

**May 10, 2003**

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## Lewis and Clark timeline

**1804**

**May 14** – William Clark begins the expedition from **Camp River Dubois, IL**. Meriwether Lewis is in St. Louis and will join Clark soon.

**May 20** – Lewis joins Clark and they set out together from **St. Charles, MO**.

**June 26-28** – Lewis and Clark stay in **Kansas City, KS**, where they see their first buffalo of the trip.

**July 20** – the men camp in **Cass County, NE**.

**Aug. 1** – William Clark celebrates his 34<sup>th</sup> birthday at the “Council Bluff Site,” today's **Fort Atkinson State Historical Park, NE**.

**Aug. 2** – Lewis and Clark meet with Oto chiefs at the **Council Bluff Site, NE**.

**Aug. 11** – The men camp at what is today Badger Lake, near **Whiting, IA**. Lewis and Clark honored Black Bird, a chief of the Omaha Indians who died four years earlier, by climbing to the top of his mound grave with ten men and planting a flag.

**Aug. 18** – Capt. Lewis celebrates his 30<sup>th</sup> birthday near modern-day **Homer, NE**.

**Aug. 20** – Near modern **Sioux City, IA**, Sgt. Charles Floyd, the only member of the Corps of Discovery die on the expedition, succumbs to what is now believed to have been appendicitis.

**Aug. 23** -- Near **Vermillion, SD**, the expedition kills its first buffalo.

**Sept. 7** – Near the modern-day **Niobara National Scenic Riverway in NE**, the men investigate a prairie dog town and described it for science.

**Sept. 24** -- Within the boundaries of modern **Pierre, SD**, the Corps met and had a confrontation with the Lakota or "Teton" Sioux.

**Oct. 26** -- Lewis and Clark finally arrived at the Mandan villages near **Stanton, ND**, some 1,600 miles by their estimate from the start of the expedition at Camp River Dubois.

**Nov. 3** – The expedition begins construction of Fort Mandan, its winter camp site, in **North Dakota**. They will remain there for five months.

**Nov. 4** -- Toussaint Charbonneau is signed as an interpreter for the coming journey, along with his Shoshoni wife, Sacagawea.

MORE

## 1805

**Feb. 11** -- Sacagawea gives birth to Jean Baptiste Charbonneau in **Fort Mandan, ND**.

**April 2** – The team dispatches a return party with a package of specimens from the expedition to President Jefferson. The package includes a live prairie dog, a sharp-tailed grouse, and four magpies. Also sent were the pelts, horns, and skeletons of various animals; dried plant, soil, mineral, and insect specimens. Of the live animals, only the prairie dog and one magpie survived the trip.

**April 29** -- The team camps at Big Muddy Creek in **Roosevelt County, MT**. Lewis fired on a grizzly bear, which chased him 70 or 80 yards. Lewis' second shot killed the animal. Clark walked on shore in the evening and saw a bighorn.

**May 14** --The team camps in **Valley County, MT**, above Snow Creek. The Corps noted huge herds of buffalo, elk, deer, wolves and antelope.

**May 26** -- **Fergus County, MT**, two miles below the mouth of Windsor Creek, Lewis saw the Rocky Mountains for the first time. He described them as “covered with snow and the sun shone on it in such manner as to give me the most plain and satisfactory view.”

**May 31** – Lewis describes the White Cliffs of the Missouri Breaks and saw Citadel Rock. “The hills and river cliffs which we passed today exhibit a most romantic appearance. The bluffs of the river rise to the height of from 2 to 300 feet and in most places nearly perpendicular . . . the soft sand cliffs worn into a thousand grotesque figures,” he wrote.

**June 3** --- Camped on the right side of the river at modern **Loma, MT**, the Corps reached a point where the Missouri seemed to divide equally into northerly and southerly branches. After nine days they concluded that the south branch was the true Missouri. Lewis named the north fork the Marias River, and scouted ahead with a small advance party following the south fork until he heard waterfalls. The Indians at Fort Mandan had told them about the falls of the Missouri, so Lewis knew he was on the right stream.

**June 17 to July 9** – The men camp at **Great Falls, MT**. A series of five waterfalls were found at Great Falls. All were too large to navigate and Lewis had the men build trucks and wheels to haul the boats overland. They celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July here. At one point, Lewis writes that he could see 10,000 buffalo along the plains.

**July 19** – The team passes through the Gates of the Mountains. Lewis wrote that “this evening we entered much the most remarkable cliffs that we have yet seen. These cliffs rise from the waters edge on either side perpendicularly to the height of 1200 feet... from the singular appearance of this place I called it the gates of the rocky mountains.”

**July 27** -- **Three Forks, Gallatin County, MT, Missouri Headwaters State Park**. Clark's advanced party was reunited with Lewis and the main party at the Three Forks of the Missouri River. Lewis termed the Three Forks "an essential point in the geography of this western part of the Continent."

**July 30** -- The Corps camped 2 miles north of **Willow Creek, MT**, just below the mouth of the Philosophy River. The party began the ascent of the Jefferson River. Lewis noted that the river was covered by thick brush and dammed by beavers.

**August 12** --- Lewis climbs up to Lemhi Pass in **Montana** and becomes the first US citizen to cross the Continental Divide.

**Aug. 18** – Lewis celebrates his 31<sup>st</sup> birthday near **Tendoy, ID**.

**Sept. 13** -- Clark investigated the hot springs near Lolo Pass, Route 12 between **Montana and Idaho** in current-day Clearwater National Forest. "I found this water nearly boiling hot at the places it spouted from the rocks," he wrote.

**Sept. 14** -- **Colt Killed Creek, ID**. The route over the Bitterroot Mountains took the explorers into some of the worst terrain in the Rockies. This was the most agonizing part of their entire journey.

**Sept. 20** -- The camp was between Dollar and Sixbit Creeks, **ID**. In order to get through the Bitterroots Lewis and Clark split the party, with Clark and six men pushing ahead.

**Sept. 22** -- Lewis and the rest of the Corps catch up with Lewis at **Weippe Prairie, ID**. The team stays in the area until Oct. 6, working with the Nez Perce.

**October 21** -- Camped near the site of modern **John Day Dam, WA**. The Corps bought wood and breakfast from the Indians.

**Nov. 3** -- The Corps camped on Diamond Island, three miles west of modern **Camas, WA**.

**Nov. 15** -- Lewis reached the Pacific Ocean near modern **Seaview, WA**. Clark noted that it rained until 3 p.m.; there were 11 straight days of rain; he moved camp once more to Haley's Bay, where they stayed until November 24.

**Nov. 23** -- Near modern **Fort Columbia State Park, WA**, the Corps members voted on where to spend the winter; every member of the party got to vote, including Sacagawea. The Corps voted to cross to the Oregon side of the river where there were reputed to be more elk and a site along the seacoast to make salt could be established.

**Dec. 7** -- The Corps establishes its winter camp in **Fort Clatsop, OR**, where they will stay until the following March.

## 1806

**March 23** -- the Corps packed up their camp in Fort Clatsop and began their journey home.

**May 9** -- Near modern **Orofino, ID**, on the Nez Perce Reservation. The Nez Perce brought 21 of the Corps' horses to them, cared for all winter by the Nez Perce.

**May 14 to June 10** -- The Corps establishes camp at "Camp Chopunnish," near **Kamiah, ID**, on the Nez Perce Reservation. This was the longest camp of any, other than the three winter encampments of the Corps. The Corps had to wait until the snow melted in the mountains so that they could pass over the Continental Divide and return to the east.

**July 3, 1806** - After successfully making their way over the mountains thanks to the Nez Perce, Lewis and Clark decided to split their force in order to scout more of the mountainous country and look for an easier pass over the Rockies. Lewis would follow the Missouri eastward, while Clark would proceed southeasterly on horseback to the Yellowstone and follow it to its junction with the Missouri, where the Corps would be reunited. Lewis camped near the site of modern **Missoula, MT**. Lewis with 9 men and 5 Indians set out down the Bitterroot River on a raft. Clark, with the remainder of the Corps and 50 horses, traveled to a point 3 miles north of present-day **Hamilton, MT**, along Route 93.

**July 11** -- Lewis' party arrived at the White Bear Islands near **Great Falls, MT**. The men killed 11 buffalo, and begin building canoes of buffalo skins. Clark stayed near modern **Twin Bridges, MT**.

**July 25** -- At "Camp Disappointment" on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, Lewis tried to take solar readings, but it was too cloudy and rainy. Lewis became concerned that he would not be able to return to the United States this season unless he rushed. Meanwhile, Clark camped 2 miles northeast of Pompey's Pillar, he found a dinosaur skeleton, possibly a Tyrannosaurus Rex, and carved his name on Pompey's Pillar.

**August 12** -- The reunion of the Lewis and Clark parties took place 6 miles south of **Sanish, ND**, at "Reunion Point," on the Fort Berthold Reservation.

**Sept. 17** -- Camped at the mouth of the Grand River on the south side across from **Brunswick, MO**. Met a Capt. John McClallen who told the Corps that they had been given up for dead by the people of the United States.

**Sept. 23** -- Lewis and Clark end their journey in **St. Louis, MO**. The men had covered 8,000 miles of territory over a period of 2 years, 4 months, and 9 days.