

## Short Biographies of Expedition Personnel

### **Captain Meriwether Lewis** (August 18, 1774-October 10, 1809):

- Lewis was born in Albemarle County, Virginia to William and Lucy (Meriwether) Lewis.
- His father died in 1779. Mother remarried six months later, to Captain John Marks.
- Their home was ten miles from Jefferson's home at Monticello.
- In 1794, Lewis joined the U.S. Army, attained his infantry captainship in 1800.
- Served under command of William Clark for six months in General Wayne's Chosen Rifle Co.
- In 1801 was hired by Thomas Jefferson to be the new president's private secretary.
- Jefferson offered leadership of the Corps of Discovery to Lewis for his abilities at observation, intelligence, frontier experience, scholarship. Trained by experts in several fields.
- Upon the group's return, Lewis was appointed governor of Upper Louisiana Territory in 1807.
- Did not appear in St. Louis until 1808 to assume his position.
- Incurred a \$4,000 debt during his stint as governor. The new administration of James Madison refused to honor the debt.
- In 1809, Lewis left St. Louis for Washington to contest the government's refusal to honor the debt.
- On October 10, 1809, while traveling with companions, Lewis died of gunshot wounds at an inn on the Natchez Trace (Trail) in Tennessee. His death is shrouded in mystery, some claiming he was murdered and others that he committed suicide. In fact, Jefferson and Clark expressed little surprise at initial reports of Lewis' *suicide*, for they were well aware of the governor's melancholic tendencies. We will, perhaps, never know the truth surrounding Lewis' tragic death.
- Remained unmarried.
- Journals never published in his lifetime.

### **William Clark** (August 1, 1770-September 1, 1838):

- Clark born one of 10 children (the 9th overall, 6th son) near the Rappahannock River in Virginia.
- All Clark's brothers were Revolutionary War veterans, including the famed George Rogers Clark.
- After the war, the Clark family moved to Mulberry Hill, near Louisville, Kentucky.
- Clark joined the Kentucky militia at age 19.
- Soon he joined the regular army and reached the rank of lieutenant. An artillery officer, he received extensive cartography training, and was sent on spy missions to observe Spanish fortifications on the Mississippi River.
- By 1795, he had received successive promotions, eventually attaining the rank of captain.
- Ensign, Meriwether Lewis transferred to Captain Clark's command, 1795.
- In 1796, Clark left the army, due both to persistent health problems and family financial problems.
- In 1803, Clark received a letter from Lewis to co-command the Corps of Discovery.
- U.S. Army turned down a request to give Clark a captainship, he received the rank of lieutenant.
- In March 1807, Clark started dual terms as Brigadier General of the Militia and Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Territory of Upper Louisiana.
- January 5, 1808, William Clark married Julia Hancock of Fincastle, Virginia.
- Jefferson gives Clark the responsibility to see to the publication of the Expedition journals.
- In 1813, Clark was named governor of Missouri Territory.
- 1814, the journals, edited by Nicholas Biddle and others, finally published in two volumes.
- Clark continued to work as Superintendent of Indian Affairs
- He died of natural causes in St. Louis on September 1, 1838.

### **Sakakawea/Sacagawea [Sacajawea]:** (1884? to 1812?)

- Born roughly 1788-1790 in a band of Lemhi Shoshone Indians in present-day Idaho.
- In 1800, when she was about 12 years old, she was captured by a Hidatsa war party and brought to the Mandan-Hidatsa villages near present-day Bismarck, North Dakota.
- Most likely, the name she is most known by is Hidatsa: "sacaga," meaning bird; and "wea," meaning woman. (It was common practice to rename a captive).
- She was sold as a slave to Toussaint Charbonneau, a French-Canadian fur trader who claimed Sakakawea and another Shoshone woman as his wives.

- November, 1804, the Lewis and Clark Expedition hired Charbonneau as an interpreter. He decided that Sacagawea and their forthcoming child would be his companions on the trip.
- Sacagawea gave birth to a son, Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau, on February 11, 1805.
- Sacagawea was an asset to the expedition for a variety of reasons. First, the presence of a woman and small child on the expedition allayed the fears of many tribes that the group was a war party. Her recognition of landmarks as the Expedition approached the Rockies aided the Corps morale in 1805. The Shoshone band met by the expedition was led by her brother Cameahwait, her translation aided negotiations. Her calm demeanor under stress saved vital equipment several times during the trip. Clark found her an invaluable “pilot” on the return trip through Bozeman Pass in 1806.
- It is believed that she died at age 25 on December 22, 1812, at Fort Manuel Lisa, not long after giving birth to a daughter, Lisette. Some have argued that she may have died from a chronic condition aggravated by childbirth. Date of Clark's guardianship of Lizette in 1809 refutes a death during childbirthing.
- William Clark was given guardianship of Jean-Baptiste and Lisette Charbonneau in 1809.
- Clark lists Sacagawea as "dead" on a personal listing of Corps Members in 1826.
- Others contend that she actually lived until 1884, dying at age 100 on the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming. However, this theory is questionable, as she would have been 21 years old 1805 (b. 1884?), an age that does not match with other portions of her biography.
- Perhaps we will never know the truth of her legendary life.

**York:** (about 1770 - ??)

- Clark's slave on the expedition.
- Approximately the same age as Clark- though his date of birth is unknown.
- Clark's father, John, bequeathed York to William in a will dated July 24, 1799.
- 1803 York (along with his master, Clark) joined Lewis and the expedition on October 29 at Clarksville, Indiana.
- His duties on the expedition included personal service to the captains and labor responsibilities (as performed by other members of the expedition). He seemed to show great concern for the welfare of the group. Further, York was permitted to vote several times on the expedition when Lewis and Clark polled the group for their opinions on key decisions.
- Tribes marveled at York, as many had never seen a black man. Sometimes, they even tried to rub the ‘paint’ off his skin! It seems that York enjoyed this celebrity status, and once told the Arikaras that before William captured him, he ate people- especially fine-tasting children!
- Upon the expedition's return in 1806, York requested his freedom to return to Louisville to be with his wife and children. Clark initially refused York's request, but eventually, granted York his freedom after 1811.
- York known to have purchased a floundering freight business from his former master and went east.
- One line of thought believes York died of cholera sometime before 1832, allegedly while en route William Clark.
- Another report stated that he died in the 1850s in Virginia.

## **List of Personnel**<sup>1</sup>

### **A. Members of Returning Party (departed from Fort Mandan April, 1805 to return to St. Louis):**

**Corporal Richard Warfington** (b. N. Carolina 1777 - ?)

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpted from Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, vol. 4, (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), p. 12n' and Donald Jackson, ed, *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854* (Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1978) p 237n.

- recruited from 2nd Infantry Regiment
- in charge of return party

**Pilot-interpreter Joseph Gravelines, civilian Privates<sup>2</sup>**

**John Boley** (b. Pittsburgh, PA)

- recruited from 1st Infantry Regiment
- disciplinary problems
- 
- later accompanied Zebulon Pike to the upper Mississippi and other expeditions

**John Dame**

- Recruited from Artillery Regiment

**Ebenezer Tuttle** (b. Connecticut 1773 - ?)

- Recruited from Artillery Regiment

**Isaac White** (b. Massachusetts about 1774 - ?)

- Recruited from Artillery Regiment

Dishonorably discharged

**Pvt. John Newman**

- recruited from 1st Infantry Regiment
- court martialled for insubordination
- trapped on the Missouri in the 1830s
- killed by Yankton Sioux

**Pvt. Moses Reed**

- court martialled for desertion

French-Canadian *engagés* (employees/rivermen)<sup>3</sup>, civilians

**E. Cann** (possibly b. Mississippi)

- may be related to Kit Carson
- joined Wilson Price Hunt's trapping expedition in 1811
- worked many years for the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company
- settled in Oregon in 1833.

**Charles Caugee**

**Joseph Collin**

- may have been discharged in Fall of 1804
- later thought to have settled in Montreal

**Baptiste Deschamps**

**Charles Hebert**

- Canadian
- May have been discharged in Fall of 1804

**Jean-Baptiste LeJeunesse** (b. Quebec. d. about 1806)

**Etienne Malboeuf** (b. Canada about 1775)

- settled in Illinois

**Peter Pinaut** (b. about 1776)

- grew up in Missouri
- parents French and Missouri Indian
- discharged in Fall of 1804

**Paul Primeau** (b. Canada)

<sup>2</sup> One of these privates may have been replaced by the mysterious John Robinson (or Robertson), of whom little is known.

<sup>3</sup> As Moulton noted, Lewis and Clark took little interest in their "hirelings," so little information is given about the French-Canadian employees sent back from Fort Mandan- particularly the last three men listed herein. See also Donald Jackson, ed., *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2 vols., (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1978), 1:237, no. 7.

- Discharged in Fall of 1804
- may have settled in Missouri
- may be confused with, and same man as Peter Pinaut

**François Rivet** (b. Montreal about 1757)

- hunted and traded in Mississippi Valley and Lower Louisiana
- discharged in 1804
- later employed by NW Company as an interpreter and hunter among Flatheads
- settled in Willamette Valley in 1838

**Peter Roi** (maybe b. Missouri)

- Discharged in Fall of 1804

**B. Members of the Permanent Party (included Lewis' dog, Seaman):**

Captain **Meriwether Lewis** (biography listed earlier)

(Second Lieutenant) **William Clark** (biography listed earlier)

**Sgt. Charles Floyd, Jr.** (b. Kentucky. d. August 20, 1804 near present-day Sioux City, IA)

- Cousin of Sgt. Pryor
- considered a "man of much merit" by Clark
- kept journal until death

**Sgt. Patrick Gass** (b. Pennsylvania, June 12, 1771. d. West Virginia, April 2, 1870)

- recruited from 1st Infantry Regiment
- Floyd's replacement as Sgt.
- also served as Expedition's carpenter
- published his own journal in 1807
- lost eye in War of 1812; tried to serve in Civil War, but denied
- last survivor of Expedition

**Sgt. John Ordway** (b. New Hampshire. d. Missouri ca 1817)

- Well-educated
- recruited from 1st Infantry Regiment
- kept journals, an entry for every day of trip, which he sold to Lewis and Clark for \$300
- married in New Hampshire.
- purchased other expedition member's land warrants

**Sgt. Nathaniel Pryor** (b. Virginia 1772. d. 1831)

- Moved to Kentucky in 1783; married 1798; an exception to captains' enlisting unmarried men
- recruited from Kentucky by Clark
- Floyd's personals given to Pryor after his death
- was at Battle of New Orleans, 1812, remained in military until 1815, promoted to Captain.
- married an Osage woman & had family
- in 1830, Clark named Pryor sub-regent of Clermont (Osage) band
- Montana's Pryor mtns and towns of Pryor, OK and Pryor, MT are named after him.

**Pvt. William Bratton** (b. Virginia 1778; d. 1841)

- Recruited in Kentucky by Clark.
- blacksmith and hunter for expedition
- served in War of 1812

**Pvt. John Collins** (b. Maryland; d. 1823)

- recruited from 1st Infantry Regiment
- was a discipline problem at first, but came around to be a valuable member
- hunter
- by Arikaras while working as trapper

**Pvt. John Colter** (b. Virginia 1774; raised Kentucky. d. 1813, Missouri)

- Recruited in Kentucky by Clark
- one of the expedition's hunters, scouts
- Received permission to leave party on return to Ft. Mandan to trap in Upper Missouri area
- worked for Manuel Lisa 1807
- in 1809 he and John Potts worked Blackfeet country; Potts killed in encounter with Blackfeet; it was then that Colter made famous run from the Blackfeet; Colter survived;
- later first white to enter Yellowstone; "Colter's Hell" named for him

- settled and married in Missouri in 1810
- Pvt. Pierre Cruzatte** (b. of French and Omaha parents; d. before 1825-1828)
  - Recruited at St. Charles.
  - interpreter/ respected riverman
  - Had only one eye; terrific fiddle player; accidentally shot Lewis (in the behind) on the return trip while the two were hunting elk
- Pvt. Joseph Field** (b. Virginia ca. 1774. d. ca 1807)
  - Recruited in Kentucky by Clark.
  - hunter/woodsman
  - Accompanied Lewis on trip to Blackfeet Country (July, 1806) with brother Reuben and Drouillard
- Pvt. Reuben Field** (b. ca. 1772. d. Kentucky 1837)
  - Brother of Joseph
  - Recruited in Kentucky by Clark
  - was a discipline problem at Camp Wood, but became a valuable member
  - hunter/woodsman
  - Joseph & Reuben also served as trusted scouts
- Pvt. Robert Frazer** (b. Virginia, d. 1837)
  - originally designated to return with keelboat after Ft. Mandan, but replaced Moses Reed who was court martialed
  - apparently kept a journal, but has been lost
  - accompanied Lewis to Washington, DC after Expedition
- Pvt. George Gibson** (b. Pennsylvania; d. 1809 in St. Louis)
  - woodsman/hunter, played fiddle, served as an interpreter
  - Recruited in Kentucky by Clark
  - may have been with party that returned Chief Sheheke to the Mandans
- Pvt. Silas Goodrich** (b. Massachusetts. d. before 1825-1828)
  - noted as the expedition's best fisherman!
  - re-enlisted after the expedition
- Pvt. Hugh Hall** (b. Massachusetts ca. 1772; d. before 1825-1828)
  - Recruited from 2nd Infantry Regiment
  - court martialed for drinking
  - thought to have settled in St. Louis after expedition
- Pvt. Thomas Proctor Howard** (b. Massachusetts ca. 1779. listed missing ca. 1825-1828)
  - Recruited from 2nd Infantry
- Pvt. François LaBiche**
  - Recruited at St. Louis
  - interpreter
- Pvt. Jean-Baptiste LePage**
  - originally hired as an "engagee" in St. Louis
  - recruited as a private at Fort Mandan to replace Pvt. Newman who was dishonorably discharged
- Pvt. Hugh McNeal** (b. Pennsylvania; d. before 1825-1828)
  - Recruited from 1st Infantry
  - continued to serve in Army after Expedition
- Pvt. John Potts** (d. in 1808)
  - recruited from 2nd Infantry Regiment
  - a miller by trade
  - joined Manuel Lisa's trapping venture on the upper Missouri River
  - killed by Blackfeet; same attack that Colter narrowly escaped
- Pvt. George Shannon** (b. 1787 in Pennsylvania. d. 1836)
  - Shannon was the youngest man on the expedition
  - Clark enlisted Shannon at Louisville, October, 1803
  - of the same social status as the captains
  - described as having athletic prowess, good horseman
  - got lost twice during the early part of the expedition
  - placed in Pryor's squad, performed the sergeant's duties in case of "indisposition"

- while on party accompanying Chief Sheheke home in 1807, Shannon lost a leg in a battle with the Arikaras
- became a lawyer, served as a Missouri State Senator

**Pvt. John Shields** (b. 1769 Virginia. d. 1809)

- Married with children; another exception to captains' hiring of only unmarried men
- joined Corps at Louisville
- was a disciplinary problem at Camp Woods, became a valuable member of the group
- oldest member of the Expedition
- gunsmith, carpenter
- his blacksmithing skills (also see Bratton, Willard) were invaluable- able to get corn from tribes in exchange for blacksmithing services; Lewis asked Sec'y of War Dearborn to reward Shields (in addition to his private's pay) for his blacksmithing assistance
- relative of Daniel Boone; settled in Indiana

**Pvt. John B. Thompson**

- assisted with surveying on expedition

**Pvt. Peter M. Weiser** (b. in Pennsylvania)

- recruited from 1st Infantry Regiment
- joined Manuel Lisa's trapping venture in 1807
- crossed Continental Divide to the Snake River valley

**Pvt. William Werner**

- may have been born in Kentucky
- settled in Virginia after Expedition

**Pvt. Joseph Whitehouse** (b. ca. 1775 in Virginia)

- Moved to Kentucky at age 9
- recruited from 1st Infantry Regiment, demoted at Camp Dubois (had possibly been a corporal)
- allowed to return to party after penitence
- kept a journal during expedition (first published 1905)
- served as tailor for the expedition
- left army after trip, but rejoined for War of 1812
- deserted five yrs. later- whereabouts unknown

**Pvt. Alexander Hamilton Willard** (b. New Hampshire, 1778 - 1865)

- moved to Kentucky
- recruited from artillery
- blacksmith, may have kept journal but not existing now
- court martialed for sleeping while on post
- hired as a govt blacksmith in 1808
- served in War of 1812
- moved to California in 1852

**Pvt. Richard Windsor**

- recruited from 1st Infantry Regiment
- served as a hunter on expedition
- rejoined the army and served until 1819
- settled in Missouri

C. Non-military members

**Sacagawea** (biography listed earlier)

**York** (biography listed earlier)

**Toussaint Charbonneau** (b. ca. 1759 near Montreal; d. 1840?)

- had been living with Mandan/Hidatsas for some time prior to Expedition
- hired November 1804 as interpreter at Ft. Mandan
- husband of Sacagawea
- given Expedition's blacksmithing equipment upon return to Ft. Mandan, 1806.
- moved to St. Louis in 1809, at least temporarily

- became an employee of the Missouri Fur Company
- hired again by government as an interpreter

**Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau** (b. 1805, Ft. Mandan, d.1866)

- 55 days old when expedition left Ft. Mandan in Spring of 1805
- became a favorite of Clark who nicknamed him "Pomp"
- Pompey's Pillar named after him
- Clark became his legal guardian in 1809
- educated by Clark's sponsorship
- accompanied Prince Paul Wilhelm to Germany and accompanied him out West
- returned to America in 1829, became a hunter, trapper, guide, explorer
- journeyed to California, died on a return trip

**Pierre Dorion**

**George Drouillard**, (b. ca. 1775 to French-Canadian father and Shawnee mother. d. 1810)

- interpreter/hunter/woodsman
- skilled in Indian sign language as well as several Indian languages
- extensive career assisting military at Mississippi forts prior to expedition
- delivered Ft. Massac and Kahokia recruits to Camp Woods to Clark in 1803
- entrusted to deliver letters to Jefferson to Cahokia postmaster upon return to St. Louis in 1806
- returned to West and gave Clark supplemental information Clark added to his maps
- killed by Indians while working for Manuel Lisa near Three Forks