they still offer the best they have to visitors—in this case, a knowledge of who they are and what they believe, and a great deal of environmental wisdom that Lewis and Clark followers must learn soon, before we destroy all of nature, and ourselves with it.

—James Alexander Thom

## A digest version of the Captains' journals

### The Essential Lewis and Clark

Landon Y. Jones, ed.

Ecco/HarperCollins

203 pages

\$24 hardcover

HarperCollins has developed a series of books that extract the "essential" representations of selected writers. Landon Y. Jones has added to that series with *The Essential Lewis and Clark*.

Jones has selected his essential extracts from the Captains' journals. His source was Reubin Gold Thwaites's *Original Journals Of the Lewis And Clark Expedition* (1904-5). Jones's 270 essentials cover the Expedition's journey from Clark's entry of May 14, 1804 ("I set out at 4 o'clock P.M., . . . and proceeded on under a jentle brease up the Missouriie.") through September 26, 1806 ("A fine morning we commenced wrighting &c."). Footnotes are at a minimum, with many from Thwaites's work. Jones also includes Lewis's report to President Jefferson.

The selection presents the newcomer to Lewis and Clark with a handy one-volume telling of their wondrous journey. More seasoned Lewis and Clark armchair adventurers can follow the familiar story to see if the editor selected their "essential" journal quotes.

Jones's essentials include major events such as the 1804 encounter with the territorial overlords—the Teton Sioux. The early meetings and negotiations with Touissant Charbonneau are a prelude to the challenge he later presented to the success of the endeavor.

A concise volume of excerpts, suitable for both seasoned Lewis and Clark buffs and neophytes.

The unnamed Sacagawea gives birth to her son with the help of crushed rattlesnake rings on February 11, 1805. Later, she insists on being part of the contingent that examined the whale carcass on the Oregon coast. Also included are animals—Lewis's dog, Seaman, as well buffalo, rattlesnakes, the ubiquitous mosquitoes, and the grizzly bears that

terrorized the expedition on the high plains.

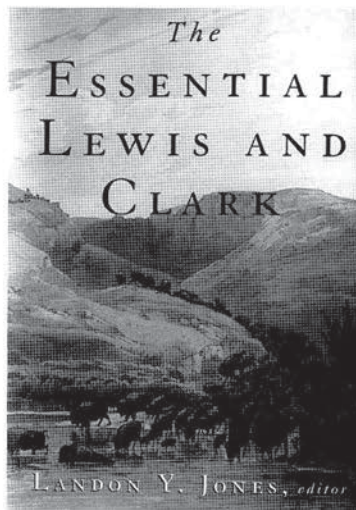
Along with selections chronicling the adventures of our "writingest explorers," Jones favors many of their poetic ruminations, such as Lewis's thoughts on the 1805 departure from Fort Mandan and his melancholy reflections on his 31st birthday.

I lamented the absence of some of my favorite "essentials"—the early concerns

about Shannon's 1804 absence, the first 4th of July, and the March 23, 1806, comments on leaving Fort Clatsop.

The addition of daily geographic locations would have helped the reader follow the journey on a map, but this is a minor omission. All in all, Jones makes a good contribution to the Lewis and Clark bookshelf: a great gift to that friend who is still a little fogged on one's interest in Lewis and Clark, or a concise volume for the seasoned student to carry while on the trail in pursuit of personal insights from the expedition's story.

—Jerry Garrett



## The hills are alive with the sound of Lewis & Clark

### West for America: A Musical Anthology

David Walburn  
Cabin South Productions  
\$15 (CD), \$10 (cassette)

Two new musical CDs are of special interest to Lewis and Clark enthusiasts. These are “West for America” by David Walburn and “Lewis and Clark” by the Trail Band. Both CDs contain moving, lyrical collections of Lewis and Clark-related songs. David Walburn’s album is almost entirely composed of original works, whereas the Trail Band presents mostly period pieces from the era of Lewis and Clark.

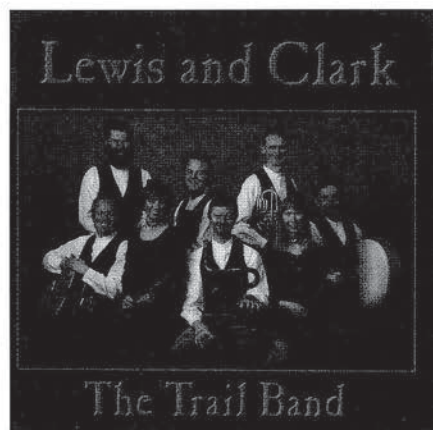
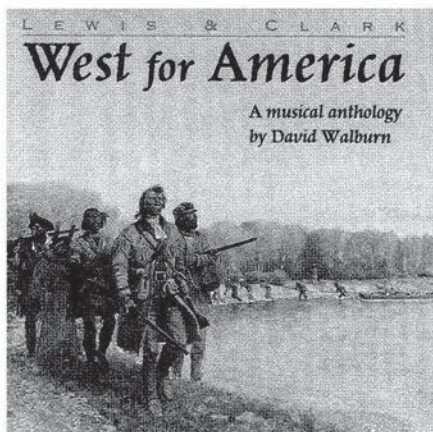
David Walburn’s crisp guitar and hearty vocals explore the human elements of the Lewis and Clark expedition—from the homesickness and loneliness suffered by Corps members, as well as those they left behind, to the wanderlust and excitement of exploring, undershadowed by the fear of the unknown, their patriotic pride, their camaraderie, and the loss of one of their own.

The title song, “West for America,” features some lively fiddle and mandolin work by Christian Johnson and captures the excitement as the Corps sets off on its great journey. The tune “Push and Pull” describes the explorers’ daily struggle against the Missouri’s current. In “Whiskey Down” they toast Sergeant Charles Floyd: “Here’s to Sergeant Floyd, God rest his soul, may he never be forgotten when this story’s told.”

The song “God Only Knows” deals with their fears of the unknown, their doubts and musings about how and whether they will overcome all the obstacles between them and their distant goal. “Sacagawea’s Prayer” addresses many of these same issues, but adds the extra burden that “she has to be strong for the boy,” in reference to her baby,

### Lewis and Clark

The Trail Band  
Trails End Productions  
\$17 (CD), \$12 (cassette)



Two new albums offer insight into the sufferings and triumphs of the Corps of Discovery.

Jean Baptiste. “The Dalles” is a rousing and raucous instrumental, aided by John Dunnigan’s banjo skills, that musically depicts the ferocious white water they faced on the Columbia.

“How Long Has It Been” deals with the homesickness they must have felt during their long stay at Fort Clatsop. But the song I found most thought-provoking was “In All My Days.” As the explorers approached St. Louis on the return trip, it seems natural that

Ross’s song, “Heart of God,” a tribute to Lewis, starts out with the words, “Won’t you raise a song to a soldier gone, to a captain dying young.”

they would quietly reminisce about the sights and sounds of their nearly completed journey—the welcome roar of the Great Falls, or how hard it might be to properly describe the Rockies to someone familiar only with the eastern mountains. They look forward joyfully to their triumphant return. At the same time, they feel an unconscious sadness, as though sensing their lives have peaked with this grand accomplishment.

Walburn created *West for America* after encouragement from his friend Jack Gladstone, whose name is familiar to those who saw him perform during the Foundation’s 1998 annual meeting, in Great Falls. The album is produced by Cabin South Productions, P.O. Box 1746, Whitefish, MT 59937 (406-862-0037).

The Trail Band’s latest CD, *Lewis and Clark*, is a work of art and the perfect venue for this enthusiastic and extremely talented group. Members of the band, especially the husband-and-wife musicologist team of Phil and Gayle Neuman, spent long hours researching the period songs selected for this album. This was challenging work because many old tunes were around for years before they were copyrighted or published. Defining the “era” as extending from Lewis’s birth (1774) through Clark’s death (1838), they feel the material selected, such as “The Rose Tree,” “The Ash Grove,” “Johnny’s Gone For a Soldier,” “Drive the Cold Winter Away,” “The Sussex Carol,” “Bonaparte’s Retreat” and “Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine,” would have been familiar to persons of the time. Also selected are represen-

tative French-Canadian fiddle tunes, vibrantly played by Skip Parente and Gayle Neuman.

The album contains two Native-American tunes, selected on recommendation from traditional native singer Thomas Morning Owl (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla), who considers both to be “very old.” It was a challenge to the band to learn to properly sing the “vocables” (the syllables sung) as well as accommodating the alternate time-counting required.

The album also features two pieces by Corelli, a favorite composer of Thomas Jefferson. For these songs, band member Phil Neuman made and used two period instruments, the sausage bassoon and the serpent, which you will likely hear nowhere else.

Two new songs were penned for this album. As producer and songwriter Marv Ross told me, “Writing new songs that tell the stories brings to life the history better than just narrative placed around early music songs that say nothing about the expedition itself.” Ross’s song, “Heart of God,” a tribute to Meriwether Lewis, starts out with the words, “Won’t you raise a song to a soldier gone, to a captain dying young.” The other new song, “Up the Missouri,” by the band’s musical director, Cal Scott, tells Sergeant Gass’s tale of how Lewis “interceded and spoke on my behalf, and took me as a member of the Corps.”

Eleven of the album’s songs debuted at the fourth annual Planning Workshop of the National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council in Vancouver, Washington, in April 1999. A new concert production based on the album will include a wider variety of music in addition to the album tunes. The production will feature Native-American singer Arlie Neskahi and the band members in costumes. This band’s enthusiasm shows brightly on the album and in concert.

—Jay Rasmussen

More on these albums can be found on the artists’ Web pages, [www.davidwalburn.com](http://www.davidwalburn.com) and [www.trailband.com](http://www.trailband.com).

## Essays probe American exploration

### Surveying the Record: North American Scientific Exploration to 1930

Edward C. Carter II, ed.

American Philosophical Society

334 pages \$25 hardcover

*“Geographers in Afric maps, with savage pictures fill their gaps, and o’er unhabited downs, Place elephants in want of towns.”*

—Jonathan Swift

The goal of *Surveying the Record* is “to explore American exploration,” according to John Logan Allen, one of a panel of scholars who contributed to this collection of papers from a 1997 conference sponsored by the American Philosophical Society. Foundation members Allen and James Ronda played major roles in putting the conference together and helping to chair it. From the 27 presentations by historians, geographers, anthropologists, archaeologists, and others, Edward C. Carter II, the society’s librarian,

has selected 16 essays to give us an excellent overview of a vast and endlessly engaging subject.

Allen’s “Where We Are and How We Got There” introduced the conference and is the lead essay in the book. A professor of geography at the University of Connecticut, he is best known to Foundation members as the author of *Passage through the Garden: Lewis and Clark and the Image of the American Northwest*, a book inspired by another distinguished scholar, John Kirtland Wright. In the first year of Allen’s doctoral studies, Wright asked him, “Wouldn’t it be interesting if we knew something about the world view

of Lewis and Clark in 1804?” That off-handed question led to much of his work for the next 30 years.

Allen quotes Wright on the three components of exploration: First, “the influence of earlier geographical knowledge and belief upon the course of exploration; second, the actual relations between the course of exploration and the nature of the regions explored; and, third, the contributions made by exploration to subsequent geographical knowledge.”

The Lewis and Clark Expedition is an outstanding example of this process. One has only to look at Thomas Jefferson’s concept of “geographical balance”—that the mountains in the West would be the mirror image of the mountains in the East, with just a short portage from the east-flowing river to



Terra incognita: North America, 1788

the west-flowing river—to see why it was easy for him to believe there was a Northwest Passage waiting to be discovered. Of course, Lewis and Clark failed to find that mythical passage, but in seeking it they made geographical and scientific discoveries that replaced conjecture with hard knowledge.

Although *Surveying the Record* has only two essays on Lewis and Clark, their expedition is a constant thread throughout it. For example, in an essay on “The Romantic and the Technical in Early Nineteenth-Century American Exploration,” Brad Hume, a historian at the University of Dayton, writes that beginning with Lewis and Clark “both the size and the methods of scientific travel changed. The average size of expedition groups from 1800-1850 was roughly 25 and most of these were under military supervision. The groups were assembled



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Address inquiries to Cari Karns, P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403. Tel: 406-454-1234/fax:406-771-9237. E-mail: membership@lewisandclark.org.

## Chapter News

# Missouri River islands renamed for York



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Actually, the islands have been renamed for York, for whom Clark named the islands in late July 1805, when the Corps of Discovery passed them on its way toward the Continental Divide.

According to *The Townsend Star*, the chapter began the drive to name the privately owned island cluster in 1998. While studying a copy of Clark's field map, Crimson Bluffs member Hal Price noticed that Clark's sketch of the eight islands [above] resembled a group of existing but now unnamed islands five miles upstream (south) of Townsend. Clark's notation on the map was "Yorks 8 Islands."

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surveying and celestial navigation.

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Philadelphia will host the Foundation's annual meeting in August 2003, which will kick off the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. President Frank Muhly hopes Ellicott's marker will be the first of five to be placed over the next three years

to honor Pennsylvanians associated with Lewis. The others were Benjamin Smith Barton, Robert Patterson, Benjamin Rush, and Caspar Wistar.

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**Spencer Overholser, Nancy Davis, and Tom Davis with the new Ellicott marker.**

# Lewis bronze on display in White House

Statuette of "Lewis the Naturalist" includes his faithful Seaman

A 20-inch-tall bronze sculpture of Meriwether Lewis examining the last plant collected on the Lewis and Clark Expedition is now on permanent display in the White House, in the hall just outside the room where Lewis and Thomas Jefferson often ate their meals.

The bronze shows Lewis, accompanied by his faithful dog, Seaman, collecting a raccoon grape (*Ampelopsis cordata*), probably in the vicinity of present-day Leavenworth, Kansas, on September 14, 1806.

As director of natural resources for Fort Leavenworth and secretary of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council, I was intrigued to learn of Lewis's plant collecting in my neighborhood several years ago when reading Paul Cutright's *Lewis and Clark: Pioneering Naturalists*. As a way of memorializing his discovery of what I think of as the "Leavenworth grape," I started looking for a sculptor to cast the scene in bronze. I eventually settled on Kansas City artist Kwan Ku. One of the things that sold me on Ku was another of his bronzes, which I saw on a visit to his studio: a graceful statuette of an Indian woman amid a flock of ducks [inset, right]. Until I told him, Wu (a native of China who came to the United States in 1997) was totally unaware of Sacagawea—much less that he had created a bronze of her! I call his statuette *Bird Woman*.



Within a week of his selection, Wu had completed a clay prototype of *Lewis the Naturalist*. It showed him examining the raccoon grape while carrying a rifle. At my suggestion he replaced the weapon with a magnifying glass to emphasize the peaceful nature of the expedition.

Lewis's type specimen of the raccoon grape is in the herbarium collection at the Academy of Natural Sciences (ANS), in Philadelphia. I had been in touch with the ANS, and after the White House invited it to display something related to Lewis and Clark as part of the Millennium Project, we talked about what might be appropriate and quickly settled on *Lewis the*

*Naturalist*. Wu donated the first casting of a planned limited edition of 35.

The Foundation is offering its members castings of both *Lewis the Naturalist* and *Bird Woman*. The price is \$3,500 each, and the artist is donating a portion of his receipts from these sales to the Foundation's Young Adults Committee to further its programs. The Lewis and Clark Expedition was all about America's future. Our youth today embody that future, and I can't imagine a more fitting use of Wu's generosity.

Eventually, Wu will "scale up" *Lewis the Naturalist* to produce a heroic-size, nine-foot statue to be placed by a stream entering the Missouri River in Landing Park in Leavenworth. Philadelphia also wants a full-size statue, and the race is on to see which city will erect one first.

Both bronzes will be displayed at the annual meeting in Dillon, Montana, August 13-16.



—Matt Nowak

Matt Nowak chairs the Foundation's Young Adults Committee. For more information about the sale of Wu's bronzes to benefit the committee, contact Nowak at 913-727-3871 (jnowak@birch.net) or the artist at 913-381-0707.

## Briefings

### YOUNG ADULT AWARD

The Young Adults Committee is looking for a few good candidates for the Foundation's annual Young Adult Award. Send nominations to Matt Nowak at 1007 North 2nd St., Lansing, KS 66043-1152 (jnowak@birch.net).

### TRAIL WORK CLIPS & VIDEOS

Jeff Olson, the Foundation's new trail

coordinator, is looking for press clippings and audio and video news that feature the work of local chapters along the Lewis and Clark Trail. They should be sent to him at LCTHF, POB 2376, Bismarck, ND 58502 (701-258-1960).

### L&C ON THE WEB

Updates to the Discovering Lewis and Clark Web site (www.lewis-clark.org)

include: "Fallout Over Freedom," a treatment of York. The page has added larger versions of the 3D renderings of the Model 1803 Harpers Ferry rifle ("Discovery Paths">"Technology"). The Oregon grape has been added to the tour of Fort Clatsop. On the homepage navigation pane, click on Clark's nutcracker and Lewis's woodpecker and these birds will sing.





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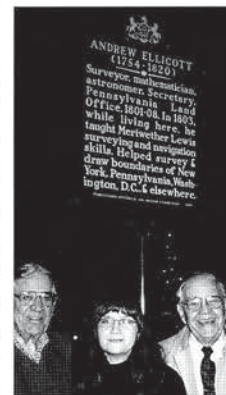
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**Spencer Overholser, Nancy Davis, and Tom Davis with the new Ellicott marker.**

## Moulton in residence

“Your observations are to be taken with great pains & accuracy, to be entered distinctly & intelligibly for others as well as yourself.” President Thomas Jefferson’s instructions to Meriwether Lewis are why we have so much written material about the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The number of printed volumes written by members of the Expedition is small, fewer than 20. But the volumes written by scholars of the Corps of Discovery can fill a good-sized library, including the Foundation’s, housed in the Lewis and Clark Interpretative Center in Great Falls, Montana.

In the nearly 200 years since Jefferson directed Lewis to put on paper what he saw and did during the exploration, only four men have edited and produced volumes of the actual words written by the expedition’s journalists: Nicholas Biddle, Elliot Coues, Reuben Gold Thwaites, and Gary Moulton. The efforts of all four editors are included in the Foundation’s library. This summer, Dr. Moulton will move his office from the University of Nebraska to the Foundation’s library in Great Falls, where he will be our scholar in residence for five weeks, starting in mid-June. Dr. Moulton, whose residency is sponsored by the Montana Committee for the Humanities, the National Park Service, and the Foundation, will make several public presentations, but for the most part he will be in the library working on a book project and interacting with visitors and researchers using the many volumes in our collection.

Dr. Moulton’s residency is part of a long-term program that will place a Lewis and Clark scholar in the Foundation’s library every summer. The Archives Committee has made great strides in organizing the library and making it more accessible. Dr. Moulton’s visit is the start of an exciting new phase in its development.

—Ella Mae Howard  
Archives Committee, LCTHF

*A short week of fun and laughter,  
adventure and enlightenment,*

### Around the campfires of the Lolo Trail with Clay Jenkinson and Meriwether Lewis

1866 Prof. Marcy of Mass writes:  
"The *Lu Lu Trail* will furnish the  
artist and the naturalist *the rarest  
scenery and the richest experience  
to be found on the continent.*"

The history of the motor way is rich.  
Many sites are revered by American  
Indians and valued for their  
primitive state.

Two departures July 24-28, and  
August 20-25. Add-on Grizzly Bear  
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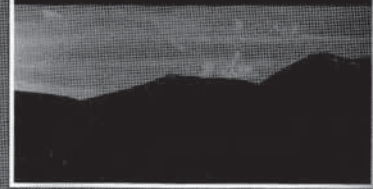
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## Postings

### Karns and Olson join Foundation staff

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation has added two members to its staff: Cari Karns, the new membership coordinator, and Jeff Olson, the new (and first) trail coordinator.

Karns, who works out of the Foundation's headquarters in Great Falls, Montana, is a native of Great Falls and holds a B.A. degree from Carroll College in Helena, Montana, and a master's in education from Montana State University-Billings. Before joining the Foundation's staff in December she spent five years at Rocky Mountain College in Billings as associate director of admissions and taught for two years in Japan with the Kumamoto Prefecture Board.

As membership coordinator, Karns keeps track of the Foundation's approximately 2,700 members, a number growing by 20 percent per year. As a collateral duty she is also WPO's advertising director. She replaces Megan Smith, who left in December when her husband, an Air Force officer, was transferred out of the Great Falls area.

Olson comes to the Foundation from the Bismarck (North Dakota) *Tribune*, where he has worked as a journalist for the last 16 years and was the paper's lead writer on Lewis and Clark. He has traveled the Lewis and Clark Trail from St. Louis to Seaside, Oregon. In his new position, which he assumed in February, he works with government agencies, landowners, and tribal authorities to promote trail stewardship in preparation for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. He is based in Bismarck.

### INSTRUCTORS WANTED

This summer, six Elderhostel programs will trace the path of Lewis and Clark. Participants will set out by motorcoach from St. Charles, Missouri, to the Columbia River and the Pacific Coast. The 17-day programs will include field trips



Cari Karns



Jeff Olson

to historic sites and interpretive centers, lectures, boat excursions, and living-history exhibits. An instructor accompanying each group will give formal presentations and provide commentary during travel between sites.

Elderhostel is seeking instructors for the June 11-27 and July 9-25 programs. Applicants should have a broad knowledge of the Corps of Discovery's journey, teaching experience (high school or college level preferred), enthusiasm, and the ability to share information effectively. Those interested should contact Betsey Miller at 503-786-8080 or by e-mail at [betsyhm@frontiernet.net](mailto:betsyhm@frontiernet.net).

### FOR THE RECORD

Several errors crept into the February WPO. Jerry Pontow of Hastings, Iowa, tells us that in the obituary of Blair Chicoine on page 6, the re-enactment group we called the Corps of Discovery is actually named the Discovery Corps. Also in that issue, the correct byline on the article on page 33 about Robert Weir's L&C collectibles is Jane Weber, chair of the Foundation's Archives Library Committee. In Nancy Davis's profile of Caspar Wistar, we had problems with the last four endnotes. They should be: 46: *DSB*, p. 456; 47: Caldwell, pp. 19-20; 48: *DAB*, p. 438; 49: Tilghman, pp. 983,985; and 50: *History of the Wistar Association*, p. 8.

In the issue of last August, writer Robert R. Hunt alerts us to several errors in his article "Luck or Providence? Narrow Escapes on the Lewis and Clark Expedition." On the last line of the third column of page 10, the word should be "sent." At the top of the center column on page 11, the Jackson County referred to is in Nebraska, not South Dakota. On page 12, the last endnote was omitted. It should read: "Shakespeare's Hamlet has previously appeared in the pages of WPO: See Paul Russell Cutright, 'Rest, Rest, Perturbed Spirit' (about the death of Meriwether Lewis), WPO, Vol. 12, No. 1, March 1986, pp. 7-16." Also in that issue, in the table of contents and the editor's note prefacing the article "What Happens When We Stop a River's Meandering" we misspelled the name of the author, Daniel Botkin.

—THE EDITOR

# Cruzatte

*Soundings continued from page 36*

etrating eye of the amorite.”

This is not to say that the Journals never mention music, song, or dance, for they do occasionally describe evening festivities among the men. I presume that the journal writers took such events for granted and recorded them less often than they occurred.

Though not part of the Journals, one of my favorite references to dancing comes from a letter Clark wrote to Charbonneau toward the end of the expedition. He concludes with a reference to Jean Baptiste Charbonneau (Pompey), the person I imagine appreciating Cruzatte’s fiddling more than anyone else. Clark wishes Charbonneau and his family “great suckcess & with anxious expectations of seeing my little dancing boy Baptist.”<sup>2</sup>

Even though my own little dancing boy upstaged me, I was delighted by Ben’s telling of the story of that incident of August 11, 1806, in the willow thicket on the Missouri. With words and gestures his narrative moved skillfully from the two men setting out to hunt, through the near-sighted Cruzatte’s mistaking Lewis for an elk, to the denouement—the part he knew his classmates would appreciate the most. When Ben finished, I thanked him, pleased at his knowledge of Cruzatte’s contribution to the Lewis and Clark Expedition, but grateful that the other classes that would see my performance would be spared the revelation that my favorite fiddler shot Meriwether Lewis in the rump.

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*Foundation member Dan Slosberg lives in Los Angeles. A longer version of this essay appeared in the January newsletter of the California Chapter of the LCTHF.*

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986-99, 12 volumes), Vol. 5, p. 32. All Journal quotations are from Moulton, Vols. 2-11.

<sup>2</sup>*We Proceeded On*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (February 2000), p. 21.

L&C Trail  
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## Music, mirth, and Pierre Cruzatte

*The nearsighted fiddler captivates both father and son, but for different reasons*

BY DAN SLOSBERG

“Cruzatte shot him *right here*,” my five-year-old son, Benjamin, said, slapping his behind. “Right in the butt, right here in the butt.” The other 19 children in Mrs. Tong’s kindergarten weren’t sure what to think about this surprise reference to an explorer’s *derrière*. From their seats on the floor, Ben’s giggling classmates looked to me and Mrs. Tong for cues on how to react. I hadn’t intended to tell Ben’s class about the episode for which most people remember Pierre Cruzatte, the Corps of Discovery’s master boatman and fiddler, who accidentally shot Meriwether Lewis while the two were hunting elk on a willow-choked island on the Missouri. But Ben couldn’t let me get away with the omission. As soon as I mentioned Cruzatte, he stood up and told the story from start to finish, stealing center stage while his teacher and I sat by helplessly.

For the last year I’ve been developing a school program about the music, dance, and song of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Although the program won’t be ready to sail for a while, I’ve been testing its seaworthiness on classes at Ben’s elementary school. In my research, I have spent months reading through the expedition’s journals, trying to get an overall sense of the journey while learning as much as I can about Cruzatte and the performing arts as practiced by the Corps of Discovery.

If the Captains had devoted as much ink to music, song, and dance as they did to dog meat, I’d be fiddling pretty. But in spite of the relative silence of the Journals on the performing arts, reading through them has been a great adventure. Among the many things I’ve learned is that Lewis, despite his reputation as being moody and prone to depression, had a nice, if understated, sense of humor. On August 2, 1805, for example, Patrick Gass lost Lewis’s tomahawk. After fruitless attempts to find it, Lewis wrote in an entry both funny and tenderly paternal, “regret the loss of this usefull implement, however accedents will happen in the best of families.”<sup>1</sup>

Lewis’s humor surfaces most frequently when he writes



The explorers dance to the lively fiddle of Cruzatte (right).

about food and sex. On the outbound journey, he bemoans the expedition’s impending exit from buffalo country, which means they will no longer be able to feast on Touissant Charbonneau’s chef d’oeuvre, the Boudin Blanc, a tasty sausage made of bison meat. These “white puddings,” Lewis notes on July 3, 1805, “will be irretrievably lost and Sharbono out of employment.” But by January 5, 1806, after the expedition has settled into winter quarters at Fort Clatsop, Lewis is “not very particular” about his meat,

“the flesh of the dog the horse and the wolf having from habit become equally formiliar with any other[.] I have learned to think that if the chord be sufficiently strong, which binds the soul and boddy together, it dose not so much matter about the materials which compose it.”

On February 26, 1806, while still at Fort Clatsop, Lewis jokes dryly about the deteriorating state of their larder. “[W]e have th[r]ee days provision only in store and that of the most inferiour dryed Elk a little tainted. *a comfortable prospect for good living.*” By March 11, however, the Corps of Discovery is heading up the Columbia and prospects have improved: “we once more live in *clover*; Anchovies fresh Sturgeon and Wappetoe [roots].”

As for sex, Lewis often finds delightful ways to address the subject. On August 19, 1805, after the expedition has reached the Shoshones, he knows well enough not to prohibit liaisons: “[T]o prevent the mutual exchange of good officies altogether I know it impossible to effect, particularly on the part of our young men whom some months abstanance have made very polite to those tawney damsels.” Later, on March 19, 1806, he describes a skirtlike garment worn on the lower Columbia. The women construct it by anchoring shreds of bark about their waists, “the whole being of sufficient thickness when the female stands erect to conceal those parts usually covered from familiar view, but when she stoops or places herself in many other attitudes this battery of Venus is not altogether impervious to the inquisitive and pen

*Soundings continues on page 35*

PAINTING BY CARTER LUCAS, FROM TWO CAPTAINS WEST, BY ALBERT AND JANE SALISBURY (BRAMWELL HOUSE, 1990)