

## JOHN JACOB ASTOR BECOME A LEADING AMERICAN FUR DEALER

Astor was a leading fur dealer headquartered in New York -- by 1800

he seldom pretended to be other than what he was -- a pirate in the fur markets

he took advantage of every opportunity to make money including the use and abuse of power

John Jacob Astor sent his first ship to China -- 1800

his personal fortune grew to a million dollars

all saturated with the hate of men he cheated along the way

However, Astor received the supportive attention of the federal government

in the person of Senator Thomas Hart Benton

## DAVID THOMPSON AND DUNCAN MCGILLIVRAY REACH ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE

North West Company traders Thompson and McGillivray traveled the Saskatchewan River

they reached John McDonald 's Rocky Mountain House (near Calgary, Alberta) -- 1800

this was the "farthest in" permanent post of the North West Company

Thompson and McGillivray found a convenient headquarters for their work

## NORTH WEST COMPANY NAMES DAVID THOMPSON CHIEF GEOGRAPHER

David Thompson began the task the of surveying the Saskatchewan, Athabasca and Peace rivers

(this task will occupy him for the next thirty years)

he was always more interested in discovery and mapping than in profits

Thompson left Rocky Mountain House for the Rocky Mountains -- October 5, 1800

he was accompanied by Duncan McGillivray, thirty French-Canadian and native workers

and as usual, by his wife Charlotte and their children

Thompson attempted to establish friendly relations with the natives as he traveled

Piegan Indians were willing to trade but they continually watched Thompson

## NORTH WEST COMPANY TRANSPORTATION ACROSS THE CONTINENT

Two systems of rivers, lakes, and portages

made transportation from Hudson's Bay to the West possible

One Division operated between Montreal and Grand Portage on Lake Superior

Hudson's Bay, Nelson River, Lake Winnipeg, Saskatchewan route

was traveled by "Montreal Boatmen"

at the west end of Lake Superior the big canoes were exchanged for smaller ones

(sometimes called "north") canoes that were used in the interior

these light canoes took one hundred days to make the journey each way

Second division operated between Grand Portage and the frontier

Mississippi-Missouri system was traveled by voyageurs to and from Grand Portage  
North West Company employees eventually increased from 500 to 2,000 men  
working in the two divisions transporting goods and pelts

#### EXPRESS SERVICE RUN BY NORTH WEST COMPANY PROVIDES TRANSPORTATION

North West Company maintained a transportation link between Montreal and Rocky Mountain House  
trade was well organized with regular routes and schedules

two expresses brigades were sent annually -- one in summer and another in winter

Summer express left the posts ahead of the regular, causal, canoes

voyageurs of the summer brigade carried news of the winter trade, dispatches to officials  
and letters from home

Winter express left Rocky Mountain House [in November]

and reached Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada [in March]

canoes were useless at that time of year so they replaced with snowshoes and sledges

Trade with North West Company's posts in the Rocky Mountains and to the West

was carried on by brigades linking the forts and trading posts along the route with supply depots  
they delivered supplies in and furs out by canoe, horseback and back packs

#### FIRST LAP OF THE NORTH WEST COMPANY VOYAGEURS' JOURNEY

Journey from Montreal to Grand Portage on Lake Superior

used canoes thirty-five feet long and six feet wide built of thinnest yellow birch bark

these were manned by eight to ten "Montreal boatmen"

each canoe could carry four tons of supplies on the "grand perch"

four poles lengthwise in the bottom with all goods carefully stored

so as to not touch the fragile birch bark

a definite schedule determined the load of every canoe

each canoe took sixty-five packages of goods, 600 pounds of biscuit, 200 of pork,

three bushels of peas, two oilcloths, a sail, an ax, a towing line, a kettle,

a sponge for bailing, gum and bark for repairing the craft

#### SECOND LAP OF THE NORTH WEST COMPANY VOYAGEURS' JOURNEY

From Grand Portage on Lake Superior to the west as far as the fur men went

this route used interior canoes of one and one-half tons, about half the size of the birch bark,

manned by four or five voyageurs

speed was essential

this trip was often marked by privations as the voyageurs must depend on Indians for supplies

Voyageurs were proud and hardy

they often spoke in picturesque contempt to the Montreal boatmen

Before arriving at their destination

voyageurs always put on their plumes and made their costumes trim

as they came in, they sang their best selection of boat songs

Guns of the fort were fired at the first sight of the approaching brigade

everyone at the post hastened to greet the arrivals

Voyageurs drove the canoe or bateaux (a flat-bottomed riverboat) at full speed toward the landing  
at the last possible moment, they all paddled backward

as bowmen leaped ashore and seized the prow

other voyageurs leaped into the water and carried the gentlemen and passengers to dry ground

#### SPAIN CEDED POSSESSION OF LOUISIANA TO FRANCE

Spain owned all of the land west of the Mississippi River

Spain ceded Louisiana back to France in the Treaty of Ildefonso -- December 1800

Napoleon Bonaparte envisioned a new French colonial empire in North America

this transfer of land will not become known in the United States until [May 1801]

Spanish flag was replaced by the French tricolors

Napoleon had territorial ambitions in both the Old and New Worlds

France was now free to expand into the New World again

#### THOMAS JEFFERSON IS SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Thomas Jefferson took the oath of office -- March 4, 1801

President Jefferson feared French ambition demonstrated by Napoleon Bonaparte

France had already ventured to the Black Hills perhaps even to Yellowstone River

navigation of the Mississippi River could become a motivation for war

between England and France -- both of which might cross United States' soil to fight

war would drive America back into the arms of the British

Americans were most especially concerned about French garrison at New Orleans

President Jefferson noted: **“Perhaps nothing since the Revolutionary War has produced more uneasy sensations throughout the body of the nation.”**<sup>1</sup>

President Jefferson sent a secret action plan to Congress to buy New Orleans from France -- 1801

thus American would own both sides of the Mississippi River at the mouth

---

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 39.

Jefferson also urged Congress to outfit an expedition “...to explore the Missouri River and such principal streams of it as, by its course of communication with the waters of the Pacific Ocean, whether the Columbia, Oregon, Colorado, or any other river, may offer the most direct and practical water communication across the continent, for the purpose of commerce.”<sup>2</sup>

#### UNITED STATES BECOMES AWARE OF FRANCE ACQUIRING LOUISIANA

International transfer of Louisiana from Spain to France caused great alarm in America

France would replace Spain at the mouth of the Mississippi River

and receive ownership of New Orleans

all shipping linking the Ohio and Mississippi valleys to the United States

was carried on the great river

control of the Mississippi River was imperative to Americans

who lived west of the Allegheny Mountains

Spain was by now too weak to impose any toll or restrictions on the river

France, ranked as the greatest military power in the world,

had become America's neighbor on the frontier

#### NORTH WEST COMPANY CONTINUES TO EXPLORE WESTERN CANADA

Nor'Westers David Thompson and Duncan McGillivray found a location in the Rocky Mountains

which showed them the existence of practical trading routes to the Pacific slope -- 1801

Thompson and McGillivray explored one such route ending twenty miles east of (today's Banff)

they returned east to their base of operations at Rocky Mountain House

on the Saskatchewan River

#### ALEXANDER MACKENZIE WRITES HIS BOOK

While living in Avoch, Scotland and London Mackenzie published his journal:

*Alexander Mackenzie's Voyages From Montreal to the Frozen and Pacific Ocean in 1793 -- 1801*

David Thompson was thought to have drawn the map for the book

without being given credit

this map showed not only Mackenzie's explorations but also those of Thompson to [1800]

(Mackenzie's book was read by President Jefferson and was carried by Lewis and Clark)

why there was such a great length of time between the event and the publication

was explained by Mackenzie: “**The delay actually arose from the very active and busy mode of life in which I was engaged since the voyages have been completed**”<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Gordon Speck, *Northwest Explorations*, P. 234.

Mackenzie was knighted by England's King George III for his efforts in exploring the northern and western portions of North America thus becoming Sir Alexander Mackenzie -- 1802

#### SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE ESTABLISHES HIS OWN TRADING COMPANY

Sir Alexander Mackenzie returned to Canada and again became active in the North West Company established partners in the North West Company split over control of the western trapping region dissident partners under the rebellious leadership of Sir Alexander Mackenzie withdrew from the old North West Company to form a new Canadian enterprise "X.Y. Company" (also known as the North West Company) -- 1802 Mackenzie had access to as much capital as the old North West Company partners had

#### SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE PLANS FOR A NEW VENTURE

Mackenzie returned to Canada and proposed a transcontinental, trans-Pacific trade venture to combine whaling with land and sea fur trade, and commerce with China supplies would be shipped from Montreal skins and whale oil would be sent to East India Company plants in the Orient trade circle would be completed when Oriental profits would be used to purchase trade goods that had been manufactured in England and sent to Montreal for shipment to the fur fields

Sir Alexander Mackenzie asked the British government to force East India Company and Hudson's Bay Company to abandon their exclusive monopolies or to license a new company to operate in the Orient and Canada he urged the British government to provide protection to the proposed company at Nootka Sound and on the Columbia River this effort was beyond the talents of even Sir Alexander Mackenzie -- British government refused

#### SIMON McTAVISH CONTINUES TO LEAD THE OLD NORTH WEST COMPANY

Simon McTavish was the ill-tempered leader of the (Old) North West Company he received a personal grant of 11,550 acres from the company -- 1802 McTavish did everything within his power to compete with both Hudson's Bay Company and Alexander Mackenzie's X.Y. Company

#### RIVALRIES DEVELOP IN THE CANADIAN FUR TRADE

Three fur companies were competing for control of the Canadian inland fur trade:  
•Hudson's Bay Company;

- Old North West Fur Company;
- X.Y. Company (Sir Alexander Mackenzie's New North West Company)

Furious competition set in between the two Canadian companies

competition became cut throat -- rum was in widespread use as a bartering tool

employee of both companies frequently murdered each other over furs and territory

employees of both Canadian companies also killed Hudson's Bay Company men

Indians were also the victims in all of this fighting

North West Company used 2,199 gallons of liquor for Indians in [1803] alone

Mackenzie cut heavily into the business of his former partners

during a two-year period natives were flooded with no less than 195,000 gallons of liquor

Indians became demoralized

Scotsman Simon McTavish, head of the Old North West Company,

began an effort to accept a merger with Alexander Mackenzie's X.Y. Company

this effort ended in failure and McTavish refused to ever consider a second effort

#### CENTRAL CANADA BECOMES THE FOCUS TO EXPANDING FUR TRADING EMPIRES

Nor'Wester David Thompson spent the next four years traveling and trading

from the Peace River area the shore of Lake Superior -- 1802 to [1806]

North West Company trader John McDonald was put in charge of Fort Augustus

(located at today's Edmonton, Alberta)

he was responsible that was equivalent of North West Company's Saskatchewan District

John McDonald remained there intermittently for six years

#### PRESIDENT JEFFERSON HAS AN INTEREST IN THE WEST

President Jefferson, based on his conversations with American John Ledyard and others

planned an American expedition across North America to:

- gather information about the land, plants, animals, and natives;
- map a highway route to the Pacific Ocean;
- offer a token challenge to the British and Canadian fur trading companies

President Jefferson hired Meriwether Lewis as his personal secretary -- April 1802

Lewis' family had been neighbors to Jefferson and the president considered him a friend

Jefferson instructed Robert R. Livingston, U.S. Minister in Paris

to negotiate for a tract of land on the lower Mississippi River for use as a port

(no one could anticipate the much larger purchase that took place)

#### MANUEL LISA IS A WELL KNOWN TRAPPER AND TRADER IN ST. LOUIS

Manuel Lisa was a colorful Spaniard born in New Orleans, Louisiana [September 8, 1772]

his father, Christopher de Lisa, was a native of Spain

Lisa came to St. Louis from New Orleans sometime about [1790] -- there he entered the fur trade

Lisa was a very clever but unscrupulous Spanish fur trapper and trader in St. Louis  
and soon became one of the leaders in the industry

Lisa became such an important trader on the Missouri River that the French government granted him  
exclusive rights to trade with the Osage Indians -- June 1802

Of all traders to penetrate the mountains, he was the ablest  
and his business code was as ethical as others of his time

However, he made enemies easily

Auguste Chouteau was a French colonist and the first settler of St. Louis

it was his trade monopoly that was given to Manuel Lisa to the disgust of Chouteau's family  
(it will also be discovered that Lisa was Secret Agent of the Spanish Crown)

Manuel Lisa's enemies were legion

many were created through his own fault and more were created by his success  
enemies never ceased to attack him while he lived (and to defame his name after he died)

Lisa won his place in history by initiative, daring and energy

he never had a serious or a personal brush with the Indians

although he traveled many thousands of miles through the wilderness

he became such an important trader on the Missouri River

the U.S. government granted him exclusive trade rights with the Osage Indians -- 1802

In a letter to Territorial Governor General William Clark, Lisa analyzed his strengths

**“But I have had some success as a trader; and this gives rise to many reports. Manuel must cheat the government, and Manuel must cheat the Indians, otherwise Manuel could not bring down every summer so many boats loaded with rich furs.**

**Good, My accounts with the government will show whether I receive anything out of which to cheat it. A poor five hundred dollars, as sub-agent salary, does not buy the tobacco which I annually give to those who call me father.**

**Cheat the Indians! The respect and friendship which they have for me, the security of my possessions in the heart of their country respond to this charge, and declare with voices louder than the tongues of men that it cannot be true.**

**But Manuel gets so much rich fur!**

**Well, I will explain how I get it. First, I put into my operations great activity; I go a great distance, while some are considering whether they will start today or tomorrow. I impose upon myself great privations; then months in a year I am buried in the forest; at a vast distance from my own house. I appear as the benefactor, and not as the pillager, of the Indians. I carried among them**

**the seed of the large pompion (pumpkin), from which I have seen in their possession the fruit weighing 160 pounds. Also the large bean, the potato, the turnip; and these vegetables now make a comfortable part of their subsistence, and this year I have promised to carry the plough. Besides, my blacksmiths work incessantly for them, charging nothing. I lend them traps, only demanding preference in their trade. My establishments are the refuge of the weak and of the old men no longer able to follow their lodges; and by these means I have acquired the confidence and friendship of these nations, and the consequent choice of their trade.”<sup>4</sup>**

#### SPANISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS DETERIORATE

Spanish officials at New Orleans, (now part of French Territory) -- October 16, 1802

forbid American traders from depositing their cargoes in New Orleans

this move presented a serious economic threat to America

as New Orleans is the port where goods from the interior were transferred to ocean-going ships

President Jefferson asked the Spanish

for permission to send an expedition into the West -- November 1802

#### PRESIDENT THOMAS JEFFERSON SENDS A SECRET MESSAGE TO CONGRESS

President Jefferson sent a second secret message to Congress -- January 18, 1803

congressional session was closed to present the president's confidential proposal

Jefferson advocated that \$2,500 be appropriated for a two year expedition

to send a small military detachment across Louisiana to the Pacific Ocean

for commercial and literary purposes

this expedition was to trace the Missouri River to its source, cross the high lands

and follow water communications to the Pacific Ocean

Congress approved the expenditure

Jefferson wanted to encourage an American population increase west of the Mississippi River

to protect the national interest at our western border

by stopping the British from gaining territory in the Far West

taking control of the Columbia River at its mouth would block British expansion

#### SQUABBLE OVER LAND GRANTS IN CANADA

Canadian Presbyterian clergy demanded they be given a land grant by the British government

they pointed out the Catholic and Episcopal clergy were well provided for

Methodists made a similar demand

---

<sup>4</sup> Gordon Speck, *Northwest Explorations*, P. 265.

Landed Canadian proprietors who were holders of immense estates  
wanted the government to spend large sums building roads so their estates would be accessible  
and lumber could be transported to market

**“For a long time this body of men [Landed Proprietors] ...possessed almost all the highest public offices, by means of which, and of its influence in the Executive Council, it welded all the powers of Government....”<sup>5</sup>**

Loyalists to the British king during the American Revolution [1776-1783]  
who had settled in Upper Canada (Ontario) as refugees from the United States before  
or the children of those Loyalist had collectively received 3,200,000 acres in land grants<sup>6</sup>  
Loyalists who settled in Lower Canada (Quebec)<sup>7</sup>  
were provided similar land grants totaling 1,457,209 acres  
much of this land was sold to speculators for a trifle  
two hundred acres could be sold for a gallon of rum or as much a six pounds

#### AMERICAN TRADING SHIP ARRIVES AT NOOTKA SOUND

American trading ship *Boston* loaded with general cargo was commanded by Captain John Salter  
she was the largest, strongest, and best equipped ship on the Pacific coast  
when she arrived at Nootka Sound and began trading with the Indians -- March 12, 1803  
Natives seemed quite friendly but Captain Salter became indignant at Nootka Chief Maquinna  
Salter verbally insulted the Nootka chief in terms some of which the native understood  
Maquinna stormed ashore bent on revenge  
Chief Maquinna decided the *Boston* should pay for this and other outrages  
for instance, all Maquinna's furs had been stolen when native men were away from the village  
also about twenty natives including four sub-chiefs had been murdered  
because an Indian stole a chisel from the ship's carpenter

Maquinna led a gruesome assault on the *Boston*

Indians captured the *Boston* at anchor in Nootka Sound and the ship was set afire and destroyed  
all but two of the crew members were massacred:

- twenty-two year old blacksmith and armorer John R. Jewitt  
whose skills were extremely valuable to the Indians -- Jewitt kept a journal of the events
- sailmaker John Thompson who hid in the hold of the ship until he was discovered  
Jewitt told the Indians the old sailor was his father and thus saved his life

Jewitt and Thompson were held as slaves, but they enjoyed some privileges

---

<sup>5</sup> Gustavus Myers, *A History of Canadian Wealth.*, Vol. I., P. 60.

<sup>6</sup> Gustavus Myers, *A History of Canadian Wealth.*, Vol. I., P. 81.

<sup>7</sup> Gustavus Myers, *A History of Canadian Wealth.*, Vol. I., P. 83.

Jewitt later described his life as a slave as the “...most valuable species of property. These (slaves) are of both sexes being either captives taken by themselves in war, or purchased from the neighboring tribes, and who reside in the same house, forming as it were a part of the family, are usually kindly treated, eat the same food, and live as well as their masters. They are compelled, however, at times to labor severely, as not only all the menial offices are performed by them, such as bringing water, cutting wood, and a variety of others, but they are obligated to make the canoes, to assist in the building and repairing of houses, to supply their masters with fish, and to attend them in war and to fight for them.... The females are employed principally in manufacturing cloths (weaving by hand), in cooking, collecting berries, etc., and with regard to food and living in general have not a much harder lot than their mistresses....”<sup>8</sup>

Jewitt wrote notes addressed “to any captain nearby”

these notes were carried by befriended natives of other villages

Attack on the *Boston*, when it was discovered, caused alarm among the fur traders

#### SPAIN OPENS THE PORT OF NEW ORLEANS TO AMERICANS

Spain restored to Americans the right of deposit at the port -- April 19, 1803

at least temporarily American could continue the use of the Mississippi River

however, the French threat to control the port and the Mississippi River loomed even larger

#### UNITED STATES PURCHASES LOUISIANA FROM FRANCE

Napoleon Bonaparte decided to sell France’s claim to the territory of Louisiana to the United States

he was bent on dominating Europe by conquest of war -- Louisiana helped pay the huge cost

he also believed that as American became increasingly powerful

England’s naval power would be threatened by the young nation

Louisiana Purchase Treaty was signed by Americans Robert Livingston, James Monroe

and French representative Barbe Marbois in Paris -- April 30, 1803

United States had purchased 828,000 square miles for \$15 million -- less than 3 cents per acre

an area greater in size than the original thirteen colonies -- America had doubled in size

U.S. thus extended from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains

however, the northern and southern boundaries were not yet determined

#### MANUEL LISA’S TRADE MONOPOLY COMES TO AN ENDS

Spanish government had granted Manuel Lisa a trade monopoly with the Osage Indians

purchase of Louisiana ended that arrangement as the United States took possession

---

<sup>8</sup> Lancaster Pollard, *A History of the State of Washington*, P. 41-42.

Vast territory was opened to American trappers  
and no privileged corporations limited the possibilities of profits

#### DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN SETTLES IN QUEBEC, CANADA

John McLoughlin was born at Riviere du Loup, Lower Canada (Quebec)  
along the south bank of the St. Lawrence River [October 19, 1784]  
to a poor Catholic father and an upper class Protestant mother, Angelique Fraser McLoughlin  
he was baptized Jean-Baptiste McLoughlin into the Catholic faith

McLoughlin grew up in the French-Canadian village about 120 miles south of Quebec City  
trappers and voyageurs daily passed the McLoughlin farm at Reverie de Loup  
throughout his childhood John listened to their songs and stories  
his uncle, Simon Fraser, who worked for the North West Company was a frequent visitor  
he recounted thrilling tales of adventure for the boy

McLoughlin's Irish father drowned while John was still a boy  
after the death of his father McLoughlin lived with his maternal granduncle Colonel William Fraser  
he was brought up in the Anglican Church (Church of England)

John McLoughlin began to study medicine in Quebec City at age fourteen [1798]  
he crossed the Atlantic to Scotland in order to enter the University of Edinburgh  
four and a half years later at age nineteen  
he was granted a license to practice medicine and surgery -- April 30, 1803

Dr. John McLoughlin got into a petty scuffle with a British officer  
while defending a pretty girl from military rudeness  
to escape punishment, he was forced to run away to relatives working for the North West Company

Dr. John McLoughlin served as an apprentice surgeon to the North West Company's headquarters  
post of Fort Kaministiquia (later Fort William [1807]) (now Thunder Bay, Ontario)  
on Lake Superior at a salary of twenty English pounds a years -- 1803  
this began a forty-six year career with the company

however there was little doctoring to do except for a few brief weeks during the summer  
when Fort Kaministiquia swarmed with transport brigades and rendezvousing partners  
besides, the six-foot-four-inch, big-handed youth was not an adept physician

Dr. John McLoughlin soon abandoned medicine as he preferred the fur trade  
while serving North West Company as a trader he mastered several Indian languages  
he soon showed an astounding capacity for managing Indians, trappers and traders

#### PRESIDENT JEFFERSON LEARNS OF THE SIGNING OF THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

President Thomas Jefferson received word of the Louisiana Purchase agreement -- July 1, 1803

Jefferson announced the treaty to the American people -- July 4

Jefferson had been making arrangements for an expedition to cross the continent to the Pacific Ocean

Jefferson's choice to lead the expedition was his former neighbor and secretary Meriwether Lewis who was a captain in a United States Army rifle company commanded by William Clark

Lewis possessed military discipline and experience that would be necessary

Lewis chose his old commander, William Clark, to assist him in leading the "Corps of Discovery"

Lewis requested of President Jefferson that his old military mate be appointed co-commander

There were four central beliefs that Lewis and Clark held as they prepared for their expedition:

- the Missouri was a mighty river originating in the mountains far to the west;
- it would be possible to navigate by canoe all the way to the source of the Missouri River;
- it would be possible to see the Pacific Ocean or even ships from those mountains;
- it would be possible to locate another great river that flowed to the Pacific from those mountains

Meriwether Lewis left Washington City (D.C.) traveling to St. Louis

where supplies were to be gathered for the expedition

en route he journeyed to Louisville, Kentucky where he was to meet William Clark

Lewis and Clark traveled together from Louisville to Pittsburg and on to St. Louis

#### NORTH AMERICA REMAINED A MYSTERY YET TO BE EXPLAINED

Although French, British and Spanish explorers, British, Canadian and Russian traders and trappers, soldiers, Catholic and Protestant missionaries, independent entrepreneurs

and ever-westward moving farmers had all visited the eastern portions of North America

map makers remained ignorant regarding what was actually to the west

To fill in the void in knowledge and on the maps several misconceptions prevailed:

- headwaters of all of the major rivers of the West were near each other;
- headwaters of the Missouri (flowing east) and the headwaters of some great "River of the West" (flowing to the Pacific Ocean) were near each other;
- western rivers were navigable up to their sources;
- Stony (or Rocky) Mountains were just one or two ridges of low mountains or hills they did not present much of an obstacle to travel;
- it would be possible to travel up the Missouri River from the east, cross over to the River of the West in less than a day, then take that river directly down to the Pacific Ocean

Some people believed during their explorations Lewis and Clark:

- would come to a mountain of rock salt that was 180 miles long and forty-five miles wide after traveling a thousand miles;
- would see a number of volcanoes along the Missouri River;

- would encounter the woolly mammoth -- long extinct elsewhere in the world

President Jefferson himself believed this to be true

Indians of the West were believed to be different from those already encountered and conquered

some believed the western tribes were descended from pre-Christopher Columbus explorers

such as the Vikings or Welsh or Irish, or that they were remnants of the Lost Tribes of Israel,

some assumed Indian cultures became more advanced the further west they were located,

others believed that some tribes in the West would be white and some would be black

## MERIWETHER LEWIS WAS WELL PREPARED TO LEAD THE “CORPS OF DISCOVERY”

Meriwether Lewis was a thirty-year-old native of Charlottesville, Virginia

his parents were prominent in the Colonial and Revolutionary efforts

Meriwether had lost his father at a young age

his childhood training depended on his mother and uncle

he was a fearless hunter at the age of eight

Meriwether successfully managed his mother’s plantation at age eighteen

college educated, intelligent, aware, reserved, respected, moody and meticulous

he lost his temper easily

he commanded well as he developed and maintained an efficient unit of men

he demanded strict obedience to his leadership

Jefferson knew Lewis to be, **“honest, disinterested, of sound understanding, and a fidelity to truth so scrupulous that whatever he should report would be as certain as if seen by ourselves.... [He is] steady in the maintenance of discipline...careful as a father of those committed to his charge.”**<sup>9</sup>

## WILLIAM CLARK SERVES AS CO-COMMANDER OF THE “CORPS OF DISCOVERY”

William Clark was picked by Meriwether Lewis to serve as the “Corps of Discovery” co-commander

thirty-three-year-old was ninth child of John Clark

they had moved to Kentucky when William was fourteen

they settled into a new home which became the center of local sociability

Clark made friends easily

William Clark left home at age nineteen for the Indian wars of the Ohio Valley

he was a respected soldier who developed his leadership skills

Meriwether Lewis served under young officer William Clark

at age twenty-four, he was put in charge of 700 pack horses carrying supplies to Fort Greenville

Indians attacked and Clark lost five men but he delivered the goods intact

---

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 48.

twice he was twice sent to negotiate with Spaniards regarding Louisiana

Clark retired from the army abruptly [1796]

he returned home to straighten out the financial affairs of his more famous brother

Revolutionary military leader George Rogers Clark

no more was heard of him until he received a message from Meriwether Lewis

asking him if he were interested in the proposed expedition [June 19, 1803]

William Clark was a man of good judgment, boldness and skill in organizing his work

friendly, a natural leader, easy going, even tempered and patient

he liked people, got along well and was successful in dealing with others

he proved to be successful at negotiating with the Indians

who called him “red-haired chief, our brother”

Clark kept journal of flora and fauna during the expedition to the West

he demonstrated practical knowledge of woodcraft, building and managing canoes

his writings are what are referred to as *The Journal of Lewis and Clark*

Jefferson said of him, “...**brave, prudent, habituated to the woods, & familiar with Indian manners and character. He is not regularly educated, but he possesses a great mass of accurate observation on all subjects of nature which present themselves here, & will therefore readily select those only in his new route which shall be new.**”<sup>10</sup>

## ST. LOUIS WAS THE CENTER OF THE AMERICAN FUR TRADE

St. Louis had been founded [1764] by French trader Pierre Laclède Liguest

he was a member of the firm Maxent, Laclède and Company of New Orleans

the town was planned as a haven for French refugees expatriated by Treaty of Paris [1763]

St. Louis desired to become a city which drew tribute from all trade on the Mississippi River

St. Louis became the center of the American fur trade in the West [1800-1840]

this was the cross-roads of America and often of the world

docks and streets were piled high with goods and supplies

it was the most important inland city in North America

St. Louis drew a variety of clientele from all parts of the continent and the world

everyone from savages to crown princes to soft-spoken Creoles

hard-eyed Yankee gamblers and Spaniards from Taos and Santa Fe

fierce Indian chiefs cared nothing for Virginia gentlemen

middle class traders were shunned by godly Protestant missionaries

St. Louis thrived on violence, sudden death, outlawry and cut-throat business methods

---

<sup>10</sup> Gordon Speck, *Northwest Explorations*, P. 238.

## NORTH WEST COMPANY CONSTRUCTS A NEW COMPANY HEADQUARTERS

Fort Kaministiquia had first been built [1679] by the French soldier and explorer

Daniel Greysolon, Sieur du Lhut (now spelled Duluth [Minnesota])

This Fort Kaministiquia was replaced by a new structure [1717]

as the first of a projected series of posts leading to the “Western Sea”

undertaken by a French military officer Zacharie Robutel de la Noue

this fort next served as a trading post and base of operations [1727-1743] for French explorer

Pierre Gaultier de la Verendrye and was again abandoned with the defeat of the French [1760]

during the French and Indian War

Fort Kaministiquia was again rebuilt -- this time by the North West Company -- 1803

replacing the former headquarters at Grand Portage which came under American jurisdiction

with the [1784] Jay Treaty

Fort Kaministiquia name was changed to Fort William [1804]

in honor of North West Company Chief Superintendent William McGillivray

North West Company's Fort William became the company's headquarters on Lake Superior

Fort William became a major transshipment point linking the frontier with England

## LOUISIANA FORMALLY BECOMES PART OF THE UNITED STATES

Meriwether Lewis traveled to New Orleans where he witnesses the transfer ceremony

French tricolors were lowered and the fifteen-star and stripe American flag was raised

over what was now known as the Louisiana Territory

formal transfer of Louisiana to American ownership took place -- December 20, 1803

## LEWIS AND CLARK PREPARE THE “CORPS OF DISCOVERY” TO JOURNEY WEST

Captain Meriwether Lewis was in St. Louis -- winter 1803-1804

where he purchased supplies for their expedition

he gathered information concerning the route as far as the Mandan Villages

from traders familiar with the Missouri River

he also mastered the use of the scientific equipment

William Clark set up Wood River Camp where the Wood River enters the Missouri River

there he received the trade goods such as Jefferson medals, handkerchiefs, needles,

yards of red flannel, whiskey, tobacco and fishhooks

Together Lewis and Clark used the time from December 1803 to [May 1804

to train and weed out misfits -- two boatmen deserted

## LEWIS AND CLARK'S CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Both men were given joint command -- both were to serve as co-captains

although Clark's commission had lower military rank

Clark's appointment as captain did not arrive until after they left St. Louis

they served as co-captains anyway -- success depended on their leadership

Lewis and Clark's personalities and training complimented each other

Lewis headed the scientific phase

Clark the led the military phase

both Lewis and Clark were experienced in the Indian Wars of the Ohio Valley

Main purpose of the expedition was to explore the Missouri River and find a way to the Pacific Ocean

President Jefferson sent written complete instruction to Captain Lewis: **“The object of your mission, is to explore the Missouri and such principal streams of it as by its course and communication with the waters of the Pacific Ocean, whether the Columbia, Oregon, Colorado, or any other river that may offer the most direct and practical water communication across the continent, for the purpose of commerce, and you are hereby instructed to keep a journal covering every possible phase of the country you traverse.”**<sup>11</sup>

on the way, the explorers were to:

- obtain accurate and thorough information about the natives;
- attempt to appease them as much as possible;
- collect natural history specimens;
- note the sources and courses of rivers for military purposes and the location of lakes;
- observe the routes of Canadian traders;
- chart strategic military points;
- list the visible resources of the country;
- note geographical features such as rapids, waterfalls and islands

President Jefferson provided instructions regarding dealing with the Indians

in order to establish commerce with the Indians the Corps of Discovery was to **“treat them (the Indians) in the most friendly and conciliatory manner which their own conduct will admit”**<sup>12</sup>

Jefferson noted: **“We wish to err on the side of your safety, and to bring back your party safe, even if it be with less information”**<sup>13</sup>

Lewis and Clark expedition was well equipped

they were provided scientific instruments for determining longitude and latitude

materials for preserving specimens of plant life were supplied

---

<sup>11</sup> Laura Bartlett, *Student's History of the Northwest as the State of Washington*, P. 97.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*. P. 49-50.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest.*, P. 50.

they carried a copy of Alexander Mackenzie's *Voyages*  
However, no arrangements were made for the expedition to return to the United States by ship  
in was unknown when, or even if, the Lewis and Clark Expedition would reach the Pacific coast  
it was thought that perhaps the blooming American fur trade would provide a ship for their return

#### PASSPORTS FOR THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION WERE OBTAINED

Passports were secured from France, Spain and Great Britain  
American effort to explore the frontier seemed of little consequence to Europe  
England and France went to war in Europe -- April 1804  
it was assumed the victor would control North America

#### SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE RETURNS TO CANADA

Mackenzie was elected to the Legislature of Lower Canada --1804-[1808]  
(Lower Canada was that part of today's Quebec Province downriver from the headwaters  
of the St. Lawrence River than its contemporary Upper Canada, present-day southern Ontario)  
Mackenzie tried unsuccessfully to unite the North West Company and Hudson's Bay Company  
with the intention of combining this new enterprise with the East India Company  
expansion of the fur trade to China would then be possible

#### CAPTAIN WILLIAM CLARK SETS OUT FROM WOOD RIVER CAMP

Captain William Clark ordered the expedition to depart from St. Louis -- 4:00 p.m. May 14, 1804  
they fired one gun as a note of farewell to frontier civilization and left Wood River Camp  
to journey up the Missouri River in three boats  
a keelboat -- twenty-two oars with square sail, breastworks, tow-ropes, push poles  
armed with a swivel gun in the prow  
and two swivel-mounted blunderbusses -- one on each side  
two dugout canoes  
red pirogue -- eight oars with a sail  
white pirogue -- six oars with a sail  
two horses were used by the hunters who walked along shore  
Captain Clark and the Corps of Discovery arrived at noon at the village of St. Charles, Missouri  
about twenty-four miles upriver from St. Louis  
there they waited for Captain Meriwether Lewis -- May 21, 1804

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY LEAVES CIVILIZATION

Captain Meriwether Lewis joined the Corps of Discovery at St. Charles

Lewis and Clark and the members of their expedition  
passed last of the white settlements, La Charrette, Missouri -- May 25, 1804  
this was also the home of Daniel Boone  
they were greeted by small brigade headed by Regis Loisel -- "boss" of the upriver trade

#### LEWIS AND CLARK CONTINUE UP THE MISSOURI RIVER

Clark noted trappers returning to St. Louis were on the river -- June 5, 1804

**"...raft of two canoes joined together in which two French traders were descending from eighty leagues up the Kansas River, there they had wintered and caught great quantities of beaver."**<sup>14</sup>

As the Corps of Discovery continued on their way  
eight trapping parties traveling down river were passed -- Middle of June  
they were going down to St. Louis with their season's catch of furs

#### PROGRESS UP MISSOURI RIVER IS SLOW FOR THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Missouri headwaters has been visited by Spanish explorers for ten years  
British traders had traded with the Mandan Indians for twenty years  
French travelers had explored as far as the Black Hills and, perhaps, even the Yellowstone region  
Boat traffic on Missouri River was heavy -- several times the party had to move to shore  
while trappers returning down river to St. Louis crowded the river  
Poor communication hampered coordination for the Corps of Discovery boat parties  
considering the distance covered each day, ten to twenty miles, some signal system  
Corps of Discovery boats needed to devise a communication system -- but they did not  
Indians had used smoke signals from time unknown  
Americans had no way to communicate  
hunters on land often accidentally lost contact with those in the boats

Lewis and Clark would have to dispatch two or three men to search for the hunters  
Hazards along the Missouri River included willow islands and sand bars where the boats grounded  
canoes had to be pried and pulled off the obstacles and returned to mid-channel  
sluggishly moving river had a powerful current which shifted from side to side with every bend  
bluffs narrowed the channel in places -- there the currents had to be fought head on  
men often were out with tow-lines working waist-deep in water  
and sloshing through mud to their knees

Weather conditions added to the difficulties

---

<sup>14</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 52.

rain, hot and humid, was followed by cold and winds  
sandstorms and cloudbursts both added to the tribulations of the expedition  
Insects such as ticks, gnats, snakes and clouds of mosquitoes increased their misery  
rattlesnake bite was the most feared of all hazards  
Speed was sacrificed due to specimen collecting  
Corps of Discovery stopped or started any time the commanders wanted  
as a result the men never knew when their day's labor was finished

#### LEWIS AND CLARK CONTINUE ON THE MISSOURI RIVER ALL SUMMER

Members of the Corps of Discovery celebrated the nation's birthday  
by firing the big gun on the keelboat -- July 4, 1804

Private Joseph Field was bitten by a rattlesnake

but was **"quickly doctored with bark by Captain Lewis"**

Lewis and Clark Expedition reached the Platte River -- July 22, 1804

the record notes: **"As we journeyed on, great herds of buffalo so large that we gazed on them in astonishment, came into view. Upon one occasion on our return journey, the herd was so vast, swimming and plowing its way through the stream a mile broad, formed a column so thick that we were compelled to land and wait an hour until it passed, before we could continue our journey."**<sup>15</sup>

Lewis and Clark had their first serious dispute with the Sioux Indians

who wanted to be paid a tribute for the explorers to travel up the Missouri River -- July 25

Clark's coolness and Lewis' diplomacy triumphed

Sioux tried to stop them once more -- July 28

Captain Lewis aimed a small cannon at them

thus he established American sovereignty over the Mississippi Basin

Expedition met Kickapoos, Otoes, Poncas, Yankton, Teton Sioux, Pawnee, Omahas

and learned of Cheyennes and Crows -- summer 1804

explorers found many natives hostile because of their past experience with whites

Sergeant Charles Floyd died with "Biliouse Chorlick" -- probably acute appendicitis -- August 19

he was the only person to die on the trip and was buried (near present Sioux City, Iowa)

An elk and three buffalo were killed -- September 4, 1804

a few days later Lewis estimated there were 3,000 buffalo in one herd

food was plentiful -- every day hunters killed fat antelopes, buffalo, or elk

Lewis and Clark met friendly Arikara Indians -- October 8, 1804

---

<sup>15</sup> Laura Bartlett, *Student's History of the Northwest and the State of Washington*, P. 99.

## DISCIPLINE WAS SEVERE FOR THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Military court-martial was used to discipline the men

John Collins and Hugh Hall were charged with drawing liquor from kegs

they were assigned to guard -- each was given fifty lashes

one man was charged with lying down and sleeping while on sentry duty

he was dishonorably discharged and assigned permanent KP (kitchen patrol) duty

Several times the men either deserted or attempted to

Moses B. Reed attempted to desert

when he was captured he was made to "run the gauntlet" four times

thereafter he was not considered part of the expedition

Joseph Barter was sent on an errand to an Indian camp -- he never came back

John Newman was court-marshaled as a deserter -- October 13, 1804

he was given seventy-five lashes and dismissed from the expedition

La Liberty, a deserter, was caught "but he deceived them and got away" Clark says

one man was "discharged" from the party for attempting to desert

and stealing a "public rifle, shotpouch, powder" Clark reported

Desertions ceased abruptly after the expedition reached the Mandan Villages

perhaps Lewis and Clark realized too many otherwise great expeditions had been wrecked

by commanders who overused the lash rather than reserving it for when it was most needed

(in fact, John Newman who had been sentenced to seventy-five lashes for desertion

was highly recommended by Lewis when the party got back home)

## DAVID THOMPSON BECOMES A PARTNER IN THE NORTH WEST COMPANY

North West Company Chief Geographer David Thompson was elevated to partner status

he continued to conduct trade widely across expanses adjacent to Hudson's Bay Company -- 1804

Though undistinguished at this time, he was a natural explorer

recording his latitude and longitude at every stop to assist him in mapping accurately

he allowed no liquor for trading purposes in the areas he was assigned

## LEWIS AND CLARK MAKE WINTER CAMP

Corps of Discovery prepared their first winter camp 1,600 miles up the Missouri River from St. Louis

at two earthen villages of the sedentary Mandan Indians

and their more mobile neighbors the Minnetarees

Mandans were a peaceful but poor Indian people

although they had been the center of Canadian trade activity for at least twenty years

for ten years Spanish traders also had been traveling as far as the Mandan village in North Dakota

Captain William Clark and eight men selected a site for winter camp  
about eight miles below the mouth of the Knife River -- October 27, 1804

#### LEWIS AND CLARK'S FORT MANDAN IS WITHIN EASY CONTACT OF THE INDIANS

Fort Mandan was built of cottonwood, elm and ash  
eighteen-foot stockade of tall pointed posts joined at an angle to form a "V"  
storage was located at the apex of the "V"  
picket fence was placed across the open end of the post thus forming an enclosed area  
two rows of huts of four rooms each were constructed  
shed roofs sloped upward toward the outer walls  
Fort Mandan was guarded day and night  
Minnetarees, Hidatsas, Arikaras, Cheyennes, Crees and Blackfoot were camped in the area  
North West Company employees and free-lance trappers camped there also  
Lewis persuaded the Indians and the Canadian traders  
that the American expedition was a friendly exploration expedition not a commercial venture

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY SPENDS THE WINTER AT FORT MANDAN

Winter was quiet and time was spent in making acquaintance of the Indians and in various tasks  
members of Lewis and Clark's expedition packed botanical, zoological and geologic specimens  
to send to Jefferson [in the spring] along with detailed reports and graphic notes on the Indians  
all of the reports and notes were copied in triplicate  
for diversion the expedition's men danced to the fiddle of one-eyed Peter Cruzat  
whose music charmed every Indian tribe the party encountered  
between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean  
As time dragged on the enlisted men occupied themselves  
they built cottonwood dugout canoes for use on the upper river  
they operated a blacksmith shop where they made iron implements  
that could be traded to the agricultural Mandan Indians for corn  
they repaired equipment and made miles of tow line  
Temperature dropped to 40° below zero

#### NORTH WEST COMPANIES MERGE

Sir Alexander Mackenzie's most bitter enemy was dead  
jealous, grasping Simon McTavish, the head of the Old North West Company  
this event made the reconciliation of competing former partners possible  
as the chief obstacle to a partnership agreement had been removed

Mackenzie's X.Y. Company employed 520 men, thirty-seven women and thirty-one children  
its officers and men joined with the old North West Company employees  
Reunion of X.Y. Company with North West Company was completed -- November 5, 1804  
positive outcomes were achieved with the merger  
there was less violence among the white traders and trappers  
and less liquor consumption among the natives

#### NORTH WEST COMPANY IS REORGANIZED

Sir Alexander Mackenzie remained in Montreal until 1805  
he was easily was the most influential partner in the reorganized North West Company  
After the merger it was decided to extend the beaver trade west of the Rocky Mountains  
David Thompson was placed in charge of the parties going into the wilderness  
Alexander Mackenzie added to his considerable fortune  
he retired in Inverness-shire, Scotland --1805  
where he lived a married and settled life until his death fifteen years later

#### SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE'S (NEW) NORTH WEST COMPANY EXPANDS OPERATIONS

Grand Portage (Minnesota) on the shore of Lake Superior  
had served as the North West Company headquarters for shipping and receiving  
Mackenzie replaced Grand Portage with Fort Kaministiquia (today's Thunder Bay, Ontario)  
(this post later became known as Fort William)  
(New) North West Company carried on trade westward of Lake Superior  
wherever North West Company men clashed with Hudson's Bay Company men  
North West Company had the advantage as it was directed  
by aggressive Canadian merchants and traders on the spot  
one of the most active was young Scotsman explorer Donald Mackenzie  
who served the company for eight years  
(before becoming a partner of John Jacob Astor)

#### LEWIS AND CLARK'S MEN ENJOYED GOOD HUNTING AT FORT MANDAN

Members of the Corps of Discovery shot game for winter supplies  
Joseph Whitehouse gave the take on one short hunt as: **"34 deer, 10 elk, 5 buffalo"**  
in addition to porcupine and antelope

Lewis would say, **“The party are [sic] in excellent health, zealously attached to the enterprise, and anxious to proceed. Not a whisper or a murmur of discontent to be heard among them, but all act in unison with the most perfect harmony.”**<sup>16</sup>

#### CHARBONNEAU AND SACAGAWEA ARE HIRED BY LEWIS AND CLARK

At Fort Mandan Lewis and Clark found two Montreal free trappers

Rene Jessaume and Toussaint Charbonneau who informed the Americans

of the death of (Old) North West Company leader Simon McTavish

both Jessaume and Charbonneau were promptly hired by the Americans as interpreters and guides

(Jessaume would not go all the way to the Pacific Ocean)

Toussaint Charbonneau, although his English was shaky, was hired as an interpreter

Charbonneau had purchased two women from the Hidatsa Indians

Sacagawea (meaning “Bird Woman”) and his second wife “Otter Woman”

both were Shoshone (Snake) Indians who had been captured by the Hidatsa

Charbonneau told Lewis and Clark that his wives’ people lived at the headwaters of the Missouri

and the Shoshones were well-equipped with horses

Lewis and Clark foresaw that Charbonneau and his wives’ interpreting skills

would be instrumental when the expedition reached the Rocky Mountains

Clark found the name Sacagawea impossible to pronounce so he called her “Janey”

Because Charbonneau’s English was shaky and neither Lewis nor Clark spoke French

French boatmen Francois La Biche or Peter Cruzatte or Private George Drouillard

would convey the captains’ questions to Charbonneau in French

Charbonneau then could speak Hidatsa to his Shoshone wives,

especially Sacagawea who spoke both Hidatsa and Shoshone

Sixteen-year-old Sacagawea gave birth to a son -- February 11, 1805

she gave her baby the name Pompey which meant “first born” in Shoshone

Captain Clark promptly nicknamed the baby “or Little Pomp”

among the whites was known as Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau

Sacagawea was held in high regard by the men of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

as a woman she demonstrated the peaceful intent of the expedition

she proved to be more valuable than her husband

Charbonneau was not well liked by the leaders of the Corps of Discovery

---

<sup>16</sup> Cecil Dryden, *History of Washington*, P. 51.

one journal entry noted: **“only a tongue to wag in a mouth to fill -- a minus quality in comparison to his wife, Sacagawea, the wonderful Bird Woman who contributes a full man’s share to the success of the expedition, besides taking care of her baby.”**<sup>17</sup>

#### PREPARATIONS FOR THE JOURNEY WEST BEGIN IN EARNEST

Crews were sent into the timber to cut logs for building dugouts and canoes  
specimens that had been collected en route were packed into crates and boxes for shipment  
Meriwether Lewis wrote to his mother from Fort Mandan -- March 31, 1805

**“So far we have experienced more difficulties from the navigation of the Missouri than danger from the savages. The difficulties which oppose themselves to the navigation of this immense river arise from the rapidity of its current, its falling banks, sandbars and timber, which remains wholly or partially concealed in its bed, usually called by the navigators of the of the Missouri and the Mississippi ‘sawyer’ or ‘planter.’ Such is the velocity of the current at all seasons of the year, from the entrance of the Missouri to the mouth of the great river Platte, that it is impossible to resist its force by means of oars or poles in the main channel of the river; the eddies which therefore generally exist on one side of the other of the river, are sought by the navigators, but these are almost universally encumbered with the concealed timber, or within reach of the falling banks.”**<sup>18</sup>

#### PACIFIC COAST MARITIME TRADE SLOWS

American maritime (sea) trade was on a catch-as-catch-can basis  
trading ships might appear suddenly at a sheltered anchorage with goods to offer  
but the Indians had no way of knowing for certain when to show up with their furs  
neither could ship-borne traders be sure that the furs they sought would be available  
Only three British vessels traded on the Pacific coast --1805-[1814]  
this decline in the sea otter trade can be explained at least in part  
by the British East India Company’s iron grip on trade

#### AMERICAN TRADING BRIG *LYDIA* REACHES THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Captain Samuel Hill sailing the *Lydia* out of Boston wrote this account: **“I sailed in the *Lydia* on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August 1804, and proceeded round Cape Horn, touched at the Sandwich Islands and arrived in Safety on the North West Coast, at Columbia River, on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 1805 where we remained near a month, during which time I eyscended (ascended) the main or S. Eastern Branch of the Columbia, to the Great Rapids in my boat, a distance I believe of about 140 miles or perhaps less.”**<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Cecil Dryden, *History of Washington*, Portland, Oregon, P. 52.

<sup>18</sup> Gordon Speck, *Northwest Explorations*, P. 242-243.

<sup>19</sup> Robert A. Saindon, editor, *Explorations Into the World of Lewis and Clark*. Vol. II, P. 611.

*Lydia* was trading in the vicinity of Vancouver Island

when an Indian chief who spoke a little English carried a letter to the visiting ship

this letter was signed John R. Jewitt and John Thompson of the *Boston*

who had remained captives at Nootka Sound since the attack on their ship [1803]

#### SIMON FRASER EXPLORES THE WILDERNESS FOR THE NORTH WEST COMPANY

Simon Fraser was the son of an American Loyalist who fled the American Revolution

Simon had become a North West Company apprentice at age twelve

and became a partner at age twenty-one -- it was noted he was

**“without much education or special mental endowments”**<sup>20</sup>

North West Company assigned Fraser to replace Sir Alexander Mackenzie at Fort Chipewyan -- 1805

at age twenty-nine he was ordered to continue Mackenzie’s explorations

Simon Fraser joined a combined trading and exploring expedition to strengthen the company’s claim

he was seen to be **“One of the most daring trappers of his day”**<sup>21</sup>

#### NORTH WEST COMPANY LEARNS OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

Early news of the American Lewis and Clark Expedition had a major effect on the Canadian fur trade

it was the final incentive for the (new) North West Company

to establish a permanent trading posts in the Pacific Northwest

#### LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION SETS OUT FROM FORT MANDAN

Ice melted on the Missouri River and two groups left Fort Mandan -- 4:00 p.m. April 7, 1805

Six soldiers including two who had been discharged and two Frenchmen

started down the Missouri River bound for St. Louis

Corporal Richard Warfington whose term had expired

took command of the keelboat and a small canoe

they carried four boxes and one trunk filled with dispatches to the government,

letters to private friends and a number of articles to the President of the United States

also included were the pelts, horns and skeletons of various animals;

dried plants, soil, minerals, and insect specimens;

Mandan and Hidatsa artifacts and items, and Arikara tobacco

and tobacco seed

they carried three cages of live animals previously unknown to science:

four magpies, a sharp-tailed grouse hen and a prairie dog

---

<sup>20</sup> Gordon Speck, *Northwest Explorations*, P. 331.

<sup>21</sup> Gordon Speck, *Northwest Explorations*, P. 331.

Second group of six homemade dugouts and two pirogues set out up the Missouri

Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark led the expedition

accompanied by four Sergeants: Charles Floyd, John Ordway, Nathaniel Pryor and Patrick Gass

nineteen Privates: William Bratton, John Collins, John Colter, Joseph Field, Reuben Field,

Robert Frazier, George Gibson, Silas Goodrich, Hugh Hall, Thomas P. Howard,

Huge McNeal, John Potts, John B. Thompson, Peter Weiser, William Werner,

Joseph Whitehouse, Alexander Willard, Richard Windsor and gunsmith John Shields

three boatmen:

small, wiry one-eyed Pierre Cruzatte, a superb hunter and fiddler

Francois LaBiche who was fluent in both English and French

Jean Baptiste Lapage who had been living among the Hidatsa and Mandan

two hunters:

Private George Drouillard famed interpreter, woodsman and scout (Clark's "Drewyer")

Private George Shannon, at age seventeen he was the youngest man on the expedition

this young Irishman who was often sent on dangerous missions

he was constantly getting lost-- one time for sixteen days

he had hunted ahead of the river party and kept going faster and faster

to catch up with those already far behind him

non-military personnel was composed of:

Toussaint Charbonneau, his wife, Sacagawea

and child Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau who was called "Pompey" by his mother

William Clark's slave York who was always referred to as "my servant" by Clark

York drew a great deal of attention from the Indians

Lewis' 160-pound Newfoundland dog Seaman

(this name long had been thought to be Scannon because of Clark's poor penmanship)

each of the thirty-three Corps of Discovery members

had been selected for the push to the Pacific Ocean because they possessed special skills

all were woodsmen, most were experienced in Indian wars, several were cooks,

two were gunsmiths and blacksmiths, two played the violin, one liked to fish,

one was skilled in making clothes, one was a boat builder

in addition a Mandan man accompanied the explorers as far as the home of the Shoshone people

## CORPS OF DISCOVERY CONTINUES UP THE MISSOURI RIVER

Captains Lewis and Clark, their thirty-one traveling companions and baby Pompey

passed the mouth of the Yellowstone River -- April 26, 1805

during their journey they saw vast herds of buffalo, deer and antelope

ducks and geese were in great abundance and there were some swans

#### NEAR TRAGEDYS STRIKE THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Camp was made (in Montana's Central Valley) and huge herds of buffalo, elk, deer, antelope and wolves were noted nearby

Six of the men attacked a grizzly bear with their rifles  
although hit several time the great bear continued to pursue the hunters  
it took eight rifle-balls to kill the animal -- May 14, 1805

Later, while Lewis and Clark were both on shore

Charbonneau was steering the white pirogue when it overturned  
valuable cargo might have been lost had Sacagawea not saved the day -- May 14, 1805

#### LEWIS AND CLARK FIRST SIGHT THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Corps of Discovery sighted the snow-capped Rockies -- May 26, 1805

Clark reported in his journal: **"I took one man and walked out this morning, and ascended the high cuntry [sic] to view the mountains which I thought I saw yesterday.... from this point I beheld the Rocky Mountains for the first time with certainty.... whilst I viewed those mountains I felt a secret pleasure in finding myself so near the head of the heretofore conceived boundless Missouri; but when I reflected on the difficulties which this snowey [sic] barrier would most probably throw in my way to the Pacific Ocean, and the sufferings and hardships of my self and party in them, it in some measure counterballanced [sic] the joy I had felt in the first moments in which I gazed on them."**<sup>22</sup>

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY REACHES A FORK IN THE MISSOURI RIVER

Missouri River was joined by another river of equal size

here the explorers faced their first serious choice of routes -- June 3, 1805

Lewis sent a canoe commanded by Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor with two men up the right fork  
another canoe commanded by Sergeant Patrick Gass with two more men took the left fork  
in the meantime small parties traveled overland to hunt and determine the lay of the land  
other men cached part of their goods to be available for their return trip

both canoes returned by evening and the men concluded the right fork was the proper one

both commanders disagreed with the decision

they overruled the men and, after naming the right fork Maria's River,

they turned the prows of their canoes up the left-hand stream

---

<sup>22</sup> Journal of Lewis and Clark

Lewis and Clark proved to be correct as this was the Missouri River

#### MERIWETHER LEWIS EXPLORES AHEAD OF THE MAIN CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Captain Lewis came upon the thundering Great Falls of the Missouri River -- June 14, 1805

this beautiful obstacle almost 100 feet high

and was followed by nearly eighteen miles of smaller falls and rapids

expedition spent nearly a month dragging their boats and goods around a portage

to speed progress, the men loaded five canoes on cottonwood logs cut as wheels

strong winds filled the attached sails

but overland progress remained slow as the carriages were forever breaking down

Lewis and Clark found they had to build new canoes

because the old ones could not be used above the Great Falls given the condition of the river

#### HAZARDS IN ABUNDANCE FACE LEWIS AND CLARK AS THEY CONTINUE UP RIVER

A cloudburst caught Clark, York, Charbonneau, Sacagawea and her baby in the open in a ravine

when floodwaters hit, Sacagawea and Pompey were nearly drowned

Clark saved them when he lifted them from the ravine but in the process he lost his rifle,

compass and a number of other articles -- June 29, 1805

Hailstones more than seven inches in circumference fell during the storm

men on the portage route were caught in the open, knocked to the ground and badly injured

Corps of Discovery stopped to work on a collapsible boat made of skins imagined by Captain Lewis

several days were lost in the effort before the project was abandoned

as it proved impossible to make the vessel water tight

#### LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION REACHES THE GATES OF THE MOUNTAINS

Missouri River became increasingly rapid as food was running low -- July 19, 1805

prominent gray cliffs along the Missouri River were named the "Gates of the Mountains"

Lewis noted the incredible surroundings when he wrote that: **"this evening we entered much the most remarkable cliffs [sic] that we have yet seen. These cliffs rise from the waters edge on either side perpendicularly to the hight [sic] of 1200 feet... from the singular appearance of this place I called it the gates of the rocky mountains."**<sup>23</sup>

Food for the members of the expedition was becoming scarce

Sacagawea helped by suggesting the bark of a pine tree could be eaten

---

<sup>23</sup> Journal of Lewis and Clark

## AMERICAN TRADING BRIG *LYDIA* SAILS IN SEARCH OF THE TWO INDIAN HOSTAGES

Captain Samuel Hill sailing the trading ship *Lydia* out of Boston decided to investigate the letter he had received signed by John R. Jewitt and John Thompson of the trading ship *Boston* which indicated they were being held captive at Nootka Sound

*Lydia* sailed to within sight of the offending Indian village

three cannon shots marked the entrance of a ship into the harbor -- morning of July 19, 1805

Jewitt later explained: **“though my heart bounded with joy, I repressed any feelings and affecting to pay no attention to what was said, told [John] Thompson to be on his guard and not betray any joy, our release, and perhaps our lives, depended on our conducting ourselves so as to induce the natives to suppose we were not very anxious to leave them.”**<sup>24</sup>

Maquinna, the native Chief, called a council of his people at his house

some were for death for the white slaves,

some were for removing them from the village fifteen to twenty miles,

some were for releasing them

Maquinna heard all of their opinions and then decided to visit the ship himself

he asked that Jewitt write a letter to the ship's captain

telling how well the whites were treated and how kind the chief was

**“Sir,**

**The bearer of this letter is the Indian king by the name of Maquinna. He was the instigator of the capture of the ship *Boston*, of Boston in North America, John Salter captain, and of the murder of twenty-five men of her crew, the two only survivors being now on shore -- Wherefore I hope you will take care to confine him according to his merits, putting in your dead-lights and keeping so good a watch over him that he cannot escape from you. By so doing we shall be able to obtain our release in the course of a few hours.**

**John R. Jewitt, *Armorer of  
the Boston for himself and  
John Thompson, Sail-maker  
of said ship*”**<sup>25</sup>

When the illiterate Maquinna boarded the *Lydia*

he gave presents of skins and the letter to Captain Hill

After reading the message, the captain asked the chief into his cabin

five or six armed men were sent for and came to the captain's cabin

Maquinna was told he was a prisoner until the whites were released

Maquinna sent several of his men to bring the slaves on board

---

<sup>24</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 52.

<sup>25</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 54.

Captain Hill rescued the two American sailors two years and four months after the attack on the *Boston Lydia* proceeded to the Columbia River

#### LEWIS AND CLARK REACH THE THREE FORKS OF THE MISSOURI RIVER

Corps of Discovery arrived at the Three Forks of the Missouri River (Montana) -- July 27, 1805

Lewis and Clark named the Jefferson River which seemed to flow southwest  
they named the Madison River, the middle fork that it seemed to flow south  
they named the Gallatin River which seemed to flow southeast

Sacagawea recognized the southwest-flowing river

five years before she had been captured by Minnetaree Indians

she had been taken to the Missouri River area where she met Charbonneau

this time all agreed -- the Jefferson River was the best choice

however, she could not tell the worried leaders where to find a pass over the looming mountains  
worse, the expedition had not yet seen any sign of her people

horse-owning Shoshone (Snake) Indians

without horses they could not cross the mountains before snow fell -- and that meant disaster

#### CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS AND THREE OTHERS SET OUT AHEAD

Lewis pushed desperately ahead with Privates George Drouillard, John Shields and Hugh McNeal

Behind them Clark, half crippled with a raging carbuncle on his ankle, and the remainder of expedition  
kept the eight dugouts canoes creeping onward among boulders, over gravel bars,  
and through the willow-tangled channels of endless beaver swamps

Clark often got the disagreeable tasks

time after time he was left behind to pull boats and build camps

(when half-wild horses were to be brought to camp, the task was Clark's)

After fifty miles the Jefferson River branched into Big Hole, Ruby and Beaverhead rivers

Lewis again faced a choice of routes -- August 4, 1805

Lewis left a note for Clark then ascended the middle branch -- the Ruby River

Clark failed to see the note as beavers had cut down the pole to which it was attached

Clark went up the northwest fork -- the Big Hole River

but returned when he found it unnavigable

no channel could be found as the river was clogged with beaver dams and swamps

#### LEWIS IS AWARE THE CANOES WILL NOT BE USEFUL MUCH LONGER

Captain Lewis and Privates George Drouillard, John Shields and Hugh McNeal climbed the mountains  
it becomes increasingly obvious the canoes would no longer be useful

finding the Shoshones and their horses was imperative if they were to continue west when Sacagawea recognized "Beaverhead Rock" great excitement was generated -- August 8

#### LEWIS MADE CAMP AT HORSE PRAIRIE CREEK (MONTANA)

Shoshone (Snake) Indians ranged the lands near the head waters of the Missouri River  
Corps of Discovery was in desperate need of horses

Lewis set out once again with his three men -- August 11, 1805

to discover signs of Indians in an effort to get aid from someone, anyone,  
who could assist them to find a way to cross the Rocky Mountains

Deep in the mountains Lewis sighted a lone Shoshone Indian warrior on an elegant horse  
he attempted to draw the rider closer

Lewis lifted his blanket in the mountain Indian sign of peace and called  
"Ta-ba-bone, Ta-ba-bone" (White man, white man)

Private John Shields, off to one side, did not notice Lewis's effort  
he blundered too near with his rifle and the Indian raced away

Wearily the four explorers trudged on

#### CONTINENTAL DIVIDE IS REACHED BY LEWIS' ADVANCED PARTY

Lewis and Hugh McNeal followed an Indian trail -- August 12, 1805

to the summit of the Continental Divide (what became known as Lemhi Pass)

Meriwether Lewis was the first United States citizen to cross the Continental Divide

For the first time a portion of the Corps of Discovery entered Oregon

this occasion was noted by Lewis: **"The road was still plain, and it led directly toward the mountains, the stream gradually became smaller, till after their advancing two mile further, it had so greatly diminished in width that one of the men in a fit of enthusiasm, with one foot on each side of the rivulet, thanked God that He had lived to bestride the Missouri. As they proceeded, their hope of seeing the waters of the Columbia rose to almost painful anxiety; when at the distance of four miles from the last abrupt turn of the stream, they reached a small gap formed by the high mountains which recede on either side, leaving room for the Indian road. From the foot of one of the lowest of these mountains, which arises with a gentle ascent of about a half a mile, issued the remotest water of the Missouri. They had now reached the hidden source of that river, which had never before been seen by civilized man; and as they quenched their thirst at the chaste and icy fountain, -- as they sat down by the brink of that little rivulet, which yielded its distant and modest tribute to the parent ocean -- they felt themselves rewarded for all their labors and difficulties. They left reluctantly this interesting spot, and pursuing the Indian road through the interval of the hills, arrived at the top of a ridge from which they saw high mountains, partially covered with snow, still**

**to the west of them. The ridge on which they stood formed the dividing line between the waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. They found the descent much steeper than on the eastern side, and at the distance of three-quarters of a mile, reached a handsome, bold creek of cold, clear water running to the westward. They stopped to taste for the first time the waters of the Columbia [as their enthusiasm misidentified the stream].”<sup>26</sup>**

this was an optimistic observation as he had no way of knowing where the river would lead

#### LEWIS HAPPENS UPON SHOSHONE INDIANS

In Shoshone Country, Captain Lewis and his three men

suddenly encountered an old Indian woman and two girls -- August 15, 1805

both girls ran away at once as the old woman, too feeble to run,

bowed her head to receive the death stroke

Lewis gave her a few beads, a pewter mirror and a little paint as friendly tokens

she called the girls back

no longer fearful, the women conducted the Americans to their camp

on the way the explorers were met by a band of warriors who had been alerted to their presence

this meeting was the first direct contact these Shoshones had with whites

although they possessed some European trade goods exchanged from other Indians

#### MEETING WITH THE SHOSHONE INDIANS

Lewis and his companions entered a Shoshone camp of about sixty warriors under Chief Cameahwait

Lewis explained they would receive guns and ammunition from his government

which would enable them to cope with the dreaded Sioux or the pitiless Blackfoot

Lewis also aroused their curiosity by indicating he had a woman of theirs with him

and also a man who was perfectly black; yet not painted

Lewis made a proposition to Cameahwait, the head Chief, to accompany them

back to the forks of the Missouri River where they had left the main party

with their supplies and boats

Cameahwait gladly agreed

#### LEWIS AND HIS PARTY ARE ACCOMPANIED BY SHOSHONES

After a journey of two days back along the trail

Lewis's party found themselves at the fork of the Missouri River -- August 17, 1805

main party under Captain William Clark was not there

---

<sup>26</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 75-76.

Cameahwait believed he had been deceived and had been led to their destruction  
Lewis, with great tact and boldness, gave Chief Cameahwait his rifle and ammunition  
he explained that if he had lied the chief could kill him -- this reassured the Indians  
In desperation Lewis sent George Drouillard and several Indians to search for Clark and the main party  
Indians traveling with Lewis saw the boats making their way slowly up the Missouri River  
in the bow of the lead boat sat Sacagawea

#### CAPTAIN CLARK REACHES THE AGREED UPON RENDEZVOUS POINT

Captain William Clark arrived with the interpreter Charbonneau and Sacagawea -- August 17, 1805  
when Sacagawea saw her tribesmen she became very excited and began to dance  
several women of the village recognized her  
Sacagawea recognized a girl with whom she had been captured who later escaped  
Main party of the expedition continued to drag the heavy canoes  
up the little creek which was the Missouri River  
Corps of Discovery arrived at Horse Creek Prairie -- noon August 17  
once again the explorers were all together  
and they had the encouraging prospect to obtaining horses to continue their journey  
York proved to be the strongest attraction for the Indians  
natives had never even heard of a black man before

#### GREAT COUNCIL IS HELD WITH THE SHOSHONE INDIANS

Corps of Discovery reached the Shoshone camp on Horse Creek Prairie  
an old Shoshone man described a trail that led across the Continental Divide  
he said this trail was used by "Pierced Nose" (Nez Perce) Indians  
who lived on the far side of the mountains  
now the expedition had a route to cross the mountains  
Lewis continued the bargaining for horses -- August 17, 1805  
Shoshone Chief Cameahwait appeared wary and hesitant  
Sacagawea was called upon to serve as interpreter -- she recognized voice of the head chief  
to the astonishment of the explorers  
she suddenly broke into a torrent of tears and joyful smiles  
as Chief Cameahwait, her brother, rushed forward to embrace her  
With the help of Sacagawea the Americans bought twenty-nine horses and a mule from the Shoshones  
unfortunately most of the Indians' horses were at a village back on the west side of the mountains  
they would have to be sent for and brought to Horse Creek Prairie  
On hearing this, the co-captains decided to split their expedition

Lewis and the main party would stay east of the mountain pass to receive the horses  
and prepare for the push across the Rocky Mountains  
Clark and eleven men, meanwhile, would go ahead to establish relations with the Nez Perce  
and attempt to discover if the river Lewis had heard about from the Shoshones (the Salmon)  
was really as navigable

#### CLARK TAKES A GROUP OF EXPLORERS AHEAD OF THE MAIN BODY

Captain William Clark and his eleven men left the main party -- August 18, 1805  
they took a Shoshone guide, Old Toby, with them into the Rocky Mountains  
they crossed 8,000-foot Lemhi Pass and dropped into Lemhi Valley  
Captain Lewis supervised the unloading of the canoes and the arrangement of baggage  
to meet their new mode of travel  
supplies not immediately needed such as the canoes and some of the goods were cached  
members of the expedition made pack saddles  
ceaseless bargaining for the purchase of the crucial horses continued  
it was his thirtieth birthday  
Clark reached the Lemhi River which led to Salmon River  
they explored for fifty miles and sent a message to Lewis to find a more northerly route  
Clark and his men became concerned when the water began to freeze at night -- August 25, 1805

#### UNITED STATES DESIRES TO EXPAND ITS FUR TRADE

Canadian North West Company had ninety-five men stationed in territory claimed by the United States  
to put a stop to their trade, U.S. government issued a proclamation -- August 25, 1805  
**“forbidding traders, canoe men, and others, not citizens of the United States from  
pursuing their traffic on the Missouri River”<sup>27</sup>**  
this order was universally ignored by the Canadian traders and trappers

#### SIMON FRASER OPENS NEW CALEDONIA, CANADA FOR TRADE

North West Company trapper Simon Fraser along with his clerk and civil engineer John Stuart  
were ordered by the New Northwest Company to enter the Rocky Mountains  
to establish trading posts  
Fraser was hopeful that a grateful British government would grant him a Charter for the land  
Nor'westers proceeded by way of the Parsnip and Pack rivers to the Peace River  
they established a base at Rocky Mountain Portage on the Peace River

---

<sup>27</sup> Gustavus Myers, *A History of Canadian Wealth., Vol. I., P. 70*

and built “Rocky Mountain Fort” on the Upper Peace River in New Caledonia -- 1805  
(origin of the name New Caledonia is generally attributed to Simon Fraser and his companions  
to whom the hills and woodlands were reminiscent of the Scottish Highlands)  
New Caledonia was comprised of the territory of the northwestern Canadian Interior Plateau  
drained by the Peace, Stuart and Bulkley river system (now north central British Columbia)

#### MOUNTAINS BECOME MORE RUGGED FOR THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Lewis and Clark had been able to ascend the Missouri River to its source  
by following a valley usually free from obstructions  
Western slopes of the Rockies were much more rugged and precipitous  
with deep canyons through which unnavigable rivers rushed  
until finally emerging from the mountains where the rivers became navigable for boats  
although Clark did not know it, they were faced with 340 miles of land transport  
200 miles along good road -- 140 miles over mountains  
with about sixty miles covered in perpetual snow

#### LEWIS AND CLARK LINK UP AND ENTER THE BITTERROOT VALLEY

Captain Lewis and main body of the Corps of Discovery rejoined Captain Clark -- August 29, 1805  
in the valley of the Salmon River that ran between the Rocky and Bitterroot Mountain Ranges  
Captain Lewis’ negotiating skills had produced only twenty-nine horses  
not enough for carrying the baggage and explorers -- except for the two captains  
Valley of the Salmon River had rough ridges choked with fallen timber and masses of rock debris  
that showed no satisfactory route could be found  
even the advice of the Shoshone guides, Old Toby and Toby’s son, could not always be trusted  
By this time, Clark’s efforts had convinced him that the canyon of the Salmon River,  
provided no passage for canoes with its waters

**“foming & roreing [sic] through rocks in every direction,”<sup>28</sup>**

Lewis and Clark’s Expedition traveled almost due north along Lemhi Valley  
guided by their Shoshone guides the explorers soon became entangled  
in the savage ridges and defiles of the mountainous terrain  
following the rough route between the between the Rocky and Bitterroot mountains  
through a frighteningly early snowstorm

In Lemhi Valley the explorers met a band of friendly Flathead Indians  
(who, in spite of their name, did not follow the costal practice of deforming their skulls)

---

<sup>28</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giant*, P. 70.

Lewis and Clark purchased several more elegant horses from the Flatheads as the captains learned of trails only five or six days' march away used by "Pierced nosed Indians" that lead directly across the Rockies to reach the Great Falls of the Missouri River and the buffalo hunting grounds  
this was very good news as their own circuitous route from the falls to the Bitterroot River had taken nearly two months -- an impossible handicap for transcontinental transportation  
Corps of Discovery rested before beginning the climb toward (Lolo Pass)  
Indians informed Lewis and Clark the river they followed was white with foam for many miles then it disappeared into a chain of snowy mountains  
Cameahwait and most of the Shoshone people who had been accompanying the explorers turned back -- August 30, 1805  
Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark turned their expedition southward  
Corps of Discovery reached the wild and beautiful stream they referred to with its Indian name: Kooskooskie (Clearwater River)

#### LEWIS AND CLARK REACH TRAVELER'S REST CREEK (LOLO, MONTANA)

Corps of Discovery proceeded down the Flathead River before setting out overland across a prairie  
Lewis reported in his journal: **"...we continued our rout [sic] down the W. side of the [Bitterroot] river about 5 miles further and encamped on a large creek which falls in on the West. as [sic] our guide inform[ed] me that we should leave the river at this place and the weather appearing settled and fair I determined to halt the next day rest our horses and take some scelestial [sic] observations. we [sic] called this Creek Traveler's rest."**<sup>29</sup>

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY PASSESS OVER THE BITTERROOT MOUNTAINS

Their route over the Bitterroot Mountains led the explorers  
into the most agonizing part of their entire journey -- beginning September 14, 1805  
fallen trees made the trail almost impassable  
pushing up steep hills and rocky mountain slopes, struggling through deep gorges and hollows,  
and forging through tangled forests choked with underbrush drained both men and horses  
rations ran short and snowstorms added to the desperation of their situation

#### LEWIS AND CLARK AGAIN SPLIT THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Desperately low on food and facing challenging terrain and weather Clark and six men pushed ahead  
Clark's party emerged from the Bitterroot Mountains at Weippe Prairie

---

<sup>29</sup> Journal of Lewis and Clark

there they encountered the “Pierced Nose” (Nez Perce) Indians -- September 20, 1805

#### LEWIS AND MAIN BODY OF THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY REJOIN CLARK AND HIS MEN

Captain Lewis and the rest of the men caught up to Clark visiting the Nez Perce -- September 22, 1805

Lewis and Clark were at the confluence of the north and south forks of the Clearwater River  
where the expedition stopped for a badly needed rest

food was scant -- only inferior fish and camas root was available

Nez Perce Indians were hospitable and appeared to be most honest, intelligent and attractive  
eager to help, they were kind to the explorers

although they were shrewd and businesslike in trading

Chief Twisted Hair drew a map of the river on the back of a deerskin

Diet of fish was growing tiresome -- dog meat was substituted  
several men, including Clark, become ill after over-eating

#### LEWIS AND CLARK BUILD CANOE CAMP

Corps of Discovery camped at the junction of middle and north fork of Clearwater River

they could see the Clearwater was a fine navigable stream -- September 26, 1805

New canoes had to be built before they could proceed

five dugout canoes were fashioned and burned from logs in ten days

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY IS ONCE AGAIN ON THE WATER

First canoe was launched -- October 5, 1805

water-borne once again the expedition no longer needed horses

what horses they had were rounded up and branded

these were left with Nez Perce chiefs Twisted Hair and Cut Nose

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY SETS OUT DOWN THE CLEARWATER RIVER

Main body of the expedition commenced their voyage -- October 7

with five large and well-filled canoes fitted with a good supply of food and other necessities  
they were accompanied by Nez Perce chiefs

#### LEWIS AND CLARK CONTINUE DOWN THE CLEARWATER RIVER

Explorers entered the Clearwater River where the Selway and Lochsa rivers merge -- October 8

this treacherous section of the river caused the canoes to overturn

a great deal of gear and equipment was lost and supplies were soaked

Clearwater River joined the Snake River which the westbound expedition entered -- October 10

(this river was named the Lewis River by Clark -- a name that did not stick)

Clark commented on the condition of the natives they were passing: **“The fish [salmon] is, indeed, their chief food, except the roots, and the casual supplies of antelope.... This diet may be the direct or the remote cause of the chief disorder which prevails among them, as well as among the Flatheads, on the Kookoskee and the Lewis’s river. With all these Indians a bad soreness of he eyes is a very common disorder, which is suffered to ripen by neglect, till many are deprived of one of their eyes, and some have totally lost the use of both. This dreadful calamity may reasonably, we think, be imputed to the constant reflection of the sun on the waters where they are constantly fishing in the spring, summer, and fall, and during the rest of the year on the snows which afforded no object to relieve the sight.”**<sup>30</sup>

#### LEWIS AND CLARK ENTERED (WHAT IS NOW WASHINGTON STATE)

Snake River was traveled into (today’s Washington State) -- October 11, 1805

Clark described an experience on the Snake River -- October 12

**“At five miles we passed a rapid; at eight another rapid, and a small island on the right, and at ten and a half a small island on the right. We halted a mile and a half below for the purpose of examining a much larger and more dangerous rapid than those we had yet passed. It is three miles in length, and very difficult to navigate. We had scarcely set out, when three of the canoes stuck fast in endeavoring to avoid the rocks in the channel, soon after in passing two small islands, one of the canoes struck a rock, but was prevented from upsetting, and fortunately we all arrived safe at the lower end of the rapid.”**<sup>31</sup>

#### FORT McLEOD IS BUILT BY NOR’WESTERS FRASER AND STUART

Simon Fraser and Clerk John Stuart moved west of the Rockies and continued on to McLeod Lake where Fort Trout (later Fort McLeod) was begun to conduct trade in New Caledonia -- fall 1805

(Fort McLeod became the chief North West Company post in the New Caledonia District)

Fraser and Stuart thoroughly explored New Caledonia west of the Rocky Mountains

Nor’Westers returned to their headquarters at Rocky Mountain House on the Upper Peace River where they spent the winter trading and trapping in the Rockies

prospects for trade with the natives were good and relations were peaceful

however, the Nor’Westers found it difficult to induce the Indians to exert themselves

Indians were plied with whiskey to inspire them to bring in the necessary furs

#### NORTH WEST COMPANY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IS LONG AND DIFFICULT

---

<sup>30</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 13.

<sup>31</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 11-12.

Rainy Lake House, North West Company's unofficial headquarters and Central Deposit was located at (today's International Falls, Minnesota)

this was an advance post for North West Company's headquarters at Fort Kaministiquia (located at today's Thunder Bay, Ontario on the shore of Lake Superior)

It was very difficult to carry furs from Fort McLeod to Rainy Lake House and on to Fort Kaministiquia in addition supplies and trade goods had to be carried back to Rocky Mountain House and Fort McLeod in New Caledonia

#### EXPEDITION REACHES THE CONFLUENCE OF THE SNAKE AND COLUMBIA RIVERS

One hundred-twenty miles from the Clearwater River -- October 17, 1805

Lewis and Clark's men measured and found the Snake River to be 575 yards wide at its mouth and the Columbia River to be 960 yards wide

however, after the rivers merged the combined Columbia was estimated to be from one to three miles in width

members of the expedition were too tired to celebrate their arrival at the Columbia River

Explorers were met by a procession of over 200 Indians

natives conducted a ceremonial dance as a reception in honor of expedition

Corps of Discovery began their journey down the Columbia River

they met a remarkable Indian -- Walla Walla Chief Yellepit

he was handsome, well proportioned with a bold and dignified bearing

he was helpful to the explorers and always favorably disposed to whites

(today's Yellepit, Washington is named in honor of the chief)

#### LEWIS AND CLARK ENTER THE COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE

Corps of Discovery entered a fifty-five miles stretch of the Columbia River

that will prove to be the most difficult and dangerous part of their journey

as the river dashes and crashes through the Cascade Mountains

in a dizzying series of narrow channels littered with huge boulders

that led to impossible rapids and impassable waterfalls

Members of the expedition first encountered "Celilo Falls" at the beginning of the Columbia Gorge

where the river plunged thirty-eight feet in only a few miles -- October 22, 1805

ropes were made of elk hide to lower their heavy dugout canoes through the rapids

it took two days to portage around the cataract

#### CORE OF DISCOVERY REACHED THE DALLES

After conquering Celilo Falls the explorers faced two sets of furious narrow rapids -- October 24, 1805

the short narrows required a portage of about a mile

while the downriver long narrows required a portage of about three miles

these portages were immediately followed by the Dalles Rapids (or Wascopam to the natives) (together Celilo Falls, the short and long narrows and Cascade rapids became known as the Dalles where the Columbia River rushed through the Cascade Mountains

the Dalles stretched from the Deschutes River on the east to the Sandy River on the west

at one point the river dropped fifteen feet in a tumult of violent water 1½ miles long

the Dalles was named for the French word for “flagstones” or “slabs”

referring to the huge basalt slabs constricting the channel<sup>32</sup>

this eight mile stretch of violently turbulent water was known to the Indians as Wascopam)

Clark climbed to the top of a rock formation to survey the first of these rapids

this was a quarter-mile stretch called the “**Short Narrows**” “**I deturmined [sic] to pass through this place notwithstanding the horrid appearance of this agitated gut swelling, boiling & whorling [sic] in every direction.**”<sup>33</sup>

Because of their rush to reach the Pacific Ocean the explorers sometimes took risks

in this instance the non-swimmers and hired Indians with their horses

portaged the most valuable baggage around the Short Narrows

while the others shot the rapids in the canoes and emerged safely

much to the amazement of hundreds of Indians who lined the cliffs to watch

#### LONG NARARROWS IS NEXT CONQUERED BY THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY<sup>34</sup>

After clearing the Short Narrows of the Dalles the expedition faced the “Long Narrows”

which was surmounted in the same way-- October 25, 1805

Lewis and Clark began to see blankets, axes, brass kettles and other trade articles

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY REACHED THE CASCAES OF THE COLUMBIA<sup>35</sup>

Finally, the expedition reached what they called “the Shute” -- the Cascades of the Columbia River

this four mile swift flat stretch of water was the final barrier -- October 31, 1805

Clark said it ran “**with great velocity foming & boiling in a most horriable manner [sic]**”<sup>36</sup>

a well-used Indian trail was used along with hired Indians and their horses to clear the rapid

This last set of rapids were cleared with the help of Indians and horses -- November 2

---

<sup>32</sup> Cassandra Tate, HistoryLink.org Essay 5355, March 3, 2003.

<sup>33</sup> Journal of Lewis and Clark

<sup>34</sup> Cassandra Tate, HistoryLink.org Essay 5355, March 3, 2003.

<sup>35</sup> Cassandra Tate, HistoryLink.org Essay 5355, March 3, 2003.

<sup>36</sup> Journal of Lewis and Clark

## CORPS OF DISCOVERY PASS THROUGH THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS

Lewis and Clark Expedition cleared the Columbia River Gorge

it had taken eleven days of dangerous and backbreaking work and the help of friendly Indians to accomplish the task -- November 2, 1805

## LEWIS AND CLARK SEE EVIDENCE OF TRADE WITH EUROPEANS

Corps of Discovery saw their first natives decked out in European finery -- November 5, 1805 they met the famous Chinook Indian Chief Comcomly

Clark made note of the condition of the natives: **“Among the Sikulks [Wanapum] too, and indeed among all the tribes whose chief subsistence is fish, we have observed that bad teeth are very general: some have the teeth, particularly those of the upper jaw, worn down to the gums, and many of both sexes, and even of middle age, have lost them almost entirely. This decay of the teeth is a circumstance very unusual among the Indians, either of the mountains or of the plains, and seems peculiar to the inhabitants of the Columbia.”**<sup>37</sup>

## CORPS OF DISCOVERY ARRIVES AT TIDEWATER

As the American explorers continued down the Columbia River they noticed the river's water rising they had reached the foot of the Cascade Mountains and tidewater -- November 7, 1805

Camp was made near Pillar Rock (between Brookfield and Dahlia, Washington)

Corps of Discovery saw the Pacific Ocean and Clark wrote: **“Great joy in camp, we are in view of the Ocian [sic] ...this great Pacific Octean, [sic] which we have been so long anxious to See, and the roeing [sic] of noise made by the waves brakeing [sic] on the rockey [sic] shores...may be heard distinctly.”**<sup>38</sup>

actually the Core of Discovery was still many miles up the Columbia River they did not reach the Pacific Ocean proper for eight more days

## EXCITEMENT OF REACHING THEIR DESTINATION SOON FADED

William Clark reported in his journal: **“November 8th. A cloudy morning with some rain. We did not set out until nine o'clock.... We came to at the remains of an old village.... Here we found great numbers of fleas, which we treated with the greatest caution and distance....**

**“The swells or waves were so high that we thought it imprudent to proceed. We landed, unloaded and drew up our canoes. Rain all day at intervals. We were all wet and disagreeable, as we have been for several days past.... We have not level land sufficient for an encampment and for our baggage to**

---

<sup>37</sup> Noah Brooks, *First Across the Continent*.

<sup>38</sup> Gordon Speck. *Northwest Explorations*, P. 253.

lie clear of the tide. ...Added to this, the waves are increasing to such a height that we cannot move from the place....

“We are not certain as yet if the white people who trade with the Indians... are stationary at the mouth or visit this quarter at stated times for the purpose of traffic.... the seas rolled and tossed the canoes in such a manner this evening that several of our party were seasick....

“November 9th. The tide of last night did not rise sufficiently high to come into our camp, but the canoes, which were exposed to the mercy of the waves... all filled; with great attention we saved them until the tide left them dry.... At two o'clock the flood tide came in accompanied by immense waves and heavy winds, floated the trees and drift... and tossed them about in such manner as to endanger the canoes very much. Every exertion and the strictest attention by every individual of the party was scarcely sufficient to save our canoes and from being crushed by those monstrous trees, many of them nearly two hundred feet long and from four to seven feet through. Our camp entirely under water during the height of the tide. Every man as wet as water could make them all the night and today all day, as the rain continued.

“At four o'clock P.M. the wind shifted about to the southwest and blew with great violence immediately from the ocean for about two hours. Notwithstanding the disagreeable situation of our party, all wet and cold, and one which they have experienced for several days past, they are cheerful and anxious to see further into the ocean. The water of the river being too salt to use, we are obliged to make use of rain water. Some of the party, not accustomed to salt water, have made too free use of it; on them it acts as a purgative. At this dismal point we must spend another night, as the wind and waves are too high to proceed.

“November 10th. Rained very hard the greater part of the last night and continues this morning. The wind has layed [sic] and the swells are fallen. We loaded our canoes and proceeded on....

“The wind rose from the northwest and the swells became so high, we were compelled to return about two miles to a place where we could unload our canoes, which was in a small bay, on driftwood, on which we had also to make our fires to dry ourselves as well as we could, the shore being either a cliff or perpendicular rocks or steep ascents to the height of 400 or 500 feet.... The logs on which we lie are all afloat every high tide. The rain continued all day. We are all wet, also our bedding and many other articles.... Nothing to eat but pounded fish.

“November 11th. A hard rain all the last night. During the last tide the logs on which we lay were all afloat. Sent out Jo Fields to hunt. He soon returned and informed us that the hills were so high and steep with undergrowth and fallen timber that he could not get out any distance. About twelve o'clock five Indians came down in a canoe, the wind very high from the southwest, with most tremendous waves breaking with great violence against the shores, rain falling in torrents. We are all wet as usual, and our situation is truly a disagreeable one. The great quantities of rain... have loosened the stones on the hillsides, and the small stones fall down upon us. Our canoes are at one

place, at the mercy of the waves, our baggage in another, and ourselves and party scattered on floating logs and such dry spots as can be found on the hillsides and crevices of the rocks.

**“We purchased of the Indians thirteen red char, which we found to be excellent fish.... One of those men had on a sailor’s jacket and pantaloons, and made signs that he got those clothes from the white people who lived below the point, etc. Those people left us and crossed the river, which is about five miles wide at this place, through the highest waves I ever saw a small vessel ride. Those Indians are certainly the best canoe navigators I ever saw. Rained all day.**

**“November 12th. A tremendous wind from the southwest about three o’clock this morning with lightning and heard claps of thunder and hail, which continued until six o’clock A.M., when it became light for a short time. Then the heavens became suddenly darkened by a black cloud from the southwest and rained with great violence until twelve o’clock, the waves tremendous breaking with great fury against the rocks and trees on which we are encamped. Our situation is dangerous. we took the advantage of a low tide and moved our camp around a point to a small wet bottom at the mouth of a brook....**

**“It would be distressing to see our situation -- all wet and cold, our bedding also wet, and the robes of the party which compose half the bedding are rotten, and we are not in a situation to supply their places, in a wet bottom scarcely large enough to contain us, our baggage half a mile from us, and canoes at the mercy of the waves, although secured as well as possible, sunk with immense parcels of stone to weight them down to prevent their dashing to pieces against the rocks.... If we have cold weather before we can kill and dress skins for clothing, the bulk of the party will suffer very much.<sup>39</sup>**

#### LEWIS AND CLARK MAKE CAMP ALONG THE PACIFIC OCEAN

Camp was located near the mouth of the Columbia River on the north side

(near modern Seaview, Washington) -- November 15, 1805

a continually pounding rain and chill wind caused great distress among the men

diet of dried fish and roots added to their misery

Clark’s Journal reported: **“November 15th. Rained all the last night at intervals of sometimes of two hours. This morning it became cold and fair. The sun shown until one o’clock P.M., which gave an opportunity for us to dry some of our bedding and examine our baggage, the greater part of which I found wet. Some of our pounded fish spoiled. I had all the arms put in order and ammunition examined. The rainy weather continued without a longer intermission than two hours at a time from the fifth in the morning until the 16th -- eleven days rain, and the most disagreeable**

---

<sup>39</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 45-48.

time I have experienced, confined on a tempest coast, wet, where I can neither get out to hunt, return to a better situation, or proceed on. In this situation have we been for six days past.

“Fortunately the wind lay about three o’clock. We loaded in great haste and set out, passed the blustering point, below which is a sand beach ... on which is a large village of thirty-six houses, deserted by the Indians and in full possession of the fleas.... The immense swells from the main ocean, immediately in front of us, raised to such a height that I concluded to form a camp on the highest spot I could find in the marshy bottom and proceed no further by water.... The ocean is immediately in front and gives us an extensive view of it from Cape Disappointment to Point Adams.... Evening fair and pleasant. Our men all comfortable in the camps they have made of the boards they found in the town above.”<sup>40</sup>

“November 17th. A fair cool morning. Wind from the east.... At half past ten o’clock Captain Lewis returned, having traversed Haley Bay to Cape Disappointment and the seacoast to the north for some distance. Several Chinook Indians followed Captain Lewis and a canoe came up with roots, mats, etc., to sell.... This Chinook nation is about 400 souls; [they] inhabit the country on the small rivers which run into the bay below us and on the ponds to the northwest of us liv principally on fish and roots. They are well armed with fuseses and sometimes kill elk, deer, and fowl. Our hunters killed today deer, four brant and two ducks, and inform me they saw some elk sign. I directed all the men who wished to see more of the main ocean to prepare themselves to set out with me early on tomorrow morning....”<sup>41</sup>

“November 18th. I set out with ten men and my man York to the ocean by land.... At three miles passed a nitch [sic]. This rock island is small and at the south of a deep bend in which the natives inform us the ships anchor, and from whence they receive their goods in return for their peltries and elk skins, etc. This appears to be a very good harbor for large ships. Here I found Captain Lewis’ name on a tree. I also engraved my name and ‘BY LAND,’ the day the month and year.... The men appear much satisfied with their trip, beholding with astonishment the high waves dashing against the rocks and this immense ocean.”<sup>42</sup>

Lewis and Clark moved their expedition to the south side of the Columbia River  
to the avoid winds and storms as much as possible -- November 25, 1805

#### LEWIS AND CLARK ESTABLISH A TEMPORARY CAMP

Camp was set up at Bakers Bay and their goods transferred from the north side of the Columbia  
to the south side -- December 3, 1805

Clark scratched on a tree the legend:

---

<sup>40</sup> W. Storrs Lee. *Washington State*. P. 48.

<sup>41</sup> W. Storrs Lee. *Washington State*. P. 48-49.

<sup>42</sup> W. Storrs Lee. *Washington State*. P. 49.

**“Wm. Clark, December 3d 1805 By Land from the U. States in 1804 &5.”<sup>43</sup>**

## FORT CLATSOP WINTER QUARTERS IS ESTABLISHED BY LEWIS AND CLARK

Members of the Corps of Discovery completed their move

from the north side of the Columbia River -- December 7, 1805

they wanted to be close enough to the ocean and river to sight any arriving ship

Fort Clatsop, named in honor of friendly Clatsop Indians, was built on the Lewis and Clark River

a stockade fifty square feet in size was constructed from fir logs built around several cabins

barracks for the men was constructed

thirty-three members of the Corps of Discovery prepared to spend a wet dreary winter

Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark

Sergeants John Ordway, Nathaniel Pryor and Patrick Gass

Privates William Bratton, John Collins, John Colter, Joseph Fields, Reuben Fields,

Robert Frazier, George Gibson, Silas Goodrich, Hugh Hall, Thomas P. Howard,

Huge McNeal, John Potts, John B. Thompson, Peter Weiser, William Werner,

Joseph Whitehouse, Alexander Willard, Richard Windsor and gunsmith John Shields

boatmen Pierre Cruzatte, Francois LaBiche, Jean Baptiste Lapage

hunters: Privates George Drouillard and George Shannon

non-military personnel Toussaint Charbonneau, his wife, Sacagawea and child Jean-Baptiste

Clark's slave York and Lewis' Newfoundland dog

Clatsop Indians stopped frequently at the post

as noted in Clark's journal -- December 12

**“A numbr [sic] of Indians in canoes came along and from them we got some food supplies, consisting mainly of some ‘wassatoo,’ Indian potatoes and a prepared root, called ‘shanataque’. For these we traded blue beads and fish hooks, and we were glad of the opportunity for our food was running low.”<sup>44</sup>**

Explorers celebrated Christmas -- all the men were in their huts and exchanged gifts -- December 25

Clark further noted: **“...we [Lewis and Clark] were awakened at daylight by a discharge of fire-arms, which was followed by a song from the men as a compliment to us on the return of Christmas, which we had always been accustomed to observe as a day of rejoicing.”**

Clark also noted on this day: **“The rain confined us to the house, and our only luxuries in honor of the season were some poor elk meat, so much spoiled that we ate it through mere necessity, a few roots and some mouldy [sic] pounded fish.”<sup>45</sup>**

---

<sup>43</sup> Gordon Speck. *Northwest Explorations*, P. 255.

<sup>44</sup> Laura Bartlett, *Student's History of the Northwest and the State of Washington*, P. 102-103.

<sup>45</sup> Laura Bartlett, *Student's History of the Northwest and the State of Washington*, P. 103.

Clark made special note of the day in his journal: **“Some rain at different times last night and showers of hail with intervalles [sic] of fair starr [sic] light. This morning at day we were saluted by all our party under our winders, a Shout and a Song, after brackfast [sic] we divided our tobacco which amounted to 2 Carrots, one half we gave to the party who used Tobacco those who did not we gave a Handkerchief as a present. The day proved showery all day, the Indians left us this evening, all our party moved into their huts, we dried some of our wet goods. I reved [sic] a present of a Fleeshe Hoserey [fleece hosiery] vest drawn & socks of Captain Lewis, pair Mockersons [sic] of Whitehouse, a small Indian basket of Guterich, & 2 Doz weasels tales (from Sacagawea), & some black roots of the Indians G.D. saw a Snake passing across the parth Our Diner to day consisted of pore Elk boiled, spilt [spoiled] fish & some roots, a bad Christmass [sic] diner worm day.”**<sup>46</sup>

#### CORE OF DISCOVERY LEARNS OF A WHALE WASHED UP ON THE BEACH

Captains Lewis and Clark were informed by some Indians a day or two after Christmas that a whale had died and washed up on the beach southwest of the fort  
(at today's town of Cannon Beach, Oregon)

Captain Lewis was eager to go and see it, but high wind delayed his trip -- December 27, 1805

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY ESTABLISHES A SALT WORKS

Members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition spent a great deal of their time securing provisions for the trip home  
by the time they reached the lower Columbia River region,

the Corps had run out of valuable salt which was necessary to preserve meat

To make salt, a location had to be found with adequate rocks to build a furnace, wood to burn, ocean water to boil, fresh water to drink and game animals to kill and preserve  
fifteen miles southwest of Fort Clatsop a good site was found

in addition, Clatsop and Tillamook Indians lived nearby who could provide their expertise

Five of the Corps of Discovery men traveled to the beach site and built a camp -- December 28, 1805  
they set five kettles of saltwater boiling twenty-four hours a day to produce salt  
(according to their records they produced about twenty-eight gallons of salt  
before returning to Fort Clatsop [February 20, 1806])

#### CORE OF DISCOVERY REPORTS MEETING A RED-HEADED INDIAN

Lewis and Clark approached a group of Clatsop Indians  
near (today's Nehalem, Oregon) -- December 31, 1805

---

<sup>46</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 89.

one of these natives had a light complexion with a freckled face and red hair  
when he was child the name "Jack Ramsay" had been tattooed on his left arm

Clark recorded in his journal: **"With the party of Clatsops who visited us last was a man of much lighter Coloured [sic] than the natives are generally, he was freckled with long dusky rad [sic] hair, about 25 years of age, and must certainly be half white at least, this man appeared to understand more of the English language than the others of his party, but he did not speak a word of English he possessed all the habits of the Indians."**<sup>47</sup>

(This man's origins remain a mystery however a legend had developed regarding him according to the Clatsops, many years before a ship was wrecked off the Oregon coast some of the wreckage drifted ashore bearing an unconscious white youth with red hair Clatsops found him and revived him -- he came to live with them he married an Indian woman according to native custom this couple had several children and among them one who was as red-headed as his father he well could have been the red-headed Indian described by Clark)

#### NEW YEAR'S DAY AT FORT CLATSOP IS MISERABLE

Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery could only hope their fortunes would improve in 1806 soaked by rain and plagued with fleas, fresh meat in short supply and even less other food it was difficult to see how things could become more miserable -- January 1, 1806 New Years dinner consisted of the usual poor elk and wapato root washed down with water Members of the expedition spent the winter making salt, hunting elk and deer and fighting fleas they kept a sharp eye for any trading vessel that might be working along the coast With little to do but address the necessities of life, Clark's journal entries varied little most entries stated **"Nothing of consequence happened today"**<sup>48</sup>

#### CAPTAIN WILLIAM CLARK INVESTIGATES THE BEACHED WHALE

Captain Clark and twelve men took two canoes up the relatively placid Skipanon River before crossing overland the saltmaker's camp and across (today's Tillamook Head) when they arrived at the scene the whale's bones had been picked clean -- January 6, 1806 Indians were boiling the whale in a trough that held about twenty gallons of oil Clark succeeded in bargaining for about 300 pounds of whale blubber and a few gallons of oil Judging from the skeleton's length which was estimated to be 105 feet long it could have been that of a blue whale -- the largest of all living animals

---

<sup>47</sup> Journal of Lewis and Clark

<sup>48</sup> Journal of Lewis and Clark

## CORPS OF DISCOVERY MEMBERS WERE ANXIOUS TO RETURN HOME

Remaining trade goods could be wrapped in two handkerchiefs

there was no surplus food or personal luggage to carry as clothes had long since worn out  
and had been replaced by rough garments fashioned from skins

Timing of the return journey, however, was critical

they would be able to cross the Rocky Mountains only after the snow melted

but too late a start would mean the Missouri River would be frozen when they arrived  
and another winter on the plains would have to be endured

## FIGHTING BOREDOM BECAME THE PRINCIPAL OCCUPATION AT FORT CLATSOP

Corps of Discovery looked for ways to use their time -- some more productively than others

Captain William Clark finished a large map of the overland route -- February 11, 1806

preparations for the return journey began in earnest largely because of the poor diet they endured

letters of credit provided to the expedition by President Jefferson were worthless

since neither ships nor traders had arrived during the winter

## CORPS OF DISCOVERY COMPLETE THEIR PREPARATIONS FOR THE RETURN TRIP

Captain William Clark counted only six days with sunshine from [January] to March 23, 1806

Fort Clatsop was turned over to the Clatsop chief (natives occupied the post for several years)

Lewis and Clark left the Indians a list of their names, the names of thirty-one people with them  
and their accomplishments to date

with instructions to give this list to the first vessel which stopped there

Lewis posted a note on the fort: **“The object of this last [message] is that through the medium of some civilized person who may see the same, it may be made known to the world that the party consisting of the persons whose names are hereunto annexed and who were sent out by the Government of the United States to explore the interior of the continent of North America, did penetrate the same by way of the Missouri and Columbia Rivers, to the discharge of the latter into the Pacific Ocean, at which they arrived on the 14th day of November, 1805, and departed on their return to the United States by the same route by which they had come.”**<sup>49</sup>

## CORPS OF DISCOVERY BEGIN THEIR RETURN TRIP BACK TO ST. LOUIS

Expedition began back up the Columbia River -- March 23, 1806

Private George Drouillard and a party of hunters were sent out ahead

two pirogues and three canoes began the return voyage

---

<sup>49</sup> Lyman, William Denison, *The Columbia River*, P. 86.

Clark reported: **“Loaded our canoes & at 1 P.M. left Fort Clatsop on our homeward journey, at this place we had wintered and remained from the 7th of Decr. 1805 to this day and we have lived as we had any right to expect, and we can say that we were never one day without three meals of some kind a day either pore elk meat or roots....”**<sup>50</sup>

#### LEWIS AND CLARK CONTINUE UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Returning up the Columbia River Lewis and Clark reached “Quicksand River” (today’s Sandy River) above (today’s Portland, Oregon)

when traveling down the Columbia River and on their return back up the Columbia Corps of Discovery members navigated along the north (Washington) shoreline both times they missed the mouth of the (now) Multnomah River because of islands they mistakenly thought the Quicksand River drained the (Willamette River Valley) which they could see from their canoes -- April 1, 1806

Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor took a small canoe and two men to explore the Quicksilver River when they returned that evening they reported the journeyed six miles upriver before the river took a bend to east (toward Mount Hood)

#### CAPTAIN CLARK LED A PARTY OF MEN TO EXOLORE THE WILLAMETTE RIVER

Forty miles beyond the confluence of the Columbia and the (Willamette) rivers

Indians told them they had missed the “Multnomah” River

a huge river that ran south to north and emptied into the Columbia River

Clark and six men went back to investigate

they reached the present site of (Portland, Oregon) -- April 3, 1806

they noticed “Image Canoe Island” (today’s Sauvie Island) in the fog and saw the mouth of a great river the natives called “Multnomah”

Indians referred to the lower river as Multnomah

and the upper river (above Willamette Falls) as something that sounded like the Wil-lamt both terms also served as the names of the local people

Clark and his men ventured up (Willamette River) only a few miles

they receive a map of the area from Indians showing the tribal habitats

and a report that a well known numerous and powerful Indian people, the Clackamus, controlled the region

#### AMERICAN BRIG *LYDIA* STOPPED TO TRADE IN THE VICINITY OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

---

<sup>50</sup> Journal of Lewis and Clark

*Lydia* out of Boston under Captain Samuel Hill had just completed its mission of mercy rescuing John R. Jewitt and John Thompson from Nootka Sound natives realizing the trading ship *Boston* had been attacked caused alarm among the fur traders aboard the *Lydia* and others they met

*Lydia* had suffered considerable damage to her spars during a gale wind she returned to the region of the Columbia River to procure timbers for her masts at the mouth of the Columbia River Captain Hill and his rescued guests crossed the bar they heard from the natives that Lewis and Clark had departed a fortnight before

John Jewitt says: **“We proceeded about ten miles up the river to a small Indian village, where we heard from the inhabitants that Captain Clark and Lewis, from the United States of America, had been there about a fortnight before us, on their journey overland, and had left several medals with them which they showed us.”**<sup>51</sup>

Captain Hill of the *Lydia* carried it to Canton with him in [January 1808] from there he forwarded the list to Philadelphia

(one of the copies of the names of the explorers, at last, did get back to the United States)

#### CAPTAIN CLARK AND HIS SIX MEN REJOIN THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

William Clark and his men returned to the Columbia River and journeyed upriver in search of Clark Corps of Discovery members continually fought blustery winds and flooding claimed two canoes During this leg of the journey Chinook Indians were a constant source of harassment

#### LEWIS AND CLARK REACH THE CASCADES

Continuing upriver the Corps of Discovery arrived at the lowest of series of rapids --April 10, 1806 The Cascades could not be navigated so the men began to drag their vessel upriver with ropes Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor was placed in charge of drawing the pirogue upriver but the bow turned sideways in the river and it was lost in the current

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY PORTAGE AROUND THE CASCADES

Larger boats were cut up for fuel five canoes were carried along the portage route around The Cascades in the rain over a slippery, narrow trail, 2,800 yards long -- April 11, 1806 Clark and a small party of explorers went ahead to trade for horses Clark took four canoes up the rapids with a great deal of effort some of the canoes were unavoidably damaged in the process

---

<sup>51</sup> George W. Fuller, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 94.

Clark's men were very tired after their laborious task

George Drouillard and the brothers Joseph and Reuben Field were sent out to hunt Chinook Indians scornfully fingered the pathetic trade goods the redheaded captain offered

Clark recorded in his journal the natives **"tanterlized [sic] me."**<sup>52</sup>

Indians crowded Lewis' camp, watching -- then began to steal items from the Corps

Shields was forced to draw a knife on two Indians

who tried to take a dog he had purchased for food

two other Indians stole Lewis' Newfoundland dog

Lewis sent three men after them to retrieve his dog -- even if they had to kill the Indians

when the men approached the Indians, they ran off, and Seaman was brought back to camp

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY ARRIVES AT THE GREAT FALLS OF THE COLUMBIA

Lewis and Clark's Expedition reached the Columbia's Great Falls (Celilo Falls) -- April 20, 1806

they expected to trade their canoes for horses acquired from the Walla Walla Indians

Sergeants Patrick Gass and Nathaniel Pryor went to work making pack saddles

#### CAPTAIN CLARK AND HIS MEN REACH A WALLA WALLA INDIAN VILLAGE

Chief Yellepit of the Walla Walla Indians had a village below the mouth of the Walla Walla River

Clark was very relieved when he reached these friendly Indians -- April 27, 1806

Yellepit offered the men food and horses

Captain Meriwether Lewis and main Corps of Discovery arrived at the Cayuse village

Chief Yellepit persuaded his villagers to give the Corps any items they needed for their journey

Lewis gave him a peace medal

Yellepit drew a map of the confluence of the Snake and Columbia Rivers

Frequently portaging around the Columbia River's waterfalls proved to be too great a challenge

additional pack horses were purchased from the Walla Walla Indians

by turning brass buttons from old uniforms into trade goods for the Indians

Yellepit presented an elegant white horse to Captain Clark

Less than a month after leaving Fort Clatsop the expedition abandoned its canoes

they struck out overland for the Rocky Mountains

using horses acquired from the hospitable Walla Walla tribe

#### LEWIS AND CLARK SEARCH FOR THE FRIENDLY NEZ PERCE INDIANS

Almost out of food, the expedition arrived back in Nez Perce country

---

<sup>52</sup> Journal of Lewis and Clark

on the Clearwater River -- April 29, 1806  
searches for the friendly Nez Perce people were earnestly undertaken  
Lewis and Clark found a collection of Nez Perce natives -- May 8  
at the confluence of the North and South forks of the Clearwater River  
Nez Perce Indians greeted the expedition with genuine hospitality  
Corps of Discovery arrived at Chief Twisted Hair's "Camp Chopunnish"  
(near Kamiah, Idaho) -- May 14  
Lewis and Clark Expedition had to wait in the Nez Perce camp  
until the snow melted in the mountains so that they could pass over the Continental Divide  
and return to the east -- Indians put up a large tent to house the explorers  
at Chief Twisted Hair's camp, the co-commanders collected the horses  
which they had branded and left behind the year before  
Nez Perce had kept reasonable care of the horses and goods left in their charge  
their horses were in fair shape and the chief was paid for his services  
although the Corps of Discovery now had the livestock necessary for pushing on toward home,  
deep snow on the upper Lolo Trail held them back for more than a month  
Lewis and Clark waited on the Upper Clearwater River with friendly Indians  
this was longest the expedition stayed in camp except for (winter) encampments  
during the wait with the Nez Perce  
Lewis busied himself with studying the natives and nature  
Clark was occupied with treating sick members of the tribe

#### NORTH WEST COMPANY BECOMES AWARE OF THE DISCOVERIES OF LEWIS AND CLARK

Stimulated by knowledge of the Lewis and Clark Expedition North West Company  
resolved to plant trading stations West of the Rocky Mountains  
in the Far West before the Americans become entrenched  
North West Company feared the encroachment of Americans:

- American ships had a virtual monopoly on the Pacific coast;
- United States owned Louisiana Territory;
- Lewis and Clark had opened the West to trappers and traders

#### DR. JOHN MCLOUGHLIN GOES TO WORK FOR NORTH WEST COMPANY

Dr. McLoughlin's uncle, Simon Fraser, secured an appointment for him with North West Company  
he was assigned to Fort Kaministiquia on Lake Superior as the resident medical doctor -- 1806  
but also became one of the most able businessmen connected with the company  
Physically Dr. McLoughlin was an impressive man physically:

- he was almost six feet tall and inclined to weight,
- he was prematurely gray with thick, bushy hair,
- his sharp blue eyes could be kind or rapidly change to glowering with his quick temper,
- Indians referred to him as “White-headed Eagle”

Dr. McLoughlin’s leadership style displayed his lofty concept of duty to his fellow men  
 he was confident in dealing with Indians whom he understood and tyrannical to his subordinates

## TWO NEW NORTH WEST COMPANY POSTS ARE OPENED IN NEW CALEDONIA

Break-up of ice on the Peace River was late

Nor’Westers Simon Fraser and his clerk John Stuart could not start upriver until May 20, 1806  
 when they left their base camp at Rocky Mountain House on the Upper Peace River  
 they stopped at Fort McLeod on McLeod Lake (which had been opened the previous fall)

Fraser and Stuart encountered many difficulties

most of the rivers and creeks they followed were swelling from melted snow run-off  
 swift currents impeded their progress

good bark for canoe-building was lacking at the portage, and the old and makeshift canoe  
 that had been set out the year before had to be replaced at Trout Lake

their ten crewmen were unskilled and unsatisfactory

most of them suffered from illness or injuries along the way

## CORPS OF DISCOVERY LEAVES THE NEZ PERCE INDIAN CAMP

Lewis and Clark’s Expedition departed from Chief Twisted Hair and the Nez Perce -- June 10, 1806  
 each member of the expedition had his own horse to ride and was leading another  
 reaching the Bitterroot Mountains proved to be far easier than the necessary crossing that lay ahead

## CORPS OF DISCOVERY SETS OUT FOR THE BITTERROOT MOUNTAINS

Climbing into the mountains was made difficult by fallen timber and slippery roads  
 this march was slow and hard on the horses.

It had been spring on the plains, but the Bitterroots still had winter-like conditions  
 soon the explorers were traveling in ten feet of snow that was packed so hard  
 that it supported the weight of the horses and their burdens  
 members of the Corps of Discovery became lost in the deep snow  
 they were forced to return to nearby Nez Perce for help

Following two Nez Perce Indian guides they headed back up into the mountains -- June 15, 1806  
 again they climbed the western slope of Bitterroot Mountains toward Lolo Pass  
 finally, with the help of the Nez Perce guides, Lolo Pass was crossed -- June 22

Once again the Corps of Discovery camped in the Bitterroot Valley (at Montana's western boundary)

#### CAPTAIN LEWIS DECIDED TO SEPARATE FROM CAPTAIN CLARK

After successfully making their way over the Bitterroot Mountains thanks to the Nez Perce Corps of Discovery reached Traveler's Rest -- June 30, 1806

there Lewis decided to split the Core of Discovery to investigate two separate routes  
Lewis and nine men would explore the Missouri River to the north  
to see if a direct route between the Bitterroot River and the Great Falls of the Missouri River could be discovered

Meanwhile, Clark and the others would take the expedition's forty-nine horses and one colt to investigate the Yellowstone River southward to its junction with the Missouri River where the Corps would be reunited with Captain Lewis at Pompey's Pillar

#### SERGEANT PRYOR AND THREE MEN ARE DISPATCHED TO DEVELOP TRADE

Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor with Privates Hugh Hall, Richard Windsor and hunter George Shannon were given the unenviable task of delivering twenty-five horses and one colt by land to the Mandan Villages -- July 1, 1806

in addition Pryor and his men were to continue on to the British posts on the Assiniboine to deliver a letter to trader Hugh Heney, a trader and agent with the North West Company, Heney was to convince several Sioux chiefs to accompany Lewis and Clark on their return trip to Washington City to meet President Thomas Jefferson this letter also asked Heaney to influence the tribe against the British and Canadian traders to trade solely with the Americans

#### LEWIS AND CLARK TRAVEL INDEPENDENTLY

Meriwether Lewis and his group of nine men and five Indians broke camp -- July 3, 1806

Sergeant Patrick Gass, Privates Joseph Field, Reuben Field, Robert Frazier, Silas Goodrich, Huge McNeal, John B. Thompson, William Werner and hunter Private George Drouillard set out down the Bitterroot River on a raft

however, the five Indians soon abandoned the trip as they were afraid of Hidatsa war parties

William Clark, with the remainder of the Corps and their remaining twenty-four horses followed the Bitterroot River

(along today's highway Route 93 to a location near Hamilton, Montana)

Clark described the animal life of the region

Clark's eighteen member party consisted of:

- Sergeants John Ordway

- Privates: William Bratton, John Collins, John Colter, George Gibson, Thomas P. Howard, John Potts, Peter Weiser, Joseph Whitehouse, Alexander Willard and gunsmith John Shields;
- three boatmen: Pierre Cruzatte, Francois LaBiche and Jean Baptiste Lapage;
- non-military personnel Toussaint Charbonneau, his wife, Sacagawea and child Jean-Baptiste and Clark's slave York

#### CAPTAIN CLARK REACHES THE BEAVERHEAD RIVER

William Clark and his twenty-one members of the Corps of Discovery crossed overland with their twenty-four horses to the Beaverhead River which they reached (near present-day Dillon, Montana) -- July 8, 1806 there they uncovered the cache and canoes that had been left behind on the westward journey

#### CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS CONTINUES HIS INVESTIGATION TO THE NORTH

Lewis and his nine men followed Lolo Creek to the Blackfoot River there Lewis discovered and named Lewis and Clark Pass (which Clark never saw) Crossing the Continental Divide Lewis and his explorers descended from the Rocky Mountains and continued on toward the Great Falls of the Missouri River

#### CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS REACHES THE MISSOURI'S GREAT FALLS

Lewis' party of nine men arrived at the White Bear Islands near Great Falls (Montana) -- July 11, 1806 there his men killed eleven buffalo and begin building small boats that consisted of a buffalo skin stretched over a willow frame (there were called bullboats)

#### CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS' PARTY OPENS THE CACHE THEY HAD LEFT

While in camp White Bear Islands, Sergeant Patrick Gass supervised the unearthing of the cache of baggage they had left behind on their westward journey -- July 13, 1806 they found the bearskins and plant specimens had been ruined by moisture

#### WILLIAM CLARK REACHES THE THREE FORKS OF THE MISSOURI RIVER

William Clark and his twenty-one members of the Corps of Discovery drove their twenty-four horses as they traveled beside the Beaverhead River until it joined the Jefferson River They followed the Jefferson to the Three Forks of the Missouri River where they made camp on the east bank of the Jefferson River (one mile east of Logan, Montana) -- July 13, 1806 Sacagawea had remembered the country through which they were passing and guided them well

she recommended a gap in the mountains to the south as their best route  
(this gap was Bozeman Pass) -- the last major land obstacle the expedition would face  
Clark sent Sergeant John Ordway and nine men to travel in canoes -- July 13, 1806  
rapidly down the Missouri River to the Great Falls to begin the arduous portage around the falls  
traveling with Sergeant Ordway were Privates John Collins, John Colter, Thomas P. Howard,  
John Potts, Peter Weiser, Joseph Whitehouse and Alexander Willard  
and boatmen Pierre Cruzatte and Jean Baptiste Lapage

#### WILLIAM CLARK AND HIS PARTY REACH THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER

From the Three Forks William Clark and his eleven remaining members of the Corps of Discovery  
continued with their twenty-four horses until they reached the Yellowstone River -- July 15, 1806  
just south of (modern-day Livingston, Montana)

#### CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS AGAIN SPLITS HIS PARTY

Lewis, camped on the Missouri River at the mouth of Marias River  
he decided to leave six men at the mouth of Marias River -- July 15, 1806  
Sergeant Patrick Gass, Robert Frazier, Silas Goodrich, Huge McNeal, John B. Thompson  
and William Werner

Lewis planned to explore the upper reaches of the Marias River  
with Privates Joseph Field, Reuben Field and hunter Private George Drouillard  
After Lewis had departed up Marias River

Huge McNeal was attacked by a grizzly bear at the lower portage around the Great Falls  
he broke his musket over the bear's head and climbed a tree to get away

#### WILLIAM CLARK AND HIS PORTION OF THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY MAKE CAMP

Captain Clark with Privates William Bratton, George Gibson, John Shields  
boatmen Pierre Cruzatte, Francois LaBiche, Jean Baptiste Lapage  
Toussaint Charbonneau, Sacagawea, the infant Jean-Baptiste and Clark's slave York  
drove their horses beside the Yellowstone River down to Buffalo Mirage Access  
where camp was made -- July 16, 1806  
where they cut, hollowed and burned two dugout canoes to continue down the Yellowstone  
At Buffalo Mirage Access the remaining members of the Corps of Discovery  
cut, hollowed and burned two dugout canoes to continue down the Yellowstone

#### CAPTAIN CLARK HAS HIS HORSES STOLEN

William Clark with his party of ten including York, Charbonneau, Sacagawea and Pompey

entered the territory belonging to the Crow Indians  
Clark made camp in the vicinity of (today's Park City, Montana)  
they awoke to find their horses were gone yet they had never seen an Indian -- July 20, 1806  
Clark sorely felt his loss as the horses had added greatly to the success of the expedition  
Clark could remember the previous winter when snow came early  
and trapped them in the Bitterroot Mountains  
short of food and with no game to hunt, they had to kill one of the colts to keep from starving  
indeed, like Sacagawea, horses made it possible for Lewis and Clark to survive  
and succeed at their difficult and all-important mission

#### WILLIAM CLARK STOPS TO MAKE DUGOUT CANOES

After the loss of their horses Clark had little choice but to stop long enough to hew out  
two twenty-eight-foot Cottonwood canoes and hollow them with fire  
in the vicinity (of today's Columbus, Montana)

#### SERGEANT PRYOR HAS THE HORSES HE IS DRIVING STOLEN

Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor made camp for the night in a thunder and lightning storm -- July 21, 1806  
Crow Indians took the party's twenty-four horses that night  
as the storm covered the sound of the herd leaving while the men slept  
Crows did not consider this stealing as many horse herds roamed the region and were available  
to the Indians claiming horses was like possessing herds of elk or deer  
When first light came Sergeant Pryor discovered the horse herd was gone  
he and his three men began looking for the horses  
walking in an ever-widening concentric circle around the camp  
it was possible, he thought, that they had merely wandered off grazing  
however, after a mile they discovered tracks that revealed the horses were driven off  
discouraged, Pryor, Hugh Hall, Richard Windsor and hunter George Shannon  
began walking for Pompey's Pillar, where they hoped to encounter Clark and his party

#### SERGEANT NATHANIEL PRYOR COMES UP WITH A PLAN

It was a long walk to Pompey's Pillar so the men killed two buffalo -- July 22, 1806  
hides were stretched over a willow framework to make made two bullboats  
these were used to carry the four men down the Missouri to the Yellowstone River  
and Pompey's Pillar

#### CAPTAIN MERIWEATHER LEWIS EXPLORES MARIAS RIVER

Lewis and his six men knew Marias River was Blackfoot Indian territory and therefore dangerous but they explored up the river to determine whether the headwaters of Maria's River intersected with the Saskatchewan River if so, this would provide a canoe route for diverting Canadian furs to the Missouri River he determined the two rivers did not meet Disappointed, Lewis and his men turned back toward the Missouri River

#### WILLIAM CLARK AND HIS PARTY IS AGAIN WATERBORNE

After completing fabrication work on two cottonwood dugout canoes -- July 24, 1806 Clark with his nine adults and a baby resumed water travel to meet Lewis at Pompey's Pillar they lashed the dugouts together for strength and safety Clark retraced their former route -- this time traveling downriver to mouth of the Yellowstone River

#### WILLIAM CLARK AND HIS PARTY REACH POMPEY'S PILLAR

Traveling down the Yellowstone River Clark and party of ten including York, Charbonneau, Sacagawea and Pompey reached the rendezvous point at Pompey's Pillar -- July 25, 1806 Camp was made on the north side of the Yellowstone River (south of Sheep Mountain and three miles below Shields River)

#### LEWIS COMES UNDER ATTACK BY BLACKFEET INDIANS

Captain Lewis and his three men continued their descent of Marias River they were spotted by a hunting party of eight Blackfoot Indians Blackfeet seemed friendly and the two groups decided to camp together -- July 26, 1806 Lewis gave the Blackfeet a Jefferson Medal, a flag and a handkerchief As the explorers slept the Blackfoot warriors took the muskets from Captain Lewis, George Drouillard, and the Field brothers Joseph and Reuben -- early morning hours of July 27 Joseph Field woke up, struggled with one of the Blackfoot warriors, and stabbed him to death Lewis shot and wounded a second warrior who shot back and barely missed Lewis' head it was believed this warrior later died of his wound Lewis and his men recovered their rifles and the Blackfeet fled this was the only serious violence the Corps of Discovery encountered during the expedition however, it resulted in providing inadvertent assistance to the North West Company effort to establish trade among the natives although the Americans never became aware of the results of their actions Fearing the surviving Indians would bring reinforcements,

Lewis and his men paddled sixty-three miles, ate, then traveled seventeen miles more  
they ate again and continued twenty more miles by moonlight  
Lewis was anxious to warn the unsuspecting members of his party at the mouth of Marias River  
of the potential danger of a Blackfoot attack  
Lewis and his three men finally camped (west of modern Fort Benton, Montana)

#### NOR'WESTERS SIMON FRASER AND JOHN STUART REACH STUART LAKE

Simon Fraser and his clerk John Stuart moved on to Stuart Lake which they reached -- July 26, 1806  
work was begun on Fort Nakasleh (later Fort St. James) on the southeast shore of Stuart Lake  
but few trade goods were available with which to barter for furs  
salmon run was late and the Indians were near starvation  
Fraser and his men were soon in a similar condition

Simon Fraser learned from the Indians that a major river called Tacouche Tess could be reached  
by descending Stuart River which drained Stuart Lake then crossing overland to the Nechako River  
and descending that river to its confluence with the Tacouche Tess

Fraser had intended to go to the Tacouche Tess and trace at least part of its course before (winter)  
but lack of goods and provisions forced him to postpone this major part of his assignment  
instead, he sent John Stuart to visit Fraser Lake which the Indians had described

(Later in the year Fraser will join Stuart and they will build Fort Natleh [later renamed Fort Fraser])

Fraser will have added Fort Nakasleh (later Fort St. James) and Fort Natleh [Fort Fraser]  
to Fort McLeod [1805] and Rocky Mountain House [1799] to develop New Caledonia)

Because supplies and trade goods would not be brought to New Caledonia until the fall of the next year

Fraser and Stuart returned to Fort Kaministiquia on the shore of Lake Superior  
where preparations were begun to lead an expedition to the Tacouche Tess

(John Stuart every summer will deliver the annual catch of beavers, otters, lynxes, skunks, fishers,  
martens, muskrats, foxes, wolves and bison taken in New Caledonia to Rocky Mountain House)

#### SERGEANT ORDWAY REACHES THE GREAT FALLS

Sergeant John Ordway arrived at the Great Falls with his nine men

Privates John Collins, John Colter, Thomas P. Howard, John Potts, Peter Weiser,

Joseph Whitehouse, Alexander Willard, and boatmen Pierre Cruzatte and Jean Baptiste Lapage  
they joined the five men Lewis had left under Sergeant Patrick Glass -- July 28, 1806

Robert Frazier, Silas Goodrich, Huger McNeal, John B. Thompson and William Werner  
portage around the Great Falls was begun by the thirteen members of the Corps of Discovery

#### LEWIS ARRIVES AT THE MISSOURI RIVER

Having completed his investigation of Marias River Captain Lewis and his three men were united with the nine men under Sergeant Patrick Gass and the nine man expedition Captain Clark had dispatched under Sergeant John Ordway This brought Lewis' expedition to twenty-one men under his command -- August 3, 1806

#### CAPTAIN LEWIS AND HIS TWENTY-ONE MEN SET OUT DOWN THE MISSOURI RIVER

Lewis and the members of his party were anxious to reunited with Captain Clark and his explorers they traveled down the Missouri River as quickly as conditions would permit -- August 4, 1806

#### CAPTAIN WILLIAM CLARK LEAVES HIS CAMP AT POMPEY'S PILLAR

Captain Clark and his members of the Corps of Discovery which included Privates William Bratton, George Gibson, John Shields boatmen Pierre Cruzatte, Francois LaBiche, Jean Baptiste Lapage Toussaint Charbonneau, Sacagawea, the infant Jean-Baptiste and Clark's slave York Clark's York left their camp at Pompey's Pillar when Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor failed to arrive with the herd of horses Clark and his companions set out down the Missouri River for St. Louis -- August 7, 1806

#### SERGEANT NATHANIEL PRYOR ARRIVES AT POMPEY'S PILLAR

Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor with Privates Hugh Hall, Richard Windsor and hunter George Shannon reached Pompey's Pillar and the Yellowstone River where Clark had camped -- August 8, 1806 They could see the main group had departed the day before Pryor and his men set about building new bullboats to catch the expedition

#### CAPTAIN LEWIS IS HIT BY A MUSKET BALL

Meriwether Lewis was proceeding rapidly to meet up with Clark at Pompey's Pillar Lewis and his twenty-one men were camped at the mouth of the White Earth River Lewis and one-eyed Pierre Cruzatte went hunting on shore after sighting an elk herd they shot one and wounded another Lewis was preparing to take a second shot when he was struck about an inch below his hip the rifle-ball missed the bone and passed completely through his right thigh -- August 11, 1806 Lewis suspected it was Cruzatte who had shot him but when he called out there was no answer fearing an Indian attack Lewis made his way back to the pirogue to warn the men there Sergeant Gass dressed his wounds Cruzatte finally arrived at the canoe -- there was no doubt that it was his rifle that did the deed,

because the spent rifle ball was in Lewis' breeches  
(although Lewis will be disabled for a month he was still able to travel)

#### LEWIS AND CLARK ARE REUNITED ONCE AGAIN

Captain Lewis came upon the camp of two hunters from Illinois, Joseph Dickson and Forest Hancock  
they told Lewis that Captain Clark had passed them about noon the day before  
Lewis gave them information regarding the upper Missouri River and the location of beaver  
Captain Meriwether Lewis caught up with Captain William Clark  
six miles south of (Sanish, North Dakota) at "Reunion Point" -- 1:00 p.m. August 12, 1806

#### LEWIS AND CLARK ARRIVED AT THE MANDAN INDIAN VILLAGES

Corps of Discovery reached the Fort Mandan (North Dakota) -- August 14, 1806  
Knife River Indian Villages were reached -- August 15  
there a council was held with the Hidatsa Indians who did not want to go down the Missouri River  
because of hostile Lakota and Arikara war parties.  
Private John Colter asked permission to be released to return upriver to trap the Yellowstone River  
permission was granted as long as others in the expedition did not make the same request

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY SET OUT FOR ST. LOUIS

Captain Lewis' leg wound healed enough to allow him to continue  
Captain Clark paid Toussaint Charbonneau \$500.33 $\frac{1}{3}$   
his salary as interpreter to the West Coast and back  
Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery took their leave of John Colter  
who set out for the Yellowstone River with two upriver -- August 17, 1806  
Charbonneau and Sacagawea were released -- "Little Pomp" was now over a year and a half old  
Captain Clark promised a home for the boy and offered to school him  
Members of the expedition still faced the trial of passing through the country of the Teton Sioux

#### TETON SIOUX INDIANS MAKE AN APPEARANCE ALONG THE MISSOURI RIVER

Nearly a hundred armed and mounted Teton Sioux warriors  
lined the banks of the Missouri River -- August 30, 1806  
Lewis and Clark's men kept to the middle of the river  
fortunately for explorers this encounter was one of threats and taunts

#### CORPS OF DISCOVERY ENCOUNTERED TRADERS TRAVELING UP THE MISSOURI RIVER

Corps of Discovery met outgoing traders traveling up the Missouri River -- September 6, 1806

Lewis and Clark made their first exchanges for supplies since setting out almost 845 days before Corps of Discovery entered the home stretch as they covered as much as eighty miles a day traveling down the Missouri River

increasing numbers of traders were encountered

who told the explorers they had been given up for dead

#### LEWIS AND CLARK AND THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY ARRIVE AT ST. LOUIS

Lewis and Clark's Expedition left the Missouri River and entered the Mississippi River on the morning of September 23, 1806

men rowed the rest of the way downriver to St. Louis, Missouri arriving there at noon

from the journal: **"September 23rd, , descended to the Mississippi River and round to St. Louis, at which place we arrived at twelve o'clock, and having fired a salute, went on shore, where we received a most hearty and hospitable welcome from the whole village."**<sup>53</sup>

two years, four months, and nine days after they had left

and six months after setting out from Fort Clatsop

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark stayed in the home of "river baron" Pierre Chouteau

#### LEWIS AND CLARK'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Corps of Discovery stimulated great interest in the West

- they strengthened the claim of the United States;
- they revealed the vastness of the North American continent;
- they proved not one but two mountain ranges existed a between the Missouri and Columbia rivers

Lewis and Clark Expedition provided information on physical characteristics of the West:

- they described plant and animal life;
- they mapped the topography and recorded the climate;
- they discovered and crossed several mountain passes and passed through the Cascade Mountains

These explorers provided information about Indian tribes:

- they established friendly relations and generally left behind good will with the Indians
- they made a special emphasis of the native's faithfulness, honesty and devotion  
because the character of the Indians was so well documented by Lewis and Clark's expedition  
it must be concluded subsequent troubles were due largely to abuse by whites;
- they noted diseases that had been contracted by the Indians from sailors:
  - smallpox scars from epidemic of [1782-1783] were seen and recorded,
  - tuberculosis also noted,

---

<sup>53</sup> Laura Bartlett, *Student's History of the Northwest and the State of Washington*, P. 104.

-malaria wiped out 75% - 90% of the natives within a few years of the expedition

Route taken by the members of the Corps of Discovery covered 7,700 miles

Clark's maps became the standard for "Westing" Americans

Lewis summarized their effort: **"The road by which we went out by way of the Missouri to its head is three thousand ninety-six miles; thence by land by way of Lewis River over to Clark's River and down that to the entrance of Traveller's Rest Creek, where all the roads from different routes meet; thence across the rugged part of the Rocky Mountains to the navigable waters of the Columbia, three hundred and ninety-eight miles, thence down the river six hundred and forty miles to the Pacific Ocean, making a total distance of four thousand one hundred and thirty-four miles. On our return in 1806 we reduced the distance from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean to three thousand five hundred and fifty-five miles."**<sup>54</sup>

#### SEVEN JOURNALS OF THE TRIP WERE KEPT

Lewis and Clark made daily notes and transcribed them after the journey into blank books

no official report was made to the government

Lewis recorded his impressions of the natives and their way of life

their relationship with nature was studied

these records were later lost and remain unpublished

Clark kept a journal of flora and fauna

and recorded his practical knowledge of woodcraft, building and managing canoes

his writings are what is referred to as *The Journal of Lewis and Clark*

Besides the official journal of the co-captains, six other men kept private records

Sergeants Charles Floyd (for as far as he traveled before he died) John Ordway, Nathaniel Pryor and Patrick Gass who published his journal in 1806

Privates Robert Frazier Joseph Whitehouse published their journals

two other journals have yet to be found

Nicholas Biddle made a digest of the journals that was published in [1814]

he generally preserved the language of the writers

but sometimes he condensed their passages while at other times he expanded their writings

details for Biddle's work were furnished by William Clark's Journal and by Patrick Gass' Journal

and by the notes taken by Sergeant John Ordway as supplied by Clark

also, Private George Shannon was constantly consulted by Biddle

Reuben Gold Thwaites, superintendent of the Wisconsin Historical Society,

was editor of seven volumes of the centennial edition of the journals [1904]

---

<sup>54</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River: Its History, Its Myths, Its Scenery; Its Commerce*, P. 87

he had discovered unknown Clark diaries and papers in the possession of Clark's descendants  
Sergeant John Ordway's journal and Lewis and Clark's Eastern Journal  
were found among the papers of Nicholas Biddle [1915]  
Clark's Field Notes were discovered in an attic roll-top desk in St. Paul, Minnesota [1953]  
Private Joseph Whitehouse's journal in fair condition appeared in a bookstore in Philadelphia [1966]  
this extended the narrative by almost five months

#### JEFFERSON SUMMARIZED THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

President Thomas Jefferson noted [in 1813]: **“Never did a similar event excite more joy throughout the United States; the humblest of its citizens have taken a lively interest in the issue of this journey and looked with impatience for the information it would furnish. Nothing short of the official journals of this extraordinary and interesting journey will exhibit the importance of the service, the courage, devotion, zeal, and perseverance, under circumstances calculated to discourage, which animated this little band of heroes, throughout the long dangerous, and tedious travel.”**<sup>55</sup>

#### EXPEDITION LEADERS LATER LIVES WERE PECULIARLY UNSATISFACTORY

After their western trip

Meriwether Lewis was appointed Governor of Louisiana Territory

he met with a sudden violent and mysterious death at age thirty-five [1809]

while traveling on horseback from St. Louis to Washington, D.C.

in a lonely inn sixty miles north of Nashville, Tennessee at Grinder's Stand  
to this day it is not known if it was murder or suicide

William Clark was actively engaged in the fur trade

he provided for an education for Sacagawea's two sons

Jean-Baptiste (Little Pomp) was taught by a Protestant

Toussaint was instructed by a Catholic priest

he was commissioned Brigadier General of Louisiana Militia and Indian Agent for the Territory

he served as governor of Missouri territory until [1820]

in later years William Clark became self-centered

he felt his services and abilities were never appreciated by his fellow citizens  
or by the government of the United States

he was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs [1822-1838]

and served until his death in St. Louis [September 1, 1838] at age sixty-eight

Details of Sacagawea's life are disputed

---

<sup>55</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 88.

probably she later moved to the reservation (near Fort Washakie, Wyoming)  
where she died [April 9, 1884] on Shoshone Reservation (Wyoming) at about 100 years of age  
she was buried in the Shoshone Indian Cemetery  
her son Jean-Baptiste (Little Pomp) and, Bazil the son of Sacagawea 's sister  
were both old men living at (Fort Bridger, Wyoming) when they were found

#### DAVID THOMPSON IS STATIONED AT FORT KAMINISTIQUIA (FORT WILLIAM)

David Thompson, head geographer for North West Company, was at Fort William  
the company headquarters located along the west end of Lake Superior  
David Thompson was assigned to develop trade west of the Rockies and South of the Peace River  
he also was to find a practical passage across the Rocky Mountains for fur-laden packhorses  
David Thompson employed Canadian fur trader, scout and explorer Jacques (Jaco) Finlay -- 1806  
to blaze a trail through the Rocky Mountains across the Continental Divide  
and establish a trading post on the west side  
David Thompson returned from North West Company headquarters at Fort Kaministiquia  
to Rocky Mountain House on Saskatchewan River --autumn 1806

#### BLACKFEET INDIANS PLAN TO AVENGE KILLINGS BY AMERICANS

Blackfoot women relatives of the warriors slain by Captain Meriwether Lewis and his party  
wailed in their lodges while chiefs passed pipes back and forth around the council fires  
war drums throbbed -- winter 1806

#### FUR TRADER RAMSAY CROOKS ACTIVELY CONDUCTS TRADE IN SIOUX COUNTRY

Ramsay Crooks was born in Greenrock, Scotland [January 2, 1787]  
he arrived in Montreal, Canada with his widowed mother [April 25, 1803]  
there are conflicting reports regarding his employment after he landed in Canada  
eventually he went to work for Robert Dickson and Company in Sioux Country  
(in today's southwest Minnesota) during the winters of [1805-1806 and 1806]-1807

#### DAVID THOMPSON SENDS THE WINTER IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Geographer David Thompson spent the winter at Rocky Mountain House  
on Saskatchewan River making preparations to cross the Rocky Mountains --1806-1807  
Piegan band of Blackfoot Indians who frequented the post  
opposed establishing trade west of the mountains  
because their enemies, the Kootenai and Flathead people, would then acquire guns  
Thompson decided to carry out his assignment and his dream to cross the Rocky Mountains

in spite of the native opposition

#### JACO FINLAY ESTABLISHES A TRADING POST WEST OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Nor'Wester Jaco Finlay had been hired by David Thompson to blaze a trail over the Rockies he reached the headwaters of the Columbia River -- although he did know this to be case he established a trading post near the south end of Lake Windemere near (present-day Invermere, British Columbia) where the Columbia River leaves the lake and begins its northward route (before making a big bend to the south) this post was built with exceptional care making it as stout as possible

#### NOR'WESTER JOHN McDONALD COMPETES WITH HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY TRADERS

John McDonald twice traveled to Rocky Mountain House -- winter 1806-1807 to assist in David Thompson's preparations to cross the Rockies competing Hudson's Bay Company men working the same region found McDonald to be a violent opponent and a notorious scoundrel

#### SIMON FRASER AND JOHN STUART ESTALISH FORT GEORGE

Nor'Wester Simon Fraser's preparations to lead an expedition farther west to find the Tacouche Tess (Fraser River) could not be carried out [1806] because of a lack of men and supplies as well as the occurrence of a local famine Simon Fraser and John Stuart could not attempt the expedition until spring 1807 as they could not be resupplied until [autumn 1807]

Fraser and John Stuart traveled to the confluence of the Nechako and Tacouche Tess -- spring 1807

Fraser believed this was the Columbia River

there "Fort George" was constructed and named in honor of Britain's King George III (the location of Fort George is now known at Prince George)

Simon Fraser received word from North West Company headquarters

to explore the Tacouche Tess (later the Fraser River)

in an effort to limit American activity in the Far West

based on conclusions drawn by sea otter traders who operated off the Pacific coast

there was considerable confusion between the Columbia River and Fraser River

Fort George would become the starting point for Fraser's trip down the Tacouche Tess

#### LEWIS AND CLARK HAD OPENED THE WEST

The Corps of Discovery had made the world aware of vast new expanses of land and opportunities only Hudson's Bay Company fur traders, North West Company fur trappers and traders

and a few hundred independent trappers and traders were even remotely aware  
of the immense regions beyond the Great Lakes

Before the Lewis and Clark Expedition there was little knowledge of the Rocky Mountains  
and not an inkling they were composed of two connected mountain ranges:

the Rocky Mountains and the Bitterroot Mountains separated by the Bitterroot Valley  
a third chain of mountains, the Cascade Range, was completely unknown to anyone but Indians  
and a fourth chain, the Olympic Mountains, were unknown even to Lewis and Clark  
before the Corps of Discovery sea trading captains and sea explorers  
reported mountain ranges to the east of the Pacific Ocean  
overland travelers from the United States heard of mountains from Indians  
who would suspect they were not the same mountains?

It was discovered by the American Corps of Discovery:

- that the Columbia River did not have its source in the region of the headwaters  
of the Missouri-Mississippi river system as was believed;
- arid lands (of today's Inland Empire of Eastern Washington) came as a geographic shock;
- Plains Indians who were well known by traders and trappers were, in fact,  
neighbors to the before unknown Plateau Indians who, in turn,  
neighbored the Coastal Indians well known to sea traders

Lewis and Clark proved North America was far more expansive than was ever imagined  
American entrepreneurs were quick to tap the rich opportunities made available to them

#### JOHN JACOB ASTOR OPERATES AN EXTENSIVE LINE OF FUR TRADING POSTS

U.S. Government stores had been established among the natives in Louisiana Territory  
businessman John Jacob Astor and U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton (Missouri)  
fought these government posts persistently and savagely  
as an encroachment of budding American capitalism

American John Jacob Astor established himself along the south side of the Great Lakes by 1807  
he made a fortune transporting furs to London  
he also had a number of vessels trading in China, England and other countries  
Astor had no rival on the American continent except the British Hudson's Bay Company  
and Canadian North West Company both operating in Canada

#### MANUEL LISA LEADS THE FIRST TRADING EXPEDITION TO THE UPPER MISSISSOURI REGION

After the return of the Lewis and Clark Expedition well known Spanish trapper and trader  
Manuel Lisa gave up his exclusive rights to trade with the Osage Indians  
and prepared to trade further west in Louisiana Territory than anyone had yet attempted

Manuel Lisa formed a partnership known as the “St. Louis Missouri Fur Company” -- April 19, 1807  
with two merchants from Kaskaskia (east-Central Illinois) -- Pierre Menard and William Morrison  
they were determined to go to Yellowstone Country and construct a small post  
at the mouth of the Big Horn River  
where they planned to monopolize the upper Missouri River fur trade  
leaders of the enterprise were: Manuel Lisa, Pierre Menard, General William Clark,  
William Morrison, Augusta and Pierre Chouteau (father and son), Sylvester Labadie,  
members of the Wilkinson and Lewis families and Andrew Henry  
St. Louis served as headquarters and supply depot for the venture  
Manuel Lisa gathered a company of between fifty and sixty men  
this party included three men just returned with Lewis and Clark, John Potts, Peter Wiser  
and George Drouillard, perhaps the most valuable man on the Corps of Discovery  
Lisa led his expedition of traders out of St. Louis in two keelboats  
bound for the upper Missouri River -- April 19, 1807

#### AMERICAN TRADERS AND TRAPPERS OPERATE OUT OF ST. LOUIS

Other Americans were outfitted in St. Louis to trap in the Rocky Mountains  
more than 100 traders were licensed to work the Missouri Country  
there was no way of knowing how many hundreds did not bother with licenses  
Several large parties set out up the Missouri River-- spring 1807  
licensed or not, all targeted the head waters of the Missouri to acquire their wealth

#### NOR'WESTER DAVID THOMPSON SETS OUT TO EXPLORE THE WEST

David Thompson set out from North West Company Western Headquarters at Rocky Mountain House  
on North Saskatchewan River (near today's Calgary, Alberta) -- May 10, 1807  
to follow the trail over the Rocky Mountains blazed by Nor'Wester Jaco Finlay [1806]  
Geographer David Thompson traveled with his wife and their three small children  
they set out from Rocky Mountain House  
accompanied by Thompson's second-in-command Finan McDonald and eight voyageurs  
Finan McDonald was six foot four inches tall with long red hair and bushy whiskers  
in addition to English McDonald spoke French and several tribal languages  
he quickly won the admiration of Indians by his reckless exploits

#### DAVID THOMPSON CROSSES THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

David Thompson and his companions traveled up the North Saskatchewan River  
past the Kootenay Plains and over (what would later be known as Howse Pass]) -- June 24, 1807

following the trail blazed by Nor'Wester Jaco Finlay  
(Howse Pass is eighty miles northwest Banff, Alberta

this pass was named after Joseph Howse who was later sent [1809]

by the rival Hudson's Bay Company to spy on David Thompson)

Thompson's expedition followed a trail that paralleled Blaeberry Creek (British Columbia)

they reached a large north-flowing river -- June 30

taking latitudinal observations Thompson knew this was not the river (today's Fraser River)  
that had been described by Alexander Mackenzie [1793]

because the river flowed north from this location Thompson (incorrectly) determined it was not  
the Columbia River that had been discovered by American Captain Robert Gray [1792]

Thompson was aware of the Lewis and Clark Expedition that had entered the Columbia River  
using the Snake River [1805]

#### NOR'WESTER DAVID THOMPSON ARRIVES AT KOOTANAE HOUSE

Jaco Finlay had been employed by North West Company geographer David Thompson

to blaze a trail across the Rocky Mountains and establish a trading post on the west side

Finlay had constructed a trading post along the headwaters of the Columbia River ([806]

although he was unaware the nearby river was actually the Columbia

When he arrived at Jaco Finlay's post David Thompson named the nearby Kootenai River

after a local Indian tribe -- he did not know this was really the Columbia River

Thompson named Jaco Finlay's post "Kootenae House"

Thompson and his expedition spent the next week building boats for the next stage of the journey

they ascended the river traveling south until they reached Lake Windemere -- July 18, 1807

#### MANUEL LISA'S EXPEDITION REACHES THE ARIKARA INDIANS

Manuel Lisa's party of fifty to sixty traders reached the Arikara Indians

(living in what is now northern South Dakota) -- August 1807

they found these people at war with their neighbors the Mandan Indians

to keep the Mandans from being supplied by the traders

Arikaras ordered the whites to give up the expedition -- Lisa refused to leave the region

Arikaras promptly retaliated by robbing him of a large portion of his trade goods

Lisa ordered his crew to push ahead anyway

#### DAVID THOMPSON BECOMES AWARE OF AMERICANS IN THE AREA

Thompson, operating out of Kootenae House, noted in his diary on August 13, 1807:

Kootenai Indians told him **“that about three weeks ago Americans to the number of forty-two arrived to settle a military post at the confluence of the two most southern and considerable branches of the Columbia, and that they were preparing to make a small advance post lower down the river. Two of those who were with Captain Lewis were also with them of whom the poor Kootenaies related several dreadful stories. The establishment of the Americans will give a new turn to our so long delayed settling of the country, on which we have entered it seems too late.”**<sup>56</sup>

#### CROOKS AND McCLELLAN FORM A TRAPPING PARTNERSHIP

Fur trader Ramsay Crooks arrived in St. Louis

there he joined Robert McClellan in a fur trading partnership

Robert McClellan was an army scout who had retired and collected a pension [1801]

he had a well-deserved reputation for his exploits during the Indian wars in Ohio country

although slightly built McClellan was an excellent woodsman and hunter

who was active in the fur trade

together Crooks and McClellan took ownership of a trading station near the Platte River

Crooks and McClellan would attempt to trade in the upper Missouri River area

they started up the river with eighty men -- mid-August 1807

but due to the hostility of the Sioux and Arikaras they found it advisable to leave the area

they moved their trading operation to the Council Bluffs (Iowa) region

#### NOR'WESTER DAVID THOMPSON RECEIVES AN ODD LETTER

Kootenai Indians delivered a letter from American traders to David Thompson at Kootenae House

it was addressed from: Fort Lewis, Yellowstone River, Columbia and dated [July 10, 1807]

this letter began: **“We the undersigned by the Power delegated to us by General Braithwaite**

**Commander of all the new ceded Territories northward of the Illinois do hereby make known and declare the instructions we have received relating to Foreigners who may at present be carrying on a Traffic with the Indians within our Territories for Peltries, &c. who may in future carry on a traffic with the said Indians.**

following that were listed in detail and in authentically phrased language eight regulations for trade

in American territory between Indians and citizens of countries other than the United States

a ninth point read: **“By information received at the Monden [sic] Village on the Mississourie**

**[sic] we were give to understand that, some of the Subjects of Great Britain are about to carry on a trade and traffic with the western Indians, we have therefore give a Copy of the above Instructions,**

---

<sup>56</sup> George W. Fuller, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 75.

**Rules and Regulations to be observed in the Indian Traffic that, the said Traders may not pretend Ignorance that they are within the Jurisdiction of Congress.**

a final tenth point warned that the writers recognized no special British rights **“to any of the Lands on the Pacific Ocean or to the Commerce of any of the Rivers that flow into the said Ocean, all of which we shall comprehend as within our said Territories until some further Explanation takes place on this head between the united [sic] States of America and the Court of St. James.”**<sup>57</sup>

This letter was signed by “James Roseman. Lieutenant”  
and “Zachary Perch Captain & Commanding Officer”

David Thompson ignored their claim to the area

but he forwarded the letter to North West Company’s Rocky Mountain House  
along with a narrative of his travels -- September 23, 1807

The author of this letter remains a mystery

this is no proof of the existence of Lieutenant James Roseman or Captain Zachary Perch  
or of a General Braithwaite

there is no doubt an American wrote the letter and that Kootenai Indians delivered it to Thompson  
an obvious similarity exists between the names Zachary Perch and Zebulon Pike

but Pike’s expedition was to the southwest far from the Columbia River

he could not have been the author of the letter although he had written a similar letter  
to his commanding officer, General James Wilkinson, more than a year before

it is possible that Manuel Lisa or one of his men could have written the letter

perhaps one of the members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition who accompanied Lisa  
although John Potts, Peter Wisner and George Drouillard were not literary enough

to leave a journal of their adventures

and Lisa’s Expedition was working along the Missouri River far from the Columbia River

**LISA’S EXPEDITION REACHED THE BIG HORN RIVER (MONTANA)**

After suffering an attack by Arikara Indians Manuel Lisa and his men continued up the Missouri River  
on their way they met John Colter who had left the Lewis and Clark expedition

to trap and explore Yellowstone Country

Colter abandoned his independent effort and joined Lisa’s party

his knowledge of the eastern Rockies would be invaluable

Lisa’s expedition arrived at the mouth of the Big Horn River -- November 21, 1807

here they built Fort Raymond at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Bighorn Rivers

Lisa named the post after his infant son

---

<sup>57</sup> Alvin M. Josephy, *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest*, P.656.

during construction Lisa set out traps and opened trade with the Crow Indians  
When Fort Raymond was completed Lisa and his men split into various parties  
since the best furs were always found “farther in”  
in a change of Manuel Lisa’s former policy the men themselves were also to set and tend traps  
rather than simply relying on trading with the Indians

#### JOHN COLTER IS SENT TO OPEN TRADE FURTHER INLAND

After the completion of Fort Raymond Manuel Lisa sent John Colter  
on a delicate and important expedition to the Grosventres (Blackfoot) Indians  
to persuade them to trade with Lisa -- 1807-1808  
(Lewis and Clark on their return from the Pacific killed a Blackfoot Indian [1806]  
Colter had been part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition)  
John Colter with a thirty-two pound pack, a gun and ammunition  
started out by himself toward the southwest -- his exact route remains unknown  
Blackfoot Indians were hereditary enemies of the Crow Indians  
a fight took place between the Blackfoot and the Crows at Pierre’s Hole  
(just west of the Teton Range in today’s Wyoming)  
Colter, allied with the Crows and saw the Blackfeet defeated  
this did not help his relationship with the Blackfeet -- the tribe he had been sent to pacify  
John Colter gave up his assignment, striking off directly toward Lisa’s Fort Raymond  
he crossed Yellowstone Country diagonally from the southwest  
his enthusiastic report on the beauty and magnificence of Yellowstone’s natural wonders  
immediately labeled Colter as a notorious liar

#### KOOTANAE HOUSE WAS THE FIRST TRADING POST IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

David Thompson’s Kootanae House was built by Jaco Finlay  
(near today’s Invermere, British Columbia)  
to serve the local Kootenai Indians  
(this would become the headquarters for what he called the “Columbia Department”)  
Although he was on the Columbia River, Thompson did not know it  
this circumstance was not surprising as in addition to running north the Columbia River  
has two sources -- lovely large Lake Windemere  
and to the south shallow, reedy Columbia Lake  
Thompson, his family and traveling companions spent the winter at Kootanae House  
this was his first winter on the Columbia River -- 1807-1808  
(David Thompson explored the Columbia River’s tributaries for the next ten years

traveling into what is now Idaho, Montana and Washington)

#### NOR'WESTER DAVID THOMPSON RECEIVES A SECOND LETTER

Thompson took delivery of a second letter from Americans written from Poltito Palton Lake  
this one was dated [September 29, 1807]

it was received by Thompson -- December 24, 1807

Thompson's failure to answer the first letter reflected disrespect for America

this letter concluded **“the British Mercht. Trafficking with the [Kootenais] did not properly acknowledge the authority of Congress over these Countries, which are certainly the property of the United States both by discovery and Cession.”**

signed by non-existent **“Jeremy Pinch, Lieut.”**<sup>58</sup>

David Thompson responded in a letter given to the Kootenai Indians  
that the British claim predated American claim

#### EFFECT OF THE AMERICAN LETTERS ON DAVID THOMPSON

Indians had assured David Thompson that **“from this House [Kootanae House] to the sea a[nd] back again was only the Voyage of a Summer Moon....”**<sup>59</sup>

Threats by rival traders slowed Thompson's investigations of the Columbia River to its source

he spent more time trading than exploring

he was forced to postpone his journey down the Columbia River for almost four years

#### NORTH WEST COMPANY ORGANIZES THE FAR WEST

No satisfactory trade link existed between Nor'Wester Simon Fraser's New Caledonia  
and David Thompson's Columbia Department

each area was approached thorough widely separated mountain passes

North West Company established two separate administrations as this was most practical

Simon Fraser's New Caledonia (between forth-nine and fifty-eight degrees north)

remained part of the Athabasca Department

this Department expanded to include lands west as far as the Pacific Ocean

bounded on the south by the watershed shared by the Fraser and Columbia rivers

and reached as far north as the Russia area of trade

David Thompson's domain was the Columbia Department (the area drained by the Columbia River)

Columbia Department also included the Snake River and the northern portion of (today's Utah)

---

<sup>58</sup> Jack Nisbet, *Sources of the River: Tracking David Thompson Across Western North America*, P. 107.

<sup>59</sup> Jack Nisbet, *Sources of the River: Tracking David Thompson Across Western North America*, P. 99.

## NORTH WEST COMPANY BRIGADES LINK MONTREAL WITH NEW CALEDONIA

To cover distance from North West Company headquarters at Montreal, Canada  
to Rocky Mountain House and Fort McLeod on McLeod Lake  
required at least a hundred days of steady and intensive canoe and foot travel

North West Company brigade route began in Montreal

brigades of four large birch bark canoes were employed  
each carrying from three and one-half to four tons of cargo  
manned by eight or nine skillful French-Canadian voyageurs  
who traveled nine-hundred mile up the Ottawa River to Lake Huron  
whenever crossing lakes square sails were generally rigged  
a good, strong wind could shorten the trip considerably

Second leg of the journey was another nine-hundred mile trip from Lake Huron to Sault Ste. Marie  
this trip was made in thirty days

Third leg of the journey, an additional nine hundred miles, from Sault Ste. Marie

brought the brigade to the advance post for North West Company at Fort William  
(Fort Kaministiquia renamed for North West Company principal partner William McGillivray  
located at today's Thunder Bay, Ontario on the shore of Lake Superior)  
this leg took an additional fifteen days

From Fort William the route varied depending on the destination:

Columbia Department or New Caledonia  
smaller canoes replaced the larger ones used in the East  
six to eight weeks were employed canoeing and portaging an additional three thousand miles

Total distance from Montreal to Fort McLeod was about 4,800 miles

trade goods making the trip were generally done up in bales  
weighing about ninety to one hundred pounds each  
with from seventy to eighty bales in each canoe

canoes and goods had to be portaged frequently

in less severe rapids, men walked along shore and pulled the canoes with long ropes  
once over the Rocky Mountains pack horses as well as canoes were employed  
however, horses were in scarce supply

bales of furs were delivered to North West Company headquarters in Montreal, Canada  
following the same route in reverse

## DAVID THOMPSON HAD SPENT THE WINTER AT KOOTANE HOUSE

Thompson's journal named more than three dozen Kootenai men and women

who hunted, guided and translated for the Nor'Westers  
these native people also provided Thompson's crew with fire wood, clothing,  
introductions to other tribes and essential advice  
Nor'Wester David Thompson left his wife Charlotte and children at Kootanae House -- spring 1808  
he and a handful North West Company voyageurs traveled by canoe south across the portage  
to the river he named "McGillivray's River" (known today as the Kootenay River)  
in memory of his old traveling companion Duncan McGillivray who died [April 1808]  
Thompson planned to explore the (Kootenay River) as far as possible  
and find the Flathead Indians to invite them to trade  
David Thompson and his men floated down the (Kootenay River) from southeastern British Columbia  
entering (today's western Montana)

#### RUSSIAN-AMERICA COMPANY MOVES ITS HEADQUARTERS

Alexander Andreyevich Baranov moved the headquarters of the Russian-America Company  
from Kodiak Island to New Archangel (Sitka) where he built a fortified post -- 1808  
Baranov oversaw the development of trade with the natives and the building of ships

#### JOHN JACOB ASTOR ESTABLISHES THE AMERICAN FUR COMPANY

Astor had built a fortune large enough to organize the American Fur Company  
he introduced his plan of operation to New York Governor DeWitt Clinton  
and, at least in part, to President Thomas Jefferson -- both leaders approved  
Astor secured a Charter for his new company to trade in the Mississippi-Missouri river region  
from the state of New York for one million dollars -- April 6, 1808  
Astor invested in English goods and brought them to America on his own fleet of ships  
he sold these European goods to the Indians at incredibly high prices  
a \$4.00 blanket sold for \$10.00; a rifle costing \$11.00 for \$30.00  
a brass kettle for which he paid 48¢ sold to the Indians for \$30.00  
one voyage could bring a profit of \$70,000 to Astor

#### ASTOR COMPETES WITH HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY AND NORTH WEST COMPANY

There was nothing original about John Jacob Astor's scheme to trade with the Indians for their pelts  
he borrowed intact from Hudson's Bay Company, Northwest Company and New England traders  
he merely combined and enlarged the procedures  
British Hudson's Bay Company had penetrated the frontier as far as Cumberland House, Saskatchewan  
and conducted successful trade with the Indians of Canada  
Canadian Northwest Company stretched across Canada and over the Rocky Mountains

Rocky Mountain House on the Upper Peace River served as headquarters for New Caledonia  
David Thompson operated Kootenae House on the (Columbia River) in the Columbia Department  
Astor made an overture to the North West Company for a partnership agreement  
Canadians showed no interest in any arrangement with him -- including a merger  
however, North West Company was willing to act as “cooperating competitor”  
if Astor was successful  
North West Company would be able to supplement their provisions from Astor’s stock  
if Astor was unsuccessful  
North West Company would take over his forts, supplies and trade goods  
Astor had tipped his hand to his competitors regarding his intentions in the Pacific Northwest  
Northwest Company took immediate steps to enhance operations itself in the Columbia Department  
Astor retaliated by recruiting experienced Northwest Company men  
with promises of partnerships and big profits

#### DAVID THOMPSON BRINGS OUT ANOTHER FORTUNE IN FURS

After spending the (winter) at Kootanae House on the Columbia River in Columbia Department  
North West Company trader David Thompson carried out a fortune in furs -- April 17, 1808  
he and his party of Nor’ Westers descended the Columbia River in a canoe  
while he had a herd of horses driven overland through the forest to the portage  
he crossed the Rocky Mountains on horseback and traveled to the Saskatchewan River

#### SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE RETIRES FROM THE NORTH WEST COMPANY

Sir Alexander Mackenzie returned to London, England at age forty-five -- 1808  
(three years later married fourteen-year-old heiress Geddes Mackenzie of Avoch, Scotland  
two-thirds of the village of Avoch was part of the Mackenzie estate  
Alexander Mackenzie maintained two houses: one on the Avoch estate and another in London)  
Alexander Mackenzie died at age fifty-five or fifty-six of Bright’s disease [kidney disease, 1820]  
and was buried at Avoch on the Black Isle of northern Scotland  
he is commemorated by the Mackenzie River, Canada’s Mackenzie District North-West Territories,  
Sir Alexander Mackenzie Provincial Park, British Columbia, Mackenzie Valley,  
Mount Mackenzie, Mackenzie Pass and the Alexander Mackenzie rose (explorer series)  
also there are seven Sir Alexander Mackenzie schools and a soccer field

#### DAVID THOMPSON INVESTIGATES THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Geographer David Thompson and his voyageurs entered (today’s Montana)  
they were forced to fend for themselves after they failed to rendezvous

with familiar Kootenai Indians at the Tobacco Plains (Montana)  
and arrived at Kootenai Falls (near present-day Libby, Montana) -- May 6, 1808  
as on all his trading expeditions he surveyed his route  
Thompson traveled northwest and entered (today's Idaho) reaching the close to (Bonner's Ferry, Idaho)  
he made trading arrangement with the Flathead Indians to explore the Rocky Mountains  
in (Northern Idaho, Northwestern Montana and Northeast Washington)

#### MANUEL LISA ONCE AGAIN SENT JOHN COLTER TO THE BLACKFEET INDIANS

John Colter set out from Manuel Lisa's Fort Raymond bound for the Blackfoot Indians  
this time in the company of former Corps of Discovery member John Potts  
Colter and Potts arrived in Blackfoot Country -- spring 1808  
for greater safety they slept during the day and tended their traps at night  
Because of this practice Potts accused Colter of cowardice and became careless with the routine  
Potts paid with his life

Indians, which Potts had vowed to Colter were only buffalo, killed him and seized John Colter  
Blackfoot method of killing an enemy was to allow the intended victim to race with their warriors  
just as a fox races with the hounds -- death was the penalty for slowness

Blackfoot made it sporting by allowing a handicap to poor runners

Colter was stripped and asked if he could run well

realizing the ordeal ahead, Colter said he was a poor runner -- the lie saved his life

Colter was led some distance beyond the assembled warriors -- at a signal the race was on  
naked and without a weapon, Colter dashed madly for the Big Hole River six miles away  
across a plain filled with prickly pear

he ran until blood spurted from his nostrils

glancing over his shoulder he spied one Indian not twenty yards behind

but the native stumbled while trying to throw his spear

the spear point lodged in the ground and the shaft cracked in the warrior's hand

Colter ran back grabbed the lance head pinning the warrior to the ground with it

as the rest of the warriors were closing in fast

Colter reached the river a few yards ahead of his nearest pursuer

he plunged in and swam toward a small island

near the island's shore, he found an old raft partly covered with driftwood and brush

diving under water he discovered a crevice in the raft large enough for his head

with Indians swimming around him all day, Colter waited for night

then silently swam downstream where he landed out of sight of the natives

Colter traveled all night toward Lisa's Fort Raymond

seven days later he was back at Lisa's fort having eaten nothing but roots the entire way in the meantime, the main Party of Lisa's expedition continued to trap the Big Hole River region

#### SIMON FRASER COMPLETES HIS EXPLORATION

Nor'Wester Simon Fraser was assigned to explore the Tacouche Tess River which had been left unexplored by Alexander Mackenzie  
Fort George (today's Prince George) at mouth of Nechaco River served as his base of operations  
Fraser led a group of twenty-four explorers composed of clerks John Stuart, Jules Quesnell, sixteen voyageurs and two Indian guides  
they set out in four canoes down the Tacouche Tess River from Fort George -- May 28, 1808  
this was the river that had defeated even the great Sir Alexander Mackenzie [1793]  
From the start they were greeted by Indian reports that the river below was but a series of waterfalls and cascades that were impossible to navigate with incredible difficulty the explorers descended the rock-walled turbulent river to the West as the expedition's four canoes were thrown about by vicious rapids and pitched through close canyons at breakneck speed  
even portages were so extremely difficult that Fraser and his men often were tempted to run the rapids almost regardless of danger in an effort to avoid the immense labor required in carrying canoes and cargoes around obstructions  
in many places steep, high banks made it impossible to leave the river and the canoes would have been helpless if they came to rapids or falls without warning

#### NOR'WESTER DAVID THOMPSON TRAVELS TO KOOTANAE HOUSE

Geographer David Thompson left (Bonner's Ferry, Idaho) and journeyed north arriving near the site of (today's Cranbrook, British Columbia)  
As was his practice he made detailed observations of the latitude and geography as he traveled he returned to Kootanae House his wife Charlotte and their three children -- June 5, 1808

#### SIMON FRASER IS CONVICTED HE MUST ABANDON THE TACOUCHE TESS

Fraser became convinced at last that the Indians were right -- it was insanity to descend the river at Hell's Canyon, some distance above the site of (present-day Lillooet, British Columbia),  
Fraser's canoes were stored on a scaffold in a shady spot  
goods that could not be carried were cached  
Simon Fraser and his men followed an old Indian trail along the river  
they were required to carry packs over steep ledges

they used native ladders made of poles hanging end to end with sticks serving as steps  
Occasionally it was possible to take to the river again  
but that required borrowing, and on at least one occasion stealing, canoes from the Indians  
Indians were numerous -- crowds numbering in the hundreds were met several times  
and on one occasion Fraser estimated that 1,200 had gathered  
Fraser showed great skill in dealing with the Indians

friendly relations had to be established with those encountered along the way  
as the return trip would most probably follow the same route  
passing from the territory of one tribe to that of another was challenging  
whenever possible Fraser used his two Indian guides to warn the next village to be visited  
and to assure them that the explorers were friendly  
nevertheless Fraser was ever on the alert for trouble

#### NOR'WESTER DAVID THOMPSON RETURNS TO FORT AUGUSTUS

David Thompson and his voyageurs set out from Kootanae House  
to deliver their (winter's catch) of pelts and hides to Fort Augustus at mouth of White Earth Creek  
They reached the Kootenay Plain -- June 18, 1808  
where canoes were built and the furs were loaded for the trip down the North Saskatchewan River  
to Fort Augustus (near Edmonton, Alberta) where they arrived -- June 24, 1808

#### SIMON FRASER CANNOT REACH THE MOUTH OF THE TACOUCHE TESS

As grueling as the journey down the Tacouche Tess was  
all went reasonably well until Fraser and his twenty men approached the end of their journey  
Cowichan Indians were at first suspicious and then openly hostile  
Fraser was unable to go as far into the Strait of Georgia, the mouth of the river  
After following the river for 850 miles, the expedition finally passed through  
(what is now the Fraser Valley and reached the delta where the City of Vancouver was later built)  
Fraser's observations and Vancouver's journal showed him  
he was not near the mouth of the Columbia River -- he was in the wrong latitude  
Simon Fraser and his men hurried back up the river as the Cowichans pursued and harassed his party  
scores of Indian canoes closed in repeatedly with the intention of upsetting Fraser's canoes  
but each time they were successfully fought off without casualties on either side  
eventually the Indians abandoned the chase (in the vicinity of Hope, British Columbia)  
but Fraser's men were left completely exhausted and discouraged

#### DAVID THOMPSON CARRIES OUT A FORTUNE IN FURS

Thompson with his wife Charlotte and their three children left Kootanae House -- early July 1808  
they descended the Columbia to the Blaeberry Creek (British Columbia)  
crossed back over the Rocky Mountains at (Howse Pass)  
and continued on down the Saskatchewan River to Boggy Hall  
(a post located north of Rocky Mountain House)  
Thompson left Charlotte, who was expecting their fourth child, and their children  
with her brother, Patrick Small, Jr., who was working at Boggy Hall  
Thompson prepared to take a fortune in furs to Fort Augustus for transshipment to  
North West Company's Central Deposit at Rainy Lake House on Rainy Lake (Minnesota)

#### MANUEL LISA AND HIS TRAPPERS RETURN TO ST. LOUIS

Manuel Lisa and his men constructed canoes  
Lisa accompanied by George Drouillard left the Big Horn River region bound for St. Louis  
they were in a great rush to acquire supplies for the next year's venture -- summer 1808  
Lisa and Drouillard completed the journey down the Missouri River in only thirty days  
others members of his crew arrived at St. Louis long after them

#### NOR'WESTER DAVID THOMPSON ARRIVES AT RAINY LAKE HOUSE

David Thompson carried a fortune in furs from Fort Augustus  
to North West Company's Central Deposit Rainy Lake House on Rainy Lake  
located at (today's International Falls, Minnesota) where he arrived -- August 2, 1808  
Two days after delivering his furs from the Columbia Department  
Thompson picked up trade goods for the next season and began his return journey -- August 4

#### SIMON FRASER AND HIS MEN STRIKE OUT OVERLAND

Fraser's leadership faced a supreme challenge when many of men decided to leave the river  
in an effort to reach Fort George on their own  
Fort George was reached thirty-seven after starting up the Tacouche Tess -- August 6, 1808  
Simon Fraser's supreme effort and heroism ended in disappointment and a sense of failure  
this river could not be used as a route for North West Company brigades  
and it was located at about 49° north -- too far north to be the Columbia River

#### DAVID THOMPSON ARRIVES A LAKE WINNIPEG

On his return journey from Rainy Lake House Thompson reached Lake Winnipeg  
(in today's Manitoba, Canada)  
there he met Alexander Henry the younger -- August 18, 1808

they traveled together to Fort Vermilion  
at the confluence of the North Saskatchewan and Vermilion rivers  
(east of today's Edmonton, Alberta)

#### RUSSIAN SHIPWRECK OFF THE COAST OF WASHINGTON

Expeditions by British and American fur traders put pressure on the Russian-America Fur Company  
to establish a presence on the West Coast

Russian brig *Saint Nicolas* sailed from New Archangel (Sitka) in Russian-America (Alaska)  
with orders to travel south along Vancouver Island to trade for sea otter pelts  
and to locate a site for a permanent Russian settlement in Oregon -- September 28, 1808

Russian naval officer Nikolai Bulagin commanded the vessel

he was accompanied by his eighteen-year-old wife, Anna Petrovna Bulagina,  
twelve Russian men, four Aleut men and two Aleut women

Bulagin's plan was to rendezvous at Grays Harbor with another Russian ship, the *Kodiak*,  
that was to follow the *Saint Nicholas* -- together they would probe southward toward California  
in search of a location for a Russian settlement

#### DAVID THOMPSON RETURNS TO BOGGY HALL

Traveling from Lake Winnipeg David Thompson reached Boggy Hall

north of Rocky Mountain House -- October 3, 1808

where he rejoined his wife Charlotte, his children

and greeted his six-week-old son, John [born August 25, 1808]

#### RUSSIAN SHIP *SAINT NICHOLAS* CRASHES ON A ROCKY REEF

*Saint Nicolas* became becalmed near Destruction Island of the (Washington) coast

with no wind to fill her sails, the ship and its crew were at the mercy of currents and tides  
which drove the ship mercilessly toward the rocky shore

Captain Nikolai Bulagin set the anchors but the mooring cables failed

Gale force winds blew out of the southwest, pushing the *Saint Nicholas* onto a rocky reef at high water  
just south of the mouth of the Quillayute River -- November 1, 1808

*Saint Nicholas* did not sink immediately and everyone on board reached shore safely

at low tide the crew returned to the vessel to salvage sail canvas, food, arms, ammunition, tents,  
and other supplies which were all carried ashore

Captain Bulagin decided they would trek southward to Grays Harbor in search of the *Kodiak*

which was following the *Saint Nicholas* down the coast from New Archangel (Sitka, Alaska)

for three days the Russians struggled through heavy undergrowth until he reached the Hoh River

## RUSSIANS ARE UNABLE TO CROSS THE DEEP HOH RIVER

Unable to ford the Hoh River, the Russians hired natives to take them across -- November 4, 1808

nine Russians were loaded into one large canoe

Captain Nikolai Bulagin's wife Anna Petrovna Bulagin, an Aleut native

and a Russian boy climbed into a second, smaller canoe

in the middle of the river the Indians pulled a plug from the bottom of the larger canoe

then jumped overboard to swim ashore

Indians on the opposite shore attacked the large canoe with spears and arrows

wounding several of the Russians -- one of whom died of his wounds

the larger canoe drifted back toward the bank from which the party had embarked

the smaller canoe was landed on the far river bank close to an Indian village

where Anna Petrovna Bulagin, the Aleut and the Russian boy were made prisoners

Captain Bulagin was overcome by remorse by the loss of his wife

Russians from the larger canoe fired on the Indians with the weapons that had not gotten wet

killing two natives and wounding several others

After the encounter the Russians withdrew to a small hill to make camp

they feared for their lives -- all the muskets and ammunition were wet

as they faced some 200 Indians

their provisions were exhausted and intense hunger gripped the Russians

men searched for woods fungi, plant roots -- anything else that might serve as food

they even ate pieces of their leather boots

rain fell incessantly adding to their misery

In despair, Captain Bulagin relinquished leadership to supercargo Timofei Tarakanov

who had survived a massacre and capture by Tlingit Indians at New Archangel six years before

## NOR'WESTER FINAN McDONALD IS DISPATCHED DOWN THE KOOTENAI RIVER

David Thompson sent his second-in-command, Finan McDonald, with men and canoes

full of trading goods to establish Fort Kootenai at Kootenai Falls

for the winter among the Kootenai Indians -- 1808-1809

Harsh winter conditions forced him to stop short of his destination

he constructed several simple leather lodges as a winter enclosure for protection -- November 1808

(east of today's Libby, Montana)

there he made contact with local Plateau bands

Finan McDonald was joined by James McMillan at Fort Kootenai

together they established a brisk, profitable trader for beaver pelts with the nearby Indians

## DAVID THOMPSON RETURNS TO KOOTANAE HOUSE

Leaving Boggy Hall and his wife and family David Thompson once again ascended the Saskatchewan River, the Rocky Mountains reaching Howse Pass, he arrived at Kootanae House to spend the winter -- November 10, 1808

## RUSSIAN LEADER TARAKANOV DECIDES TO ATTACK THE INDIAN VILLAGE

Two weeks after the wreck of the *Saint Nicholas* Timofei Tarakanov in desperation decided to attack the native village and fight the Indians -- November 14, 1808 when they reached the village they discovered the Indians had departed

Russian sailors helped themselves to as much dried salmon as they could carry back to camp An effort was made to find a route to reach Grays Harbor to the south -- November 15 where the Russian ship *Kodiak* that was to follow the *Saint Nicholas* from New Archangel was to meet them

hunters went ahead of the main party to search for food and to search for a route Indians ambushed the three-man party and two men were wounded by arrows however, they were able to fight off the attack and return to camp all hope of meeting the *Kodiak* at Grays Harbor was gone

## TIMOFEI TARAKANOV LEADS THE RUSSIAN SAILORS INTO THE OLYMPIC MOUNTAINS

It was decided to make their way into the Olympic Mountains and camp for the winter progress into the mountains was hampered by the rain and dense forest

but the few Indians they met proved friendly and offered salmon for beads and other goods After several days of exhausting travel the Russians were overtaken by a native from the village at the mouth of the Hoh River

he proposed a ransom be paid for Anna Petrovna, to which Captain Bulagin readily agreed he offered virtually all the remaining property the party possessed

but the Indians demanded four muskets in addition to the property this the Russians refused, whereupon Nikolai Bulagin asked to see his wife following an emotional meeting, Bulagin begged for her return,

but the Indians demanded the muskets and took Anna Petrovna Bulagin away Fighting their way up the Hoh River over gravel bars and through dense woods for a few more days the Russian survivors built a makeshift fortified camp with a log house and sentry boxes During the winter they foraged for food and constructed a boat which they hoped would take them down the river and out to the freedom of the Pacific Ocean

## SURVIVORS OF THE RUSSIAN SHIP *SAINT NICHOLAS* ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE

Russian shipwreck survivors traveled down the Quillayute River in their new boat  
guided by an old Indian

at the mouth of the Quillayute they camped opposite the hostile Indian village

When a large number of Indians gathered around the Russians

two Indian women and a young man were captured by the Russians and held as hostages

to be exchanged for the release of the captain's wife Anna Petrovna Bulagin,

the Aleut woman and the Russian boy

After a few days more natives appeared, bringing Anna Petrovna Bulagin

however, when the exchange was demanded she refused to leave the Indians

she said she had been well treated and she knew if she rejoined the Russians

she would be forced to wander half-starved through the forest with little hope of rescue

Captain Nikolai Bulagin became so enraged at her refusal to return that he threatened to shoot her,

but later he went away dejected and grieving

Russian leader Timofei Tarakanov after hearing Anna Petrovna's story

and seeing that the other Russian captives had also been well treated

decided to surrender himself to the Indians hoping for rescue by some foreign ship

four of the Russians joined him

the rest attempted to cross to Destruction Island, but their boat was destroyed on the rocks

with all of their provisions lost

they barely escaped with their lives -- only to be captured by the Indians

Tarakanov, who had surrendered to the Indians, was taken by a chief named Utramaka

to his home near Cape Flattery as was Captain Nikolai Bulagin

but Bulagin was later traded to the chief who held his wife Anna Petrovna Bulagin

Tarakanov was well treated by the natives largely because of his resourcefulness, his skill with tools

and his capability to amuse the Indians -- he even constructed and flew a kite

(Anna Petrovna died [August 1809] her Indian master, as was the Indian custom at the time,

threw her body into the forest

Captain Bulagin, hearing of her fate, sickened and wasted away

he died of consumption [February 1810])

## NOR'WESTER SIMON FRASER LEAVES NEW CALEDONIA

Explorer, trapper and trader Simon Fraser departed from New Caledonia -- 1809

he attended the annual North West Company rendezvous at Fort William (Thunder Bay, Ontario)

before taking a leave of absence from the company

(he returned to duty [1810] and was assigned again to the Athabasca Department

where he remained until [1814]}

Fraser's clerk, John Stuart, was placed in charge of New Caledonia District

Stuart kept his headquarters at Fort McLeod on McLeod Lake

#### NOR'WESTER JOHN McDONALD OF GARTH SERVES IN THE WILDERNESS

John McDonald of Garth had been placed in charge of building

Fort Augustus (Edmonton, Alberta, [1795]) and Rocky Mountain House (Calgary, Alberta, [1799])

Fort Augustus was frequently moved as furs and firewood became scarce

John McDonald of Garth became a North West Company wintering partner [1802]

he took a leave of absence but returned to the wilderness where he fell ill

returning once again to the frontier he was placed charge of the Red River Department -- 1809

he carried supplies to the explorer David Thompson in the Rocky Mountains

#### ASTOR'S AMERICAN FUR COMPANY ENJOYS GREAT SUCCESS

After its first year of operation John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company was firmly established

trapping and trading with the Indians along the upper Mississippi River -- 1809

Astor controlled the wilderness deep into Canada and the West beyond the Great Lakes

#### JOHN JACOB ASTOR'S BUSINESS PLAN WAS TO ELIMINATE COMPETITION

Astor never invaded a territory until others had cleared the way and proved its worth

furs from the Great Lakes region had set America's national economy on its feet

but still Astor was unable to meet the great demand for furs

Manuel Lisa and other American trappers and traders

had demonstrated the possibility of ascending the Missouri River

Astor attempted to develop an American monopoly in the fur trade

there was nothing original about John Jacob Astor's scheme as he borrowed intact the practices

of Hudson's Bay Company, Northwest Company and New England traders

he merely combined and enlarged their procedures

Astor envisioned a chain of trading posts up the Missouri River, over the Rocky Mountains

and down the Columbia River to the river's mouth

he expected to establish a shipping point where the river met the Pacific Ocean

to carry on trade with Asia, Europe and the east coast of North America

Astor's efforts embittered his American Fur Company to rival fur dealers

#### RAMSAY CROOKS AND ROBERT McCLELLAN AGAIN FAIL AT TRADE

Crooks and McClellan made an unsuccessful attempt to follow

the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company brigade to the upper reaches of the Missouri River -- 1809  
they were turned back once again by Sioux Indians much as had happened to them  
two years before [1807] when they were forced to move their trading operation  
to the Council Bluffs region

#### DAVID THOMPSON CARRIES OUT A FORTUNE IN FURS

After spending the (winter) at Kootanae House on the Columbia River in Columbia Department  
North West Company trader David Thompson carried out a fortune in furs  
he and his voyageurs left Kootanae House -- April 17, 1809  
they crossed (Hawse Pass) over the Rocky Mountains  
and arrived at Fort Augustus (near today's Edmonton, Alberta -- [June 24])  
where he saw his fortune in furs safely shipped to North West Company's  
Central Deposit at Rainy Lake House on Rainy Lake (Minnesota)

#### MANUEL LISA BEGINS CONSTRUCTION FORT MANDAN

Manuel Lisa led a party totaling close to two hundred men of the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company  
they set out up the Missouri River -- middle of June 1809  
bound for the Mandan Villages (today's North Dakota)

#### AMERICAN SHIPS TRADE ALONG THE PACIFIC COAST

Ships out of Boston and New York City took part in the rich haphazard Pacific coast fur trade  
one of the most active companies was the Boston-based enterprise of Homer & Winship  
Abiel Winship was a partner in the company trading with Europe and the West Indies  
he had three brothers, Charles, Nathan and Jonathan III, who also were active in the business  
Abiel's keen business sense pointed him toward the Pacific seal and sea otter trade  
Captain Charles Winship, the youngest of the Winship brothers, sailed the 111-ton brig *Betsy*  
which was owned by Homer & Winship to California  
sadly, the twenty-three-year-old brother was arrested for poaching  
and died in a Spanish jail [1799]  
this family crisis deterred the Winship brothers not at all  
Homer & Winship purchased the ship *O'Cain* which carried Jonathan Winship  
to trade along the Pacific coast [1803]  
Jonathan Winship returned as captain of the *O'Cain* along with his brother Nathan  
who served as First Mate [1805] their success led to a larger venture  
Abiel turned his attention toward supplying Russian traders in Russian-America (Alaska)  
to support this business opportunity it was decided to construct a trading station

at a mid-point on the Northwest coastline to warehouse American trade goods and supplies  
they selected a location along the Columbia River  
this enterprise was being considered by the Russians, also

#### WINSHIP BROTHERS PLAN A COLONY ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Homer & Winship fitted out the old American vessel *Albatross* out of Boston -- summer 1809

Nathan Winship served as captain

William Gale served as captain's assistant and kept a journal of the voyage

William Smith served as first mate

They set sail with a crew of twenty-two men and an excellent supply of stores and ammunition  
along with an abundance of tools and hardware for building a colony

(Crew wintered in the Sandwich Islands [Hawaii])

#### FINAN McDONALD ARMS THE KOOTENAI INDIANS

Nor'Westers Finan McDonald and Michel Bordeaux upset the Piegan Indians

by arming their ancient enemies the Kootenai Indians -- summer 1809

Piegan bands of the Blackfoot Indians dedicated themselves to keeping Nor'Wester  
east of the Rocky Mountains and away from the Kootenais

#### NOR'WESTER DAVID THOMPSON RECEIVES NEW ORDERS

While at Fort Augustus geographer Thompson received new orders

he was to trace the Columbia River from source to mouth and to expand trade with the natives  
preparations for the return to Kootanae House in the Columbia Department were made

Thompson wrote that Finan McDonald had set out by canoe -- July 14, 1809

with **“its cargo four pieces of Merchandise; weighing 320 lbs. four, nine gallons kegs of greese [sic] (melted Bison fat) and five bags of Pemmican, each of ninety pounds, with five men, a less number could not stem the courrant [sic].”**<sup>60</sup>

#### DAVID THOMPSON LEAVES FORT AUGUSTUS FOR THE RETURN TO KOOTANAE HOUSE

David Thompson following Finan McDonald departed from Fort Augustus -- July 18, 1809

with him were a number of Nor'Westers including Jaco Finlay and his family

They traveled to (Bonne's Ferry, Idaho) where he had been the year before

Thompson and his companions continued south by horse

---

<sup>60</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 42.

## DAVID THOMPSON BUILDS KULLEYSPELL HOUSE

Thompson his party traveling on horseback reached Pend Oreille Lake where they started building “Kullyspell House” among Nez Perce Indians -- September 10, 1809 on the East shore of Lake Pend Oreille (at today’s Hope, Idaho) this was the first trading post west of the Rocky Mountains (in today’s United States) and was reported to be **“a strong Log building for the Goods and Furr[sic], and for trading with the Natives”**<sup>61</sup>

## MANUEL LISA’S EXPEDITION CONSTRUCTS FORT MANDAN

Manuel Lisa and the approximately two hundred men of his St. Louis Missouri Fur Company constructed a second Fort Mandan (not to be confused with Lewis and Clark’s Fort Mandan) on the south side of the Missouri River ten or twelve miles from the Hidatsa villages above the mouth of the Knife River -- last of September 1809 this was to be a forward supply base to support St. Louis Missouri Fur Company trappers and traders on the Yellowstone and the Three Forks of the Missouri (Montana) most of the trappers were dispatched to investigate and harvest beaver in the surrounding vicinity Lisa himself went on to his original post among the Crows on the Big Horn River, Fort Raymond, or he returned to St. Louis (some doubt exists as to which course he took)

## DAVID THOMPSON CONDUCTS TRADE WITH THE NEZ PERCE INDIANS

Thompson and his Nor’Westers never passed an opportunity to trade as guns, ammunition and iron-headed arrows that could pierce the thick-skinned bison and not break off these were dispensed to natives in exchange for furs and hides iron objects such as awls and needles were demanded by Indian women who came to trade at Kullyspell House on Lake Pend Oreille Thompson spent the remainder of the fall and early winter exploring in the vicinity of Kullyspell House -- fall and early winter

## DAVID THOMPSON SPENDS THE WINTER WITH THE FLATHEAD INDIANS

David Thompson ascended the Clark Fork River to a location (near present-day Thompson Falls, Montana) -- November 1809 there he built Saleesh House where he spent the winter of 1809-1810 he came to love the Flathead Indians and called them **“a fine race of moral Indians”**<sup>62</sup> Thompson was reasonably content

---

<sup>61</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 42.

<sup>62</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 42.

he was occupied with mapping Rocky Mountain region  
and spending winter days trading with the Indians  
he supplied rifles to Kootenai Indians who were on the warpath against Piegan Indians  
(each summer he was again off to Rainy Lake House with the winter's bounty of furs)

#### TRIBAL BLOODSHED LEADS TO HATRED OF THE NOR'WESTERS

Over the Rockies to the west were the mortal enemies of the Piegans -- the Kootenai Indians  
Piegans knew if Thompson should penetrate to the western side of the mountains  
he would arm their long-time enemy the Kootenai Indians  
As soon as the Kootenais were armed by David Thompson, they went on the warpath  
triumphantly slaughtering several of their ancient foe  
Blaming Nor'Westers for the killings, the Piegans once again crossed the Rocky Mountains  
this time seeking revenge

#### ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY SENDS TRAPPERS INTO (MONTANA)

Manuel Lisa's Chief Factor Pierre Menard and second-in-command Andrew Henry  
led a party of perhaps sixty trappers including John Colter and George Droulliard  
of the Lewis and Clark Expedition  
Colter guided the expedition from Fort Raymond up the Missouri River to the Three Forks region  
they planned to trap beaver over the entire area of the Missouri River  
and its branches above the Great Fall -- November 1809