C - snow-capped mtns in view from Frisland
- wild roses in bush below, blooming b. - wings
- big cottonwood
- red queen
- post flag, Butte
- Butte rise higher in right from flag B
- cedar patch
- elk, fawn
- bluff within brush; exposed; long
- short grass prairie
- castle-like layers; round rock wind-eroded rocks
- river, stream
- dry soil
- south facing atop w. cliffs

juniper patches (down on ground) pintoing the bluffs
64C pic
- with stuff from when Dad split from party
- Carroll known w/ ch/ al
- hi pt

Vernon Carroll
Bof 127
Ttowers MT 59834
New Yorker, '68-'69, L 8 C in St. Patrick
needed: pics of general perspective from Wes's car

description: river, ridges, benchlands, tone of grass; silence?
Buffalo Tracks
Educational and Scientific Studies from Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump
Ethnography and Ethnology
Archaeology
Anatomy of The Jump
The Plains Bison
Hunting Techniques
The Plains Peoples of Southern Alberta
Plant and Animal Resources

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump
World Heritage Site
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Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, A World Heritage Site

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, located in the Porcupine Hills of Southern Alberta, 18 km north and west of Fort Macleod, is one of the oldest, largest and best preserved buffalo jump sites in North America. Head-Smashed-In was designated a World Heritage Site in 1981. In doing so, the members of UNESCO recognized the outstanding intrinsic value in protecting and preserving this historic site for present and future generations.

Many visitors ask:
What is a World Heritage Site?
What are the criteria for designation as a World Heritage Site?
What makes Head-Smashed-In outstanding?

What is a World Heritage Site?
A World Heritage Site is a piece of property, either cultural or natural, that is an outstanding example of a creation by humans or by the forces of nature. Because the member states of UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) recognized the need to preserve such properties for future generations irrespective of National boundaries, the World Heritage Convention was established.

The World Heritage Committee, established by the World Heritage Convention, is comprised of experts in cultural and natural heritage conservation from around the world. It is the responsibility of this committee to identify, protect and promote outstanding examples of cultural and natural properties.

What makes Head-Smashed-In unique as a World Heritage Site?
Machu Picchu in Peru, the Taj Mahal in India, the Palace of Versailles in France and the Pyramid fields of Egypt are but a few of the outstanding cultural properties designated World Heritage Sites. Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump joined this exclusive fraternity of World Heritage Sites in 1981. For many visitors it may be unclear why Head-Smashed-In is ranked as a unique cultural place on an equal footing with the pyramids or the Taj Mahal. To the members of the World Heritage Committee, it was clear that Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump satisfied the exacting criteria a cultural property must meet to be considered a World Heritage Site.
site for killing bison. The 18 metre cliff facing east, opposite the prevailing winds, prevented bison from smelling the kill site. A large basin of grassland west of the cliff regularly attracted large herds of bison. Over a period of days they could be lured towards the precipice to their deaths. The large stretch of prairie immediately below the cliff provided a source of fresh water and shelter for camping, butchering and processing activities.

The massive bone deposits (over 10 metres deep) testify to the success of generations of hunters in killing buffalo at this site. The deeply stratified deposits preserve not only the record of hundreds of kills but also the evolution of tools and techniques used in the hunt. The stone tools identify discrete prehistoric periods, and the bones and fire-broken rock reflect distinctive butchering and processing techniques.

The use of buffalo jumps for killing bison represented a significant advance in Plains Indian subsistence. To conduct a hunt and process the kill required small bands of people to unite and organize themselves in ways that would benefit the larger group. This led to a more formalized social organization which would characterize the Plains Indian way of life. The success of these buffalo hunts not only brought groups together but enabled larger groups to remain together, and encouraged the development of distinctive cultural identities. The buffalo, whose carcasses yielded most of the necessities of life for the Plains Indian, assumed sacred status to early people and became a focal point around which the bulk of religious and cultural activities revolved. The abundant supply of buffalo afforded the Plains Indian the time and opportunity to develop a rich spiritual and cultural life. In short, communal buffalo hunting was the catalyst for the development and growth of Plains Indian culture as we know it.

The extraordinary archaeological, historical and ethnological value of this site, combined with its dramatic prairie setting and outstanding interpretive potential, were major factors in the designation of Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

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Ethnography and Ethnology

Ethnography and Ethnology are the primary research activities of anthropologists, particularly those called "social anthropologists." Their activities are aimed at understanding the diverse customs and beliefs (the culture, as anthropologists use the term) of societies around the world. The difference between ethnography and ethnology concerns the level of explanation that is attempted. In ethnography, the functioning of a single society is examined, whereas ethnology compares many societies to discover universal truths about human behavior.

Ethnography
The word "ethnography" has Greek roots, ethnos means "people", the ending "graphy" refers to "description or writing of a particular subject." Ethnography is an attempt to understand the culture of a people through the intense study and description of that society. Ethnography tells us what it would be like to be a member of a different ethnic group or society, and gives us a greater understanding of how different cultures operate.

Ethnographic fieldwork is very difficult; it demands that the anthropologists put aside their cultural background and absorb the culture of those they study. To do this, the anthropologists must live with the people they study, learn their language, and gain their confidence. They must become "participant observers." When the people they study begin to regard them as participants, no different from themselves; the true structure of the culture can be better perceived and understood.

The anthropologist must at the same time continue to observe the actions of the society scientifically. At the end of the fieldwork, the notes, records, and observations must be synthesized into a report, which accurately explains the customs and beliefs of the society being studied. It is traditionally considered difficult for anthropologists to study their own society because of the difficulty in attaining the necessary level of objectivity.

The work of the Anthropologist is crucial to understanding the history of human organization. It can explain customs, which at first glance may seem strange or inappropriate. When seen from the perspective of the society itself, these customs often are sensible, reasonable and essential to the good working of the society. Understanding different cultures also leads to tolerance, respect and an appreciation for the varied methods of cultural survival.

Ethnology
The word "ethnology" has the same root as ethnography; the ending "ology" refers to "the study of." Ethnology is the comparative study of human cultures. By comparing societies, ethnology helps us to understand the commonalities of human existence. As well, it points out the differences, and shows where to look for an explanation of these differences. For example, ethnology tells us that most Plains Indians lack true clans. A clan is a group of people who trace their descent to a common ancestor. For example in a farming society a great deal of stability is needed to ensure continued access to land through the generations, and therefore stability, rather than flexibility, is the hallmark of a clan.

Plains Indian organization is based on a residential group called a band. A band is a group of people, not necessarily related, who usually camp and hunt together. Because people can leave to join another band, the flexible structure works well for hunting societies.

The Cheyenne Indians offer a unique example of ethnological study. As the Cheyenne moved from farmland to the Plains, their organizational structure also changed. Their clan structure, which had been appropriate for a farming lifestyle was replaced by a flexible band structure as the people adapted to the hunting climate of the Plains.

The work of ethnography and ethnology is used extensively by archaeologists. By studying the ethnography of the people who lived in an area, the archaeologist can gain insight and understanding into the significance of the items he uncovers in old campsites. Ethnology can reveal general principles about how people interacted with the environment. When an archaeologist tries to understand a site like...
Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, he can gain greatly from the ethnographic and ethnological literature. It can confirm his belief that the bison jump was so complex that it could only have been used by a well-organized people. Ethnology and ethnography tell him that communal kills by Plains Indians in historic times were policed by “warrior societies,” and he can infer that the same sort of organization probably operated in the past at Head-Smashed-In. Such studies give value to all human cultures.

Planning Archaeological Research
Because archaeological resources are limited and an archaeological site is permanently altered once it has been excavated, the archaeologist will only dig when it is absolutely necessary. To answer important questions about the human past, the archaeologist first studies historical documents, ethnographic material and previous archaeological research to determine whether more information is needed. If excavation is necessary to uncover further information, the archaeologist must submit evidence that this preliminary research has been done and show that excavation is appropriate.

Archaeological research at Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump has been conducted to assist the provincial government in the development of the interpretive facilities and programming at the site. This research was conducted in light of previous historical, ethnographic and archaeological research.

Past historical and ethnographic documents dealing with buffalo hunting provided much needed information on techniques used in killing and processing buffalo. Previous archaeological research at the site indicated the nature and depth of the cultural remains at the kill site. Other questions about the Head-Smashed-In site, which had to be answered in order to ensure that the site was both well protected and properly interpreted.

Archaeology

Archaeology is the branch of anthropology that concerns itself with the study of the human past through its physical remains. Unlike the historian, who relies on written, verbal and pictorial records to learn about lifeways of the past, the archaeologist reconstructs cultural history by examining the objects the early people made, used and left behind in the places they occupied.

Archaeological research, like any scientific investigation, is carefully planned and executed. The activities undertaken by an archaeologist include:

- identification of major questions or topics to be addressed by archaeological study
- background research, ground surveys and excavations cataloguing and analysis of artifacts, synthesis of scientific reports
- dissemination of research data to members of the archaeological community and the general public

Knowledge about the physical size of Head-Smashed-In and the distribution of artifacts at the site was required for further development. The planners needed to ensure that the construction of parking lots, access roads, the interpretive centre, and other related facilities would be kept away from significant archaeological deposits.

It was also discovered during preliminary research that while a great deal of information existed in regard to buffalo hunting, there were few physical descriptions detailing certain processing activities such as bone boiling. Much of the archaeological work, therefore, concentrated on excavation in areas associated with camp activities rather than the killing site itself. The information gleaned from this research was combined with ethnographic and historical information to develop the interpretive themes and displays featured at the site.

Dissemination of Research

Pages of data on lithics and bone do not automatically tell us what we wish to know about the past. It is the archaeologist’s task to take the sum total of the information and apply it to solving the research problem. In order for archaeological research to benefit other members of the archaeological community and the general public, these conclusions must be presented in a form readily understood.

For fellow archaeologists, the researcher will generally prepare scholarly papers for publication or presentation. These papers are very technical and generally require some background in the field to be readily understood.

For members of the public at large, information on archaeological research is communicated through public talks, films, interpretive displays, tours, and written materials—all of which are used at Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump.

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Anatomy of the Jump

For thousands of years native people of the Plains hunted the North American Bison. The Plains Indian lifestyle became dependent on buffalo hunting, and the native people adapted numerous hunting techniques to obtain their livelihood. The buffalo jump was the most sophisticated technique developed by native people to capture and kill the bison.

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump is one of the oldest and best preserved sites of this kind with its elaborate drive lane complex and deep archaeological deposits still intact. For these reasons, Head-Smashed-In was designated a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1981.

The first archaeologist to investigate the site was Junius Bird of the American Museum of Natural History. Since these first excavations in 1938, three major archaeological projects spanning nine summers of excavation have increased our understanding of this unique and complex archaeological site.

The Head-Smashed-In site is composed of three different components, each of which played a role in the operation of the jump. Each area—the gathering basin, the kill site, and the campsite and processing area—has different kinds of archaeological remains.

The Gathering Basin

West of the cliff lies a large drainage basin 40 square km in extent. This was a natural grazing area that attracted the herds of buffalo that would be driven over the jump. Long lines of stone cairns were built to help the hunters direct the buffalo to the jump. Thousands of these small piles of stones can still be seen marking the drive lanes that extend more than fourteen kilometers into the gathering basin. These cairns may have served as simple markers, or they may have supported sticks or brush to hide the hunters.

To start the drive, a "buffalo runner" would entice the herd to follow him by imitating the bleating of a lost calf. As the buffalo moved close to the cliff, hunters would circle behind and upwind of the herd to scare the animals by shouting, waving robes, and shooting arrows. As the buffalo stampeded towards the edge of the cliff, the animals at the front would try to stop but the sheer weight of the herd pressing from behind would force them over the cliff.

The Kill Site

The sandstone cliff north of the interpretive centre contains the actual jump site. This cliff is just one of several such locations along the edge of the Porcupine Hills which were used as buffalo jumps. Another buffalo jump, the Calverwood jump, is visible one kilometre north of Head-Smashed-In.

Against the cliff are deep stratified deposits that contain evidence of use of the jump site going back more than 5,700 years. These deposits consist of accumulated layers of dirt, stone rubble and bones. During each use of the jump, the natives would kill any crippled animals that were not killed outright by the fall. Then they would butcher the animals, removing the useful portions. The remaining animal residue and bones, along with worn or broken stone tools and sharpening flakes, were eventually covered by windblown dirt or "loess" and by rockfall from the cliff.

Over thousands of years of use of the jump, this layered or "stratified" deposit has accumulated to a depth of over eleven metres. The age of these layers and the different artifacts found in them can be determined by using the radiocarbon dating method to date the bone. This information has allowed archaeologists to reconstruct the cultural history of the site.

The Campsite and Processing Area

The hunters camped on the flat area immediately below the kill while they finished butchering the buffalo. A few tipi rings, the stones used to anchor tips against the wind, can still be seen on the prairie level. It was here that meat was sliced into thin strips and hung on racks to dry in the sun. Large leg bones were smashed to remove the nutritious marrow, and the numerous boiling pits excavated by archaeologists in this area indicate these broken bones were also boiled to render grease. Boiling was done by throwing red-hot rocks into hide-lined pits filled with water.

Much of the meat obtained from the buffalo carcasses was used to make pemmican. In order to make pemmican, grease and marrow and sometimes berries were pounded together with dried meat. Pemmican was a very nutritious staple food that could be preserved for years.

Artifacts found in this area include stone scrapers, knives, choppers, drills, broken arrowheads, pottery, bone awls, and occasionally ornaments such as bone beads. Also in this area are found tons of fire-broken boiling stones.

The Plains Bison

Buffalo are celebrated in songs, appear on coins and are part of the folklore of the North American Plains. Yet there is no such thing as a North American buffalo. The name "buffalo" only applies to animals found in Africa and Asia. The largest land mammal in North America is properly called a bison. The unique shoulder hump distinguishes it from buffalo, but the name has stuck since it was first used by early European observers.

Bison are actually distant relatives of domestic cattle. Extinct forms, 2 million years ago, have been found in Europe and gigantic forms, now long extinct, entered North America some 100,000 years ago but these animals were never hunted by man. The animal hunted at Head-Smashed-In for 6,000 years is the modern living species called the Plains Bison. This species of bison occupied most of the central region of North America and, together with its close relative the Wood Bison, would have covered a territory extending from Alaska to Mexico and from the Rocky Mountains to the Allegheny Mountains during prehistoric times.

Nobody knows how many bison were present at the time of the first European contact, but estimates in the range of 60 million animals have wide acceptance. Bison were highly mobile, travelling in dense herds and covered a huge territory, all of which combined to make accurate estimates of their numbers all but impossible.

Despite this staggering abundance of animals, a concerted effort to slaughter the species, assisted by the gun and the horse, very nearly succeeded in their total extinction.
The Plains hunters understood that the bison were a gift from the Creator. They believed that the bison would and only allow themselves to be captured if the hunters prepared proper ceremonies, including symbolic actions and songs that brought the bison to the cliffs.

It is not surprising that Plains Indian mythology, artwork, song and belief systems were strongly interwoven with the existence of the vast buffalo herds and ready availability of this single most important resource. Although the Plains Indian lifestyle was all but destroyed along with the bison, it too is now celebrating a renewed vigor and presence, as are the isolated herds of North American Bison.

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Hunting Techniques

The prehistoric people of the Great Plains depended almost exclusively on a single species for their livelihood. Bison supplied food for immediate and later use, clothing, bedding, shelter, fuel, tools, weapons, household utilities, means for personal or ritualistic adornment and even the outer symbols of worship. Other animals were hunted but mostly to supplement the diet when bison were scarce and for the several other products they supplied. Despite their vast numbers on the Plains (60 million by some estimates), it was not always easy to predict where or how many bison could be found at any particular time.

Because of the importance of bison for their survival, prehistoric peoples developed an array of hunting techniques. Whether these techniques involved individual hunters or large multi-band communities, each required effective use and intimate knowledge of all aspects of the environment. In the northwestern Plains, bison hunting reached its greatest level of sophistication with the development of communal jumps and pounds.

For more than 10,000 years, increasingly sophisticated hunting techniques evolved among these pedestrian peoples. But with the arrival of the horse via the Spanish in the 1700s, important modifications increasing mobility and flexibility in hunting strategies appeared.

Stalking
The most ancient method of hunting is stalking. It was usually undertaken by one or two hunters and required great patience and stealth. Because of the bison’s poor vision, approach was best conducted in wooded country or on the open plains in midday when the animals were lying down. Care would always have to be taken of wind direction because of the bison’s keen sense of smell. In open country, hunters crawling on hands and knees would frequently use disguises such as wolf or buffalo calf skins, and in winter, white robes or blankets.

The presence of a wolf would not necessarily be cause for alarm among the grazing buffaloes. Imitating the bellowing of a calf, particularly if attacked by the false wolf, would be strong attraction to curious, protective cows.

The intent of these procedures was to bring the hunter close enough to an animal to make a lethal strike. Probably more common before the arrival of the horse, stalking was useful when only small quantities of meat were required or when a family was on the move. In addition, the
The Plains People of Southern Alberta:
The Blackfoot

The Blackfoot, fiercely independent and very successful warriors, controlled a vast region stretching from the North Saskatchewan River in Alberta to the Yellowstone River of Montana, and from the Rocky Mountains to the Cypress Hills on the Alberta-Saskatchewan border. It was not until the coming of the North West Mounted Police in 1874, just over 125 years ago, that Euro-Canadian settlement in the region began. Until the near extinction of the buffalo by 1881, the Blackfoot pursued their traditional lifeways. Only with the loss of their food supply were they obliged to adapt to the new era.

The term “Blackfoot” actually refers to four tribes - The Blackfoot proper (Siksika), the Bloods (Kainai), the Northern Peigan (Aapatahepiikan) and the Southern Peigan (Aamiskaapipikani). Each tribe was independent, but they all spoke the same language and regarded themselves as allies. The Blackfoot proper are the northernmost of the tribes and currently occupy the Bow River east of Calgary. To the south are the Bloods, situated on the Oldman, Belly and St. Mary rivers west of Lethbridge. To the west of the Bloods are the Northern Peigan on the Oldman River. In Montana, the southern branch of the Peigan occupy the upper Missouri River drainage. This distribution of tribes reflects the area controlled at the time of the treaties; it is thought that throughout the last few hundred years the tribes had been expanding their territory southward.

Other than the family, the band was the basic social unit of the Blackfoot. Bands among the Peigan varied from about 10 to 30 lodges or about 140 people. Such bands were large enough to defend themselves against attack and to undertake small communal hunts. The band was a residential group rather than a kin group; it consisted of a respected leader, possibly his brothers and parents, and others who need not be related. A person could leave a band and join another. Thus, disputes could be settled easily by simply moving to another band. As well, should a band fall upon hard times due to the loss of its leader or a failure in hunting, its members could split-up and join other bands. The system offered maximum flexibility and was an ideal organization for a hunting people on the Northwestern Plains.

Leadership of a band was based on consensus; that is, the leader was chosen because all the people recognized his qualities. Such a leader lacked coercive authority over his followers. He led only so long as his followers were willing to be led by him. A leader needed to be a good warrior, but, most importantly, he had to be generous. The Blackfoot despised a miser! Upon the death of the leader, if there were no one to replace him, the band might break up. As a result, bands were constantly forming and breaking-up.

During the summer when the bands assembled for tribal ceremonies and communal hunting, the warrior societies would become active. These societies known as “Pan-tribal Solidalities” were very interesting social institutions. Membership was not based on kinship ties but was purchased and crosscut the bands. A number of young men would purchase membership in the lowest society. Throughout their lives, they would continue to purchase membership in higher societies while selling their old positions to the new generation. These warrior societies acted as a police force, regulating camp moves and the communal hunt.

The Blackfoot bands were nomadic. This does not mean they wandered haphazardly over the land. Each relocation was dictated by the bison herds, the weather, and the seasons. This structured movement was known as the seasonal round.

For almost half the year, the Blackfoot bands lived in winter camps strung out along a wooded river valley, perhaps a day’s march apart. In areas with adequate wood and game, some bands might camp together all winter. From about November to March, the people would not move camp unless food supplies or firewood became depleted.

In spring the bison returned northward onto the Plains where the new spring grasses provided forage. The people might not follow immediately for fear of spring snowstorms. During this time they might have to live on dried food or game such as deer. Soon, however, the bands would leave to hunt the buffalo. During this time each band traveled separately.
Plant Resources

At least 185 species of plants were used by the Blackfoot. Although not all the species mentioned here are found in the immediate vicinity of Head-Smashed-In, all occur within southwestern Alberta and are likely to have been used by people as they moved throughout the region.

Buffalo meat was the preferred food of the Plains people but they supplemented their diet with a variety of plant and animal resources. Different parts of various plants contain sugars and starches needed for human survival. Roots, bulbs and tubers contain large amounts of starch. Plants, such as the cattail (Typha latifolia), prairie onion (Allium textile), arrowhead (Sagittaria cuneata) and Indian breadroot (Poaella esculenta) have roots or bulbs that were roasted, boiled or dried and used to supplement the meat diet. Fruits provided the sugar component of the diet. Currants, gooseberries (Ribes spp.), Saskatoon berries (Amelanchier alnifolia) and other berries were very important food sources for the Plains People. Berries were used in soups, stews, and mixed with meat for pemmican.

The various bulbs, tubers, berries and meat were dried for winter consumption. The early spring was often a time of food scarcity for the Plains People. At this time of year, their stocks of preserved food, both meat and vegetable, were almost depleted, and new plant growth had not yet begun.

The people who gathered and used these plants knew them well and understood which plants were useful and which were dangerous or poisonous. Without this detailed knowledge, wild plants should not be gathered and at random eaten or used medicinally.

The medicinal use of plants was common among tribes of the Great Plains. The medicine men or women had high status in the tribe because of their knowledge of plants. Many plants were boiled or steeped to extract the juices in a tea or decoction. For example, a tea made from common yarrow (Achillea millefolium) was used as a laxative. The roots of Old Man's Whiskers (Geum triflorum) were boiled and the liquid used to treat sore eyes. The inner bark of the chokecherry (Prunus virginiana) was boiled and the resulting reddish liquid strained and drunk while warm as a cold remedy. Other plants were used to dress wounds and to encourage healing. The down from cattails (Typha latifolia) was used to make dressings for wounds and diapers for infants.

Many plants were used in personal care. Porcupine grass (Stipa spartea) was bound into a bunch and used as a hairbrush. Sweetgrass (Hierochloe odorata) was tied into sachets and used as perfume or soaked in water and the liquid used to wash hair. Plants such as river elder (Alnus tenuifolia) produced red and orange dyes. A violet dye was obtained from the roots of the pussytoes (Lithospermum incisum). These dyes were used to paint personal articles and clothing.

Animal Resources

The bison has been called a "walking department store," because almost all parts of the animal were useful. Its flesh, fat and bone marrow provided food; its hide was used for clothing and shelter; and its bones were used for making a variety of tools and implements. The flesh from many other animals was also eaten. Deer, rabbits, and birds added to the diet. The use of a range of animal resources for food ensured that the people usually had a supply of meat even if one animal was scarce.

Everyday clothing was made from buffalo hides sewn together with sinews. Ceremonial clothing was more ornate and may have included eagle feather headdress and buffalo horn bonnets. The buckskin clothes worn at ceremonies might be highly decorated, and beardskins were used for ceremonial robes. People sometimes wore claw or tooth necklaces.

Bone or horn was often used to make bows. Wooden bows could be wrapped with sinew, which gave them strength and springiness. Bone was also used to make arrowshft wrenches; these tools were used to make arrow shafts straight and true. Arrows were carried in quivers made from the skins of animals such as the otter, the buffalo and the deer. Otter skins were also used to make grips on lances. Hides were used for making bags and linings for boiling pits. Bone was used to make a wide range of tools and implements. For example, bone awls were used to pierce holes in hides so they could be sewn together with sinews. Spoons could be made from horn.

Animal materials were also used to make many articles that had ritualistic or ceremonial significance. Ceremonial drums were made from hide stretched across a wooden frame. Medicine bundles - "bags usually made from buffalo hide and filled with ritualistic articles-played an important role in many ceremonies. These bundles may have contained articles such as rattles made from skins or bladders, animal claws or teeth and whistles made from bird bones.
COUNTING CATS IN ZANZIBAR, 
OR, LEWIS AND CLARK RECONSIDERED

JAMES P. RONDA

The Bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition offers an opportunity to reconsider the journey of the Corps of Discovery as an emblematic moment in the history of the North American West. This essay examines the current popular fascination with Lewis and Clark, comments on key books in the revival of exploration studies, and suggests ways to expand the traditional story to include Native American voices.

It is not worth the while to go round the world to count the cats in Zanzibar.
—Henry David Thoreau, Walden

LET ME BEGIN WITH THE OBVIOUS—we are now deep into the Lewis and Clark bicentennial. * It is only 2001, but many Americans are already enjoying a glorious Lewis and Clark wallow. One way or another, and for all sorts of reasons, whole battalions of otherwise sensible folks are head-over-heels in love with the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery. The story of Jefferson’s intrepid captains pushing their way up the Missouri, struggling over the mountains, and then rushing down the Columbia to the Pacific Ocean seems endlessly fascinating. So, be warned. We are going to hear tales of captains courageous and explorers triumphant for a long time to come.

The Lewis and Clark obsession knows no boundaries. Corps of Discovery trekkies are of both genders, all ages, and nearly every occupation. Maybe the Lewis and Clark

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JAMES P. RONDA served as the thirty-ninth president of the Western History Association. He presented a version of this essay as his presidential address at the forty-first annual conference in San Diego, California. Ronda holds the H. G. Barnard Chair in Western American History at the University of Tulsa. The author thanks David Holth, Elliott West, Martha A. Sandweiss, Andrew Burstein, Christine Ruane, and Jeanne Ronda for thoughtful readings of this essay.

* Editor’s note: The National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial is coordinating events nationally from 2003–2006 to commemorate the explorers’ journey of 1803–1806.

frenzy has something to do with adventure fantasies. Perhaps it is an expression of
genuine interest in what Henry James called "the visitable past." Some of the popular
versions are not much more than patriotic self-congratulation, reassuring us that out
West all things have a happy ending. Searching for explanations, we should not ignore
the glibzy commercial promotions that continue to feed the fires of enthusiasm. Hal
Rothman would want to remind us that many Lewis and Clark promotions are prime
examples of heritage tourism with a vengeance. Market research tells the tale—Lewis
and Clark sell, no matter what the product. All the signs are here: a best-selling book,
three television documentaries, and a list of publications so vast in size and varied
in quality as to defy comprehensive cataloging. There are Lewis and Clark trail
guidebooks, coloring books, and cookbooks. At least three books depict the Corps of
Discovery through the eyes of the expedition's dog Seaman. The United States Mint
has gotten into the act by stamping out the most collectible coin in recent memory.
While Americans rejected Susan B. Anthony, the Sacagawea gold dollar is so much in
demand that few can be found in circulation. Never mind that the talking head in the
television commercial was George Washington's instead of hers. She said not a word,
and, strangely enough, no one even mentioned her name! Festivals, seminars,
museum exhibitions, and reenactments all crowd the bicentennial calendar. The Lewis
and Clark trail now joins the list of America's sacred places, a list that includes
Plymouth, Valley Forge, the Alamo, Gettysburg, and the Little Big Horn. Lewis and
Clark have become cultural shorthand for all western explorers. They have captured
the public imagination, to say nothing of memory's marketplace.

I have no illusions about derailing the Lewis and Clark express, although I would
like to switch it to another set of tracks. The expedition is now an industry, grinding
out everything from commemorative plates and reproduction Peace and Friendship
medals to expedition maps printed on restaurant menus and Corps of Discovery cross-
stitch patterns. We live in an age of relentless hyperbole. There is no reason to think
that this particular story can escape our drive to make the past a product. But before
we drown in Lewis and Clark memorabilia, I want to take some time to reconsider
the expedition's journey and how I got caught up in it. What follows is both scholarly
reconsideration and personal explanation, an apologia (not an apology) for the past
two decades of writing about one moment in western time.

Nothing in my past, either personal or professional, offers the slightest hint that
I would spend twenty years living with, and living in the shadow of the life and
times of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Third-generation Dutch boys from Chicago
don't generally grow up to be western historians. On the suburban Chicago crabgrass
frontier of the 1950s, our house was more bungalow than bunk house. There is no
Patty Limerick's Banning, California, in my past; and no Dick Etulain sheep ranch
to contend with. The very idea that I might write about exploring distant places

1 Henry James, preface to The Aspern Papers, vol. 12, The New York Edition of the Writ-

ings of Henry James (New York, 1908), x.
would have made little sense in my family. Our yearly adventure was a one-week pilgrimage to northern Minnesota—the same cabin, the same resort, the same lake, and probably the same fish. Hope College, with its ideological feet planted firmly on western Michigan Calvinist soil, did little to turn my eyes westward or any other direction, except heavenward. Most of my New York and New Jersey roommates believed the cultural stereotype depicted in that famous New Yorker cover—no culture west of the Hudson and no life until you reach L. A.

Once I got to graduate school, it was the events and peoples east of the Mississippi that captured my attention. The West was not a part of the graduate curriculum at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the late 1960s. Better I should be a student of imperial Anglo-America than study what my dissertation advisor dismissed as the merely local and the inexcusably provincial. Once out of graduate school, I mostly wrote about the tangled relationships between Christian missionaries and Native peoples in New France and southern New England. But the truth is that less than ten years after graduate school I was running out of ideas. To be blunt, I had little left to say, and other historians seemed a whole lot smarter and a whole lot more creative. There was something else too. My grandmother worked as a teacher and missionary among the Navajo and Zuni peoples from 1905 to 1911. The more sharp-edged my critique of the missionary enterprise became, the closer to home it all was. So, I was bored, apprehensive, and not a little disappointed in myself.

Henry David Thoreau once asked, “How many a man has dated a new era in his life from the reading of a book?” That is exactly what happened to me. It was one book that changed the direction of my career and transformed my life in ways I could never have guessed. That book was John Logan Allen’s Passage through the Garden: Lewis and Clark and the Image of the American Northwest published by the University of Illinois Press in 1975. Passage is one of those remarkable books that joins history’s narrative power to geography’s sense of place and terrain. Perhaps it didn’t hurt that the author knew the West growing up in Wheatland, Wyoming, and had an uncanny ability to read maps as historical documents. But when the book appeared in the mid-1970s, I was still lost in Jesuit Relations, and the publication of Passage wholly escaped me.

Perhaps it was providence or just plain dumb luck, but sometime in 1976, the book review editor at the journal Ohio History sent me a copy of Passage and asked for a review. Now, you should know that in the mid-1970s, I barely knew who Lewis and Clark were. I had little idea where they went or why, much less the consequences of their journey. My American history survey course moved quickly from the election of 1800 to the War of 1812 with only the merest mention of the Louisiana Purchase. So far as my students knew, Lewis and Clark might as well have been Lois Lane and Clark Kent. But for reasons that still puzzle me I agreed to write the review. I implore

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you not to read it. At least I was smart enough to say that Passage was an important scholarly accomplishment, although I had no sure idea why. I put the book back on the shelf, was (I am ashamed to say) tempted several times to give it away, and remained strangely haunted by the story it told. Something about the voyage—the people and the places—just would not let go.

As my interest in Indians and missionaries grew cold, I reached for John Allen’s book. Having read his treatment of Lewis and Clark as geographic explorers, I wondered if anyone had written about Lewis and Clark and Indians. It seemed such an obvious topic, and as I headed to the library I fully expected to find half a dozen books about the expedition’s passage through the Native West. I was surprised that those books were just not on the shelves at Youngstown State University or any other place. In a moment of profound naivete, I decided to write about Lewis and Clark and the peoples they met on the way West. Much by accident, I found a local rare book dealer who loved western history and Lewis and Clark. In August 1978, I began to pay regular visits to the late, great Mike Faklis’s Alpha-Omega Books in Youngstown, Ohio, and soon I owned dozens of those volumes that had been just authors and titles a few months earlier. But let me say again—I made this decision knowing nearly nothing about the nature of exploration, nothing about the course of the Lewis and Clark journey, and most important, nothing about the Native peoples of the West and Pacific Northwest. Perhaps the smartest thing I did was begin a correspondence with Donald Jackson—an exchange of letters that continued almost every week until his death in December 1987. Looking back on the decision to write about Lewis and Clark, I can only believe that if ever there were a case of “foolishness,” this was it.

Now, some twenty years later, there needs to be some reckoning, both for myself and for what we can learn from the Lewis and Clark stories. As I soon discovered, there were many stories to be told and many voices to be heard. The truth is that I continue to find the Lewis and Clark stories as compelling, as important, and as revealing as when I first encountered them. These stories—and the voices that tell them—have held my attention and sparked my imagination. They did then; they do now. Listening to Lewis and Clark themselves, I have been angered by their towering arrogance, hurt by their casual brutality, and troubled by their unrelenting nationalism. But the stories, the people, and the voices have never let me go. I willingly admit that there have been times when I have tried to escape them. I confess that the captains and I have had a complex relationship. What I have had with Lewis and Clark is a lover’s quarrel, something like what William Sloan Coffin meant when he said that real scholarship is a lover’s quarrel with the world for what it is not, but still could be. So, I keep returning to the events and people of those two-and-one-half years, finding in them whole worlds of meaning.

Like writing about jazz, writing the history of exploration is always politically and culturally charged. It brings us face-to-face with competing and often mutually exclusive stories about the courses and meanings of American history. Explorers themselves
remain subjects of argument and contention because what they did and what they represent matters so much. We argue about the Alamo and the blood at the Greasy Grass because they matter; we argue about the Civil War and Reconstruction because they matter; we argue about the 1960s, civil rights, and the Vietnam War because they matter. The Lewis and Clark stories are not inconsequential moments entombed in textbook pages; those stories are too unruly for that. Attending to Lewis and Clark, we are forced to pay attention to everything from federal Indian policy and environmental change to matters of race, gender, and sexuality. Lewis and Clark will not politely fold their tents, break camp, and slip away into the gathering darkness. The voices and the stories will not let us escape so easily. Their angular, bony words do not sit well in a time that demands history as a celebration of our One Big Union in the sky.

Americans have embraced the popular Lewis and Clark story, perhaps not fully appreciating its complexities and ambiguities. Once we have taken hold of these stories, they will take hold of us, and what we learn about ourselves in wrestling with them may not please us. I know that Lewis and Clark have often unsettled me, made me squirm in my comfortable academic chair. By reconsidering Lewis and Clark, we reconsider ourselves, not as an act of self-indulgence but as an act of self-discovery.

Books make a difference; Thoreau was right about their power to fire the imagination and change lives. For me there are four books that give energy and direction to any reconsideration of the life and times of the Lewis and Clark expedition. I offer them to you as a reminder of their enduring value and their collective ability to bring the past into the present.

Long before the current Lewis and Clark enthusiasm, Bernard DeVoto recognized that the expedition was something more than the great American adventure story. Lewis and Clark were not the Rover Boys out West. In the 1930s, DeVoto began to consider where Jefferson’s Corps of Discovery fit into the larger history of North America. But other projects and enthusiasms kept getting in the way. It was not until late 1946 that he set to work on what became The Course of Empire. Published in 1952, The Course of Empire is all about geographic myths and illusions (especially the elusive Northwest Passage), the role of Thomas Jefferson as the first American geo-politician, and the continental expansion of the United States. For me, the book’s most compelling lines come in the preface. Here is what DeVoto has to say: “A dismaying amount of our history has been written without regard to the Indians, and of what has been written with regard to them much treats their diverse and always changing societies as uniform and static.” DeVoto’s own narrative line followed white men across the continent, but he did begin to recognize that Native peoples were an essential part of the story. This seems commonplace today, but in 1952 it was nothing less than revolutionary.

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3 Bernard DeVoto, The Course of Empire (Boston, 1952), xv.
Indians are at the very heart of the Lewis and Clark story. Exploration history is not a meaningful narrative without them. The Course of Empire won the 1952 Pulitzer Prize for American history, but few scholars took DeVoto, the historian, seriously. He was volcanic Benny, erupting on schedule from his “Easy Chair” at Harper’s Magazine. Once on library shelves, The Course of Empire—a book that might deserve a nod but not a thoughtful reading—was largely forgotten.

“It is no longer useful to think of the Lewis and Clark expedition as the personal story of two men. Their journey . . . was an enterprise of many aims and a product of many minds.”4 No sentences in the Lewis and Clark historical literature are more important than these. They come in the preface to Donald Jackson’s Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, first published by the University of Illinois Press in 1962, with a revised and expanded two-volume edition in 1978. Writing history is an act of the imagination. When American historians at mid-century thought about Lewis and Clark, they imagined a simple story told with one voice—a voice belonging to some generic character named “Lewisandclark.” If there was one voice, then perhaps there were only four actors—Jefferson, Lewis, Clark, and Sacagawea. By patiently locating, transcribing, and annotating more than 450 documents—everything from invoices for clothing and hardware to correspondence between politicians, diplomats, army officers, and private citizens—Jackson reimagined the story, breathing life into what was a dead subject. He understood what so many continue to forget—that the physical journey across the continent was only one aspect of the expedition experience. The Lewis and Clark story is often bracketed by the years 1803–1806; Jackson’s documents range from the 1780s to the 1850s. They reveal a sprawling, intricate set of interconnected, overlapping stories told in many voices, languages, and accents. To borrow some theater imagery, Jackson presented the Lewis and Clark drama as a complex play with many actors and several scripts, all appearing on a stage both broad and deep. Thanks to Jackson, the cast of characters now included public figures like Jefferson, Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin, and Attorney-General Levi Lincoln; naturalists and men of science like Benjamin Rush, Charles Willson Peale, Benjamin Smith Barton, and Bernard Lacepede; writers and printers like Nicholas Biddle, John Conrad, and David McKeehan; and the dozens of merchants and artisans who supplied the expedition, including seamstress Matilda Chapman, fishing tackle dealer George Lawton, and blacksmith Nicodemus Lloyd—all members of the Philadelphia business community. Don Jackson’s Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition widened the story and deepened it. Modern expedition scholarship began with Donald Jackson; it is still inspired by his powerful imagination.

DeVoto’s The Course of Empire suggested that the Lewis and Clark expedition was something more than an infantry company on a presidential errand into the wilderness. The West was not empty after all, and the people who called it home made a

difference. Jackson’s Letters filled the expedition stage with a large and varied cast of characters. But it was William H. Goetzmann’s *Exploration and Empire*, published in 1966, that took the expedition story and put it where it belonged—firmly within the larger contexts of North American and global history. No lines from that book are more memorable and influential than these: “The exploration of the American West was never an isolated event. It belongs to world rather than national history, and never more so than in the opening decades of the nineteenth century.” DeVoto hinted at this in a largely unnoticed essay in 1955, but Goetzmann made the point with grace and force. Like Francis Parkman and DeVoto, he envisioned the history of North America as a struggle between powerful European and American rivals. The rush for empire shaped American life, whether the conflict was played out on the shores of the Great Lakes or beyond the wide Missouri. Goetzmann located the expedition story within a large and powerful historical narrative. That narrative was all about defining political and cultural boundaries in the North American West. The first six pages of *Exploration and Empire* liberated Lewis and Clark from endless antiquarian arguments about campsite locations and who saw what mountain first. As Goetzmann put it, the Lewis and Clark expedition “injected the United States into the struggle for national empire.”

Considering DeVoto, Jackson, and Goetzmann, I always come back to John Allen’s *Passage through the Garden*. Without that book I would not have encountered the others. *Passage* does so many things so well: it places Jefferson and Lewis and Clark within the context of late-eighteenth-century geographical thought; it offers a systematic structure for understanding how explorers made route decisions in the field; and it makes clear how Lewis and Clark moved from Jefferson’s image of the West as a vast garden to an appreciation for regionally diverse environments. What remains most compelling for me, however, is Allen’s emphasis on the strength of imagination and the lure of illusion. John Kirtland Wright, one of the founders of American historical geography, put it this way: “The imagination not only projects itself into terrae incognitae and suggests routes for us to follow, but also plays upon those things that we discover and out of them makes imaginative conceptions which we seek to share with others.” Dreams at home shape what is seen on the road, and once back home imagination continues to shape how travelers share their adventures with others. Paying close attention to both the written and the cartographic record, Allen portrayed the tenacious power of illusion—in this case the dream of the Northwest Passage and the conjectural geography behind it—in planning and carrying out the Lewis and Clark journey. Thomas Jefferson liked to think about exploration as a careful, reasoned

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6 Ibid., 7.
process of filling in blank spaces on the map. In a memorable letter to William Dunbar, he predicted that “[w]e shall delineate with correctness the great arteries of this great country: those who come after us will extend the ramifications as they become acquainted with them, and fill up the canvas we begin.” Allen showed us the passion and imagination that inspired and directed enlightenment exploration. Passage is a reminder that the most important journeys are the ones made before leaving home. They are ventures into the country of the mind.

Taken together, DeVoto, Jackson, Goetzmann, and Allen are a map to what I think is a fuller, more nuanced understanding of western exploration in general and the Lewis and Clark expedition in particular. That map is even more interesting with the completion of Gary Moulton’s masterful twelve-volume edition of the Lewis and Clark journals. The bicentennial is an appropriate time for some fresh thinking and writing about the West at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Prophecy, however, is dangerous. After publication of the first scholarly edition of the Lewis and Clark journals, editor Reuben Gold Thwaites confidently predicted that his work would provide “a new view of Lewis and Clark.” Those “new views” were a long time coming. Not wanting to be either Jeremiah or Moses, let me suggest some roads to take in reconsidering the expedition and its larger meanings.

The Lewis and Clark story—or rather its many stories—leads us back to fundamentals. One of those fundamentals is identity. For virtually all the peoples of North America, identity has been fashioned out of journey. Native American literature is filled with emergence and migration stories. European Americans, Asian Americans, and African Americans all find identity in being on the road from somewhere to elsewhere. Our national mythology abounds with journey images: overlanders on the way to California and Oregon; black southerners leaving places like Clarksdale, Mississippi, for the Promised Land of Sweet Home Chicago; and Dust Bowl refugees searching for the next harvest out past Bakersfield. The expedition’s journey is not the most important passage in American history, but it is an emblematic one, and it can serve to remind us that American stories are road stories. With Lewis and Clark we see one human community moving through the lands and lives of other communities. This story evokes both the lure of the road and the promise of home. To travel with the Lewis and Clark community is to be on the road in a fundamentally American venture.

Reading the Lewis and Clark journals is a constant reminder that Native peoples are at the heart of this story. William Clark knew as much when, just before leaving St. Louis, he said that the expedition’s “road across the continent” would take the adventurers through “a multitude of Indians.” Clark understood that Indians


were important both as objects of scientific study and as sources of geographic information. Only gradually would he come to appreciate their roles as active participants in the exploration of North America. In the life of the expedition, Native peoples were not passive spectators, quietly watching the action from the wings while the real actors did the talking. As Lewis and Clark came to explore, so Native peoples sought to explore the American explorers. It was as if a new country called Lewis-and-Clark needed to be probed, charted, and put into the world of the known. Telling the Lewis and Clark story, we need to get off the boat and get on the bank. By placing Native peoples at the center of the story, we enjoy a new angle of vision. The Indians we meet in the Lewis and Clark record are not generic, nameless bystanders. Black Cat, Cameahwait, Coboway, and dozens of other Native peoples step out of the written record as intriguing characters with their own histories, geographies, and distinctive views of the world. Taking account of these characters, we confront the complexities and ambiguities of race and ethnicity in America. American historians continue to consider race in polar terms: black Americans in tension and conversation with white Americans. The Lewis and Clark experience is a reminder that things have always been more complex and surely more diverse than that. In the winter of 1804–5 the Mandan chief Black Cat shared time and space with African American York, Shawnee-French George Drouillard, Omaha-French Pierre Cruzatte, New Hampshire Yankee John Ordway, and the Shoshone-French child Jean Baptiste Charbonneau. Might this suggest to us the subtle and shifting boundaries of that semi-permeable membrane we call race?

Thomas Jefferson told Lewis and Clark to evaluate and record “the face of the country.”

We are easily seduced by the paintings of George Catlin, Karl Bodmer, and Paul Kane into thinking that the West Lewis and Clark saw was a Garden of Eden, some natural paradise beyond the reach of change. Lewis and Clark saw and wrote about a West before hydroelectric dams, power lines, explosive urbanization, and the monocultures of modern farming and ranching. But what they experienced was not a country untouched by human hands. Lewis and Clark traveled through a landscape already altered by fire, hunting, horticulture, and centuries of settlement. In a brilliant essay entitled “The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492,” historical geographer William M. Denevan made a compelling case for the many ways Native peoples fashioned “a humanized landscape,” one that fit the needs of complex and expanding societies.

Jefferson’s explorers saw western landscapes through eastern eyes and with sensibilities conditioned by eastern contours and colors. Little wonder that Sergeant John Ordway took one look at what is now Fergus County in central Montana and described it as “the Deserts of North America.”


13 JLCE, 9: 155.
the natural history gathered by the Corps of Discovery as a yardstick for measuring change, while acknowledging that environmental change was present long before the bearded Americans showed up.

Lewis and Clark came as representatives of a republic with empire on its mind. Just how much on its mind became clear when Lewis and a small party met a group of Piegan Blackfeet warriors on the Two Medicine River in late July 1806. When the Piegan attempted to take the expedition’s guns and horses, a nasty fight erupted leaving two Indians dead. In a moment of imperial bravado, Lewis hung a peace medal around the neck of one Piegan, saying he did that so others might know “who we were.” The empire that Lewis proclaimed at the Two Medicine meant not only territorial sovereignty but economic dominion. The Corps of Discovery went up the Missouri representing a new commercial order. The phrase in Jefferson’s instructions to Lewis about finding a passage from Atlantic to Pacific waters “for the purposes of commerce” has often been overlooked or misconstrued. Commerce did mean the fur trade, and Jefferson expected that Indians would abandon Canadian connections and do business with St. Louis interests. But Lewis and Clark were also in the West to begin the process of planting an agricultural economy. Jefferson’s great hope—and surely his great illusion—was that the West would be the place where sturdy republican farmers could prosper, safe from the vices and seductions of the East. Lewis and Clark carried with them all the goods and values of an emerging capitalist society. Bill Robbins is right; we need to pay more attention to capitalism and the transformations it promoted in the West. Chicago became nature’s metropolis, but it was Lewis and Clark who advanced the vision of nature as a natural resource into the American West. With Jefferson’s utilitarian notions of nature and knowledge in mind, Lewis and Clark counted beaver as pelts, judged waterways for their navigability, and evaluated land for its fertility. Lewis and Clark were at the head of an advancing army of entrepreneurs that came to include John Jacob Astor, William H. Ashley, James J. Hill, and Marcus Daly.

Paying attention to Lewis and Clark, we are brought into what Umberto Eco calls “the Theatre of Illusion.” Jefferson sent his expedition into the West on the strength of several compelling illusions about the nature of continental geography. Myth, illusion, and superheated imagination were up every river and down every trail on the Lewis and Clark journey. When Lewis was at the confluence of the Missouri and the Marias, he described the scene as “one of the most beautifully picturesque countries that [he] ever beheld” with “its borders garnished with one continued

14 JLCE, 8: 135.
garden of roses." A little less than a month later, with the expedition near present-day Great Falls, Montana, Lewis heard distinct cannon-like booms from the distant mountains. French boatmen explained that those sounds were "the bursting of the rich mines of silver which these mountains contain." Pondering rose gardens and silver mountains, Lewis had crossed what D. H. Lawrence once called "the coasts of illusion" and was deep into imagination's West. Our scholarship lives in the Age of the Cool, a time when adjectives are suspect and engagement is dismissed as mere enthusiasm. "Dispassionate" is the most favored word among book reviewers. The Lewis and Clark story reminds us that passion and imagination were powers in the past that the present needs to recognize and appreciate. I readily confess that thinking about the explorers' imaginings has enlivened my own.

Like all good stories, this one has gifts for those who listen patiently. It offers us a place (or perhaps many places) to put our narrative feet on the ground and take account of earth, weather, and the physical presence of the natural world. This is a story that took place in places, and places made a difference. There is no generic "West" here. The shape of the ground, both real and imagined, formed this journey. The Lewis and Clark narrative brings us face to face with the country between Forts Mandan and Clatsop. There are rivers, passes, and trails here—all with names, characteristics, and parts to play in the story. It is not any river, but the Missouri, making its way through those strange rock formations in north-central Montana that Lewis termed "sees [sic] of visionary enchantment [sic]." It is not any pass, but Lemhi Pass in the late summer of 1805 with its views westward toward the snow-covered Bitterroot Mountains. Consider for a moment William Clark and the Pacific Ocean. For this landlocked, woodlands man, "ocean" was a word that lacked the substance of experience. But that changed in early December 1805, when what had been abstract became all too real. After taking a party to see the ocean, Clark wrote that he had "not Seen one pacific day Since my arrival in its vicinity, and its waters are forming [foaming] and petially [perpetually] break [sic] with emenc [sic] waves on the Sands and rocky coasts, tempestuous and heritable [sic]." The Lewis and Clark expedition took shape in government offices and country houses but played itself out in worlds of mud and water, cold rain, and blistering sun. Exploration history is, inevitably, environmental history.

The best historical narratives enliven our imagination and move us from innocence to experience. They clear a space in the clutter so that we can recollect the past.

17 JLC, 4: 266.
18 JLC, 4: 374.
20 JLC, 4: 226.
21 JLC, 6: 104.
and reconsider its meanings. What is the size of the space that Lewis and Clark clear for us? How big is this story? A look at the Lewis and Clark route marked out on any popular trail guide suggests a confined space, one defined by the banks of the Missouri and the Columbia. In this version of the Lewis and Clark journey, the expedition marched a narrow tunnel from St. Louis to the Pacific and back. And within that tunnel there is only room for a few travelers, a few voices, a few perspectives. But in fact this is a larger story and it opens for us a much larger space. This is a narrative country large enough for Sacagawea and Matilda Chapman, Attorney-General Levi Lincoln and Clatsop headman Coboway, French-Canadian boatman and sometime expedition fiddle player Pierre Cruzatte and St. Louis cartographer Antoine Foulard. As geographic explorers, Lewis and Clark lived in the age of James Cook and George Vancouver. On the eve of leaving Fort Mandan for points west, Lewis compared his expedition to those of Columbus and Cook.22 There was presumption bordering on arrogance in his claim, but in essence the American adventurer was right. The journey that Jefferson had planned was based on models of exploration established by Sir Joseph Banks and Great Britain's Royal Society. With Cook, Vancouver, and Banks we are in a very large—even a global space—precisely where Bill Goetzmann said Lewis and Clark belong.

Don Jackson once described Lewis and Clark as the “writingest” of all American explorers.23 Their report produced more first-hand accounts than any other in the history of the exploration of the American West. There are surviving journals from Lewis, Clark, Sergeants John Ordway, Patrick Gases, Charles Floyd, and Private Joseph Whitehorse, and there are hundreds of letters, official papers, and cartographic records. A close look at Lewis and Clark offers an opportunity to escape our modern illusion that the past is just another, simpler version of the present; that late eighteenth-century folks are like us except for deodorant, antibiotics, and cell phones. The social and material life of the eighteenth century is profoundly “Other.” Saying that Lewis and Clark lived in a foreign country is just the beginning of wisdom. The paradox here—the one we confront every day in the classroom and in what we write—is that this “past as foreign country” is always with us. Lewis and Clark are not our contemporaries, but reading their written traces means confronting questions of invasion, conquest, cultural arrogance, and racial violence. It means owning up to a past as deeply troubled and as morally ambiguous as our present. Historical narrative brings us face-to-face with strangeness and then enables us to experience intellectual and emotional enlargement. No story from the past is a sovereign remedy for our obsessive focus on the Now and the Immediate. But with Lewis and Clark we have a many-voiced account that invites us, our readers, and our students to move beyond self-absorption to attempt conversation with others.

22 JLCE, 4: 9.

Good stories impose obligations. Having encountered these stories, we do not escape easily. Heeding what Robert Coles describes as “the call of stories,” we cannot slip away and then slip back into old ways of telling. It does make a difference how we tell the Lewis and Clark story. So much of the distinctively American West begins with Jefferson and Lewis and Clark. What we say about beginnings inevitably shapes middles and ends, interpretations and conclusions. Blessed with a rich documentary record—one that names the names and preserves many voices—we are obliged to tell this story with all its absurdities, confusions, accomplishments, and loose ends. In recent times, some have sought to make Lewis and Clark the American master narrative. In this telling, the expedition is us—the U.S.—one family with men of many different racial and ethnic backgrounds, a woman, and a child all heading west into an uncertain (but probably) promising future. Such a narrative is so appealing that it could easily become the plot line for a television documentary. But this version asks too much; no single story can bear the entire moral weight of North America’s complex and contorted histories. But as a journey story, as one more part of the American odyssey, Lewis and Clark can help us understand a West that John McPhee aptly calls “suspect terrain.”

Now about those cats in Zanzibar. Henry David Thoreau once boasted that he had “traveled a good deal in Concord.”24 Urging his readers to be expert in what he called “home-cosmography,” Thoreau took as his motto the phrase “explore thyself.” Having recently read Charles Wilkes’s report of the United States exploring expedition, Thoreau lamponed the entire exploration enterprise, insisting that “it is not worth the while to go round the world to count the cats in Zanzibar.”25 Perhaps the Sage of Walden Pond was thinking about writing an essay called “The Insignificance of Exploration in American History.” But all of this was a pose, a polite fiction to fit the needs of Walden’s insistence on local knowledge and personal independence. No citizen of Concord was more widely traveled than Thoreau. His traveling and exploring were done by means of the printed page and the Harvard College library. Thoreau read exploration and travel narratives with astonishing passion. Lewis and Clark, Zebulon Montgomery Pike, Charles Wilkes, and John Charles Frémont, the polar explorers Sir John Franklin, Sir William Edward Parry, and Elisha Kent Kane, and the African adventurers Mungo Park, David Livingstone, and Richard F. Burton—he read them all.

That reading led Thoreau to a strikingly modern understanding of exploration. He recognized that exploration journeys were all about imagination’s encounter with the physical world. This was no idle meeting; the exploration encounter produced new knowledge. When William Clark talked with Black Cat he learned something


25 Thoreau, 322.
new; so did Black Cat. As Thoreau explained it in an early journal entry, “to travel and ‘descry new lands’ is to think new thoughts and have new imaginings.” In another entry he was even more pointed: “The excursions of the imagination are so boundless.” Thoreau had read enough to know that imagination’s children could and did wreak havoc while in search of Cibola, the Vermilion Sea, or the Passage to India. Like Thoreau, we need have no illusions about explorers and their own daemons. Exploration is imagination and passion in search of knowing and possessing. Thoreau knew the passions that drove explorers were many—curiosity, competitiveness, greed, salvation, and dominion. Passions leave scars, and exploration history is a deeply scarred record. Lewis and Clark expanded imaginations in their own time; their story can do the same for us in our time.

In the coming years, the bicentennial fires will burn hot for a while, consume themselves, and then grow cold. Heritage tourism will rise and fall on the price of gasoline and a short public attention span. What remains is a story replete with attractions, confusions, ambiguities, and potential illuminations. We seek to understand an American West that was and is diverse, intricate, in motion, and ever shape-changing. What better place to meet that kind of history than in exploration encounters of the kind that Lewis and Clark had nearly every day? If the histories of North America spring from journeys real and imagined, then with Lewis and Clark we can come to appreciate something fundamental about this American life.

27 Thoreau, journal entry for 20 September 1851, ibid., 5: 85.
Undaunted Craziness

By Brian Hall

I THOUGHT he bicultural element of the Lewis and Clark expedition enjoyed its official kick-off on Saturday at Monticello, marking the day in 1803 when President Thomas Jefferson sent Congress a request for funds for the enterprise. Almost four years from now, on Sept. 30, 2006, reenactors firing blanks in the air from flintlocks will paddle into St. Louis to mark the end of the journey. In the intervening months, symposiums, conferences and historical pageants will give the large and growing Lewis-and-Clark loving public the chance to ponder every conceivable aspect of the expedition, from the whiskey the members of the Corps of Discovery drank to the wood their proges were made of, to whether the captains shaved.

It remains to be seen, however, if that same public is ready to entertain an image of Meriwether Lewis as something other than a hero.

Meriwether Lewis was a strange man. He had "undaunted courage" — but that famous designation, as it happens, came as a grudging concession in the middle of a schoolmate's large ly unfattering posthumous portrait: "always remarkable for perseverance, which in the early period of his life seemed nothing more than obstinacy... stiff and without grace."

Jefferson wrote that Lewis was "of course undaunted" (the schoolmate may have lifted the phrase), but went on that "while he lived with me in Washington I observed at times sensible depression of mind." Jefferson wrote this after Lewis, following a disastrous term as governor of the Louisiana Territory, killed himself at a wilderness inn in Tennessee.

Or was he murdered? Eyewitness accounts of Lewis's suicide are credible and consistent; no one who knew him well doubted them. But for a national hero, suicide is a bad career move. In ensuing years, stories were gathered from people who lived near the inn; that three shots were heard

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By Brian Hall is author of "I Should Be Extremely Happy in Your Company: A Novel of Lewis and Clark."

that night, though Lewis carried only two pistols, that Lewis's money disappeared and that the proprietor became suspiciously rich, that Lewis was carrying a map showing the location of a gold mine out West.

There are the sort of folk tales about the death of the great that you might find anywhere. But writers on Lewis clucked at them. Richard Dillon, in his 1965 biography, "Meriwether Lew is," most succinctly expressed their tone of professional detachment fleec ing the field before amateur part nership: "Was Meriwether Lewis murdered? Yes. Is there proof of his murder? No... If there is such a person as the anti-suicide type, it was Meriwether Lewis. By temperament, he was a fighter, not a quitter."

Stephen E. Ambrose's account of the Lewis and Clark expedition, "undaunted Courage," is incomparably better than Mr. Dillon's. Yet even Mr. Ambrose seems at times to have been made uncomfortable by Lewis's oddness. He emphasizes, for example, how much Lewis loved his mother, Lucy — a curious assertion given that Lewis seems to have avoided seeing her as much as possible. His early letters to her bristle with complaints that she doesn't write to him; later, he repeatedly promises to visit her, sometimes laying out in detail his plans for doing so, then fails to follow through. For long stretches, he didn't write to her at all. Mr. Ambrose characterizes him as "a faithful and considerate correspondent."

Lewis's letters to his mother, in which he promises things he knows he can't deliver, are not unlike his most famous misdeed: the one to William Clark, inviting him on the expedition. In June 1803, Lewis wrote that the president "has authorized me to say that the conduct of the expedition and accepting this proposition he will grant you a Captain's commission." Thus was born

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THE LEWIS AND CLARK CASE

One point in his famous survey of the American political character, Alexis de Tocqueville observed that Americans made no effort to collect or preserve their historical records. "The only historical remains in the United States are the newspapers," he wrote. "If a number be compelling, the chain of time is broken and the present is severed from the past." De Tocqueville thought this a clear reflection of the popular frame of mind, for in America "no one cares for what occurred before his time: no methodical system is pursued, no archives are formed, and no documents are brought together when it would be very easy to do so. Where they exist, a little store is set upon them. I have among my papers several original public documents which were given to me in the public offices in answer to some of my inquiries. In America society seems to live from hand to mouth, like an army in the field."

Although de Tocqueville's observation no longer holds true, it was certainly accurate in 1835, when he wrote it and continued to be accurate for long after. In fact, until the National Archives was established in Washington nearly a hundred years later, in 1934, the various departments of the government did such a haphazard job of storing their records that vast amounts of documents deteriorated in cellars throughout the capital, or burned in fires, or simply disappeared because no one could remember where they had been stored. Even in the Library of Congress, according to Fred Frary, one of its staff members, manuscripts and other papers were subject to "neglect, default, and inattention" throughout the nineteenth century. Fortunately, at nearly every period of history there have been a few private individuals dedicated to preserving the records of time. Government archivists may concede that a great many of "historical remains" that exist today in this country have come down to us through the efforts of private collectors or bibliophiles. What appears less fortunate is that lately the interests of private collectors and the interests of government archivists have come into conflict, and in a manner that makes the future disposition of our historical records almost as uncertain as it was in Tocqueville's time, although for entirely different reasons.

The origin of this conflict was a long litigation involving some recently discovered field notes of the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804-06. The case's central issue, whose reverberations are still sounding throughout the worlds of book collecting and historical scholarship, was the United States government's claim to sixty-seven pieces of paper—most of them in the handwriting of William Clark—on the ground that they had been created by a federal employee in the course of his official duties, and that all such documents, including rough notes, belonged rightfully to the federal government. This issue had never come up before, and its appearance caused considerable uneasiness among collectors, dealers, librarians, and other private custodians of such material; indeed, although the National Archives has gone out of its way to reassure private collectors and others that it has no intention of disturbing historical collections that are well cared for and made available to scholars, a lot of mutual suspicion and hostility still exist as a result of the case. The intensity of feeling that it evoked, in fact, is perhaps the clearest possible indication of how much the public attitude toward historical remains has changed since the time of de Tocqueville.

The discovery of the Clark notes followed, up to a certain point, the classic pattern for such historical windfalls. One day in January, 1953, while Mrs. Vaclav Vytlačil (the wife of the well-known American artist) was closing down the old Victorian house in St. Paul, Minnesota, that her mother had lived in for more than half a century until her death the month before, she came across in the attic a massive rolltop desk that had once belonged to her mother's father, General John Henry Hammond. Hammond, who died in St. Paul in 1890, had been a man of considerable eminence. He had fought with great distinction in several major battles of the Civil War, during which he had served on the staff of General Sherman. After the war, he had gone West and engaged in a number of activities, among them the Indian Serv-

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ice—he was apparently the personal representative of Carl Schurz, President Hayes' Secretary of the Interior, who was then trying to reform the somewhat corrupt administration of Indian affairs. "I knew about that desk of Grandfather's," Mrs. Vytlaclil said not long ago. "I remember that on rainy days Mother used to send us children up there to get out one of Grandfather's ledgers and copy a page—he had very beautiful handwriting. Mother had often said, too, that there might be valuable papers in that desk, and that someday she really ought to get the Historical Society people in to look at them. So, anyway, when I got around to the attic and saw the desk, I went right down and called the Minnesota Historical Society. I was put on to their curator of manuscripts, who said she would like very much to come over and look at the papers."

"The curator came over the next day. After a brief examination of the desk by flashlight in the unheated attic, she said that the papers looked as though they might be very interesting, and asked permission to take them back to the Society's offices, where she could examine them in detail. Mrs. Vytlaclil agreed to this, and on January 7, 1933, the papers were packed up and removed. Mrs. Vytlaclil returned to her home in Sparkill, New York, a few days later without having had any further word from the Historical Society."

"The next development was singular indeed. Two months later, on March 19th, a front-page story in the St. Paul Dispatch announced that the Minnesota Historical Society had acquired "a priceless collection of papers . . . uncovered from a St. Paul attic." The story—which was accompanied by photographs of the house and the attic, and a photostat of one of the Clark notes and portraits of General Hammon, William Clark, and Meriwether Lewis—identified the document as "long-missing papers covering the first 600 miles of the famed Lewis and Clark expedition," and, quoting an undisclosed source, called them "the greatest discovery of its kind in decades." The notes were on sixty-seven separate pieces of paper, ranging in size from three-inch scraps to one sheet about thirty inches long. Most of these were in Clark's handwriting, but a few were in Blackmore's. Some were in the handwriting of others. The documents were then cut into small pieces, and some of them have since been lost."

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appears likely that no one ever will.

The family, Mrs. Vytlacil has said, was astonished to learn from the Dispatch that such papers existed, and even more astonished to find that they were now the property of the Minnesota Historical Society. A legal problem immediately arose. On the same day that the story broke in the papers, the First Trust Company of St. Paul, as executor of the estate of Sophia Vermont Hammond Foster (Mrs. Vytlacil's mother), had drawn up a formal list of the household effects and belongings of the estate, preparatory to a final distribution of the property under Mrs. Foster's will. The Clark papers, of course, did not appear on this list. Confronted by the sudden appearance of a possible asset whose value appeared to be considerable—newspapers across the country were estimating the commercial value of the Clark notes at upward of twenty thousand dollars—the First Trust Company felt itself legally obligated "to gather into the estate whatever assets might lawfully belong to it."

David W. Raudenbush, the attorney for the bank, accordingly wrote a letter warning the Minnesota Historical Society to regard itself merely as custodian of the Clark notes until the question of their ownership was resolved. As Raudenbush explained to one of the Hammond heirs at the time, this question could probably be settled by a "simple little action" to clear title to the papers.

This action was instituted by Raudenbush in the State District Court of Ramsey County, Minnesota, on September 30th. Mrs. Vytlacil, her sister, and her brother had previously agreed to relinquish any claims they might have to the papers in favor of their aunts—the two surviving children of General Hammond. Among the several possible claimants to the papers that Raudenbush listed, therefore, were Margaret Van S. H. Starr and Harriet K. Hammond, the late Sophia Foster's two sisters. Others were John Doe and Mary Roe, those familiar legal question marks, who in this case represented the unknown surviving heirs of William Clark; the Minnesota Historical Society, which, with or without warrant, had gone to the expense of authenticating the papers and was, after all, in possession of them; and, to the surprise of everyone, the United States of America. Raudenbush had included this last party at interest because he received a letter of instructions to Lewis written by President Thomas Jefferson and dated June 20, 1803. It read, in part:

Your observations are to be taken with great pains & accuracy, to be entered...
distinctly & intelligibly for others as well as yourself. Several copies of these as well as of your other notes should be made at leisure times, & put into the care of the most trust-worthy of your attendants, to guard, by multiplying them, against the accidental losses to which they will be exposed. A further guard would be that one of these copies be on the paper of the birch, as less liable to injury from damp than common paper. 

On re-entering the U.S. and reaching a place of safety... repair yourself with your papers to the seat of government.

WHAT the Guide Michelin calls "un peu d'histoire" may be in order here. In June, 1803, when Jefferson sent this letter of instructions to Lewis, the western boundary of the United States lay along the Mississippi River; news of the purchase of the vast territory of Louisiana, stretching from the Mississippi all the way to the Continental Divide, in the Rocky Mountains, reached Washington only later in the month. One of the immediate effects of the news was to change the nature of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Until then, this first transcontinental crossing had been planned as a kind of semi-clandestine intelligence mission, across the territory of a foreign and not altogether friendly power (France), and, once past the Continental Divide, into an area to which France, Spain, and England had all laid tentative claim. With Louisiana in American hands, though, Lewis and Clark could go quite openly about the business of empire — mapping the land with a view to settlement, commerce, and military defense; informing the Indians that the Great Father now lived in Washington; and learning everything possible about this new acquisition, which Napoleon, on selling it, had said would "consolidate forever the power of the United States." Every scrap of information they could pick up would be of incalculable value.

A formal ceremony transferring Louisiana from France to the United States took place in the frontier village of St. Louis on March 9, 1804, with Meriwether Lewis on hand as a highly interested observer. He and Clark had spent that winter a few miles north of St. Louis, training and outfitting their little band of volunteers at a base camp on the Dubois River, near the confluence of the Mississippi and the Missouri. Until the discovery of the Clark notes in General Hammond's desk, not very much was known about this preliminary stage of the expedition. The first batch of these notes, covering daily activities at Camp Dubois from December 13, 1803, through May 14, 1804,

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When the expedition’s three boats started up the Missouri on the initial leg of this journey, are virtually the only records of this period ever found. Once the expedition was under way, though, the notes cease to be a unique record. From May 14th on, Lewis and Clark said everything possible to carry out Jefferson’s instructions. Not only did they both keep journals, which together were every single day the expedition was out—largely a double record, although there were several periods when only one of them was writing—but they also encouraged the more literate of their men to keep journals of their own, and seven did so. The reason for all this duplication of effort was obvious: the constant dangers to which the expedition was exposed on a journey that was mostly by river made the survival of any single item a matter of considerable uncertainty; the more journals there were, the better chance there would be of saving vital information.

All in all, as one historian has pointed out, this was “the mostest crew” in the chronicles of exploration. Scholars fail to agree about the methods of journal-keeping that were used—whether, for example, Clark used slates on which to jot down the daily mileage upriver or took rough notes in ink on board the keelboat. What is certain is that the two captains took copious field notes of all kinds, which they later transcribed into bound notebook journals. With the exception of Clark’s so-called “elkskin” field book, now owned by the Missouri Historical Society, only isolated examples of the rough notes of the expedition had ever been found—until the Clark papers turned up in St. Paul in 1953. Most historians had believed that the captains, after copying their notes into the notebook journals, simply threw the originals away.

The bulk of the Lewis and Clark material that has survived is in the library of the American Philosophical Society, in Philadelphia. Thanks largely to the efforts of Jefferson, who spent several years agitating tirelessly for the recovery of Lewis and Clark documents that had become almost hopelessly scattered, the A.P.S. has preserved the following records: eleven notebooks bound in red morocco (six by Lewis and five by Clark), in which the captains transcribed the daily log from April 7, 1805, when the expedition left Fort Mandan, near present-day Bismarck, North Dakota, on the second leg of the western journey, until September 23, 1806, when it returned safely to St. Louis (these notebooks are so neat and unweathered

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that some scholars insist they were not carried on the expedition at all but were written up immediately following the return; three other notebook journals, one bound in brown leather, and the other two of them known as the "marble-backed" notebooks, in which Clark kept the daily log for the first leg of the journey, from Camp Dubois to Fort Mandan (these are notebooks that Clark sent back to Jefferson from Fort Mandan in the spring of 1805, and without any doubt his rough source for them was the field notes lately discovered in St. Paul); two more red morocco notebooks, containing scientific data, one by Clark and one by Lewis; two more marbled-paper notebooks, these containing natural-history notes and jointly authored; twelve parcels of "loose sheets," containing observations on the Indian tribes and notes on various other matters that do not appear in the daily journals; and, finally, the journal of Sergeant John Ordway, which was lost for many years and rediscovered only in 1913. Lewis and Clark had bought this journal from Ordway after their return, thinking that it would be useful as additional source material for the narrative account of the expedition that Lewis planned to write—but never got around to writing. The narrative that did finally appear, in 1814, was prepared by Nicholas Biddle with the cooperation of Clark and was entitled "History of the Expedition Under the Command of Captains Lewis and Clark."

The Lewis and Clark notebook journals and other records gathered dust in the vaults of the A.P.S. for the next seventy-five years, ignored and all but forgotten by everyone. Then, in 1892, the historian Elliott Coues, who was preparing a new edition of the Biddle narrative, learned by chance of their existence. Although his book was by that time in galleys, he managed to squeeze in a few excerpts from the red morocco notebooks, and these caught the attention of a new generation of historians, for which original source materials held considerably greater appeal. One of them, Reuben Gold Thwaites, headed straight for Philadelphia and spent the next several years editing and annotating the notebooks for publication. Thwaites' edition of "Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition" came out in eight volumes in 1904-05, exactly a hundred years after the explorers had set out up the Missouri. It included also the journals of Sergeant Charles Floyd and Private Joseph Whitehouse, which Thwaites.

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son’s letter cited, the “simple little action” became a highly complicated chain of events. The government did assert its title to the Clark papers, basing its claim specifically on Jefferson’s letter of instructions, and the case was removed from the Ramsey County Court to the Federal District Court in Minneapolis for trial. (As for the second ownership dispute—between the Minnesota Historical Society and the Hammond heirs—that would evaporate entirely if the government proved its case.)

For a while, it looked as though the government claim would not even be contested. Like most private citizens, the various descendants of General Hammond had an understandable reluctance to appear opposite the might of the United States of America in a federal court, and the Minnesota Historical Society, which was in actual possession of the papers, was lying low. There was one descendant, though, whose reluctance was outweighed by a profound sense of family pride and an equally profound belief in the property rights of individual citizens. Louis Starr, a partner in the New York financial firm of Laidlaw & Co., had never known General Hammond, his grandfather, but when the Minnesota Historical Society announced its acquisition of the papers, he had been sufficiently irritated to “hotfoot it out to St. Paul,” as he described it, and hire a lawyer to represent his mother, Margaret Van S. H. Starr and her sister, Miss Harriet Hammond. When the government intervened, Starr flew out to St. Paul again to deal with the new situation. Every one of the law firms he approached advised him not to contest the government’s claim; it would cost too much, they all said, and he didn’t stand a chance of winning. Starr returned to New York discouraged but by no means reconciled. “I just felt that neither the government nor the Minnesota Historical Society had a right to come in and take away my grandfather’s papers, and I wanted to do something about it,” he said.

What he did was to go to work on a friend of his, Donald F. Hyde, a partner in a highly respected New York law firm and a fellow-commuter to the city. Starr lives in Far Hills, New Jersey, and Hyde, until his death last February at the age of fifty-six, lived nearby in North Branch. “We often rode across together on the ferry from Hoboken, and I kept talking to Don about the case and asking if he didn’t think we should do something,” Starr recalls. “He just wasn’t interested

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at all. He couldn't believe that the government was really serious about charging the papers. This went on for about three months, I guess. Then one morning, just the day before he was to leave on a trip to Europe, I brought it up again, and to my absolute surprise Don said, "All right, let's do something. We'll represent you."

Hyde's decision seemed remarkably quixotic. To prepare and argue a case against the government, and particularly a case as complex as this one promised to be, would require a great deal of time and effort. Since Louis Starr's own resources were relatively modest, most of the time and effort would have to be contributed voluntarily by a number of people, including Hyde and whatever witnesses he could persuade to testify for my client. The deciding factor was Hyde's personal interest in the field of books and book collecting. Over the years, he had spent a great deal of time on the boards of various book societies and libraries (including the Morgan Library and the New York Public Library; his widow has just been elected a trustee of the former), and the Hyde collection of Samuel Johnson is considered the finest in existence. As a bookman, Hyde had begun to see the government's claim in the Lewis and Clark case as a threat to all great American historical collections, public or private. The first thing to be done, he felt, was to find out just how serious the threat was. Before leaving for Europe, he asked another partner in the firm to go to Washington and discuss the case with officials in the Justice Department. The partner went down and talked with J. Lee Rankin, who was then the Assistant Attorney General. When Hyde returned to New York and heard his colleague's report, he decided that the threat was a great deal more serious than anyone had suspected.

Largely on the basis of the partner's talk with Rankin, Hyde and his associates drew up a summary of the facts and issues in the case, pinpointing the danger as they saw it. "We are of the opinion that the pending case is not an isolated one but is an initial move in a plan to assemble in the National Archives all original data and documents which the National Archives Establishment may deem of value and interest and which were compiled or prepared by federal officials of all ranks while in the employ of the United States of America," they stated. Noting that, with certain exceptions, the statute of limitations does not run against the government, the memoran-
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and the Minnesota Historical Society had sent him photostatic copies that were considerably reduced in size—a fact he only learned later, when he saw the originals in St. Paul. As a result, Mrs. Hyde was obliged to work with photographs in which the tortuous, nearly illegible penmanship of William Clark—one of history’s most bizarre spellers—was reduced to about one-fourth its original size. Hyde and another of his associates at the firm—Dermot Stanley—dropped virtually all outside work to concentrate on the case. One of their first discoveries was that there was no precedent for the case in either American or English law. “With no precedent, we found ourselves deeply involved in history, reading Jefferson’s papers and tracking down all the sources of this thing,” Hyde said. Up at Yale, Metzdorf was busy digging into past archival practice and accumulating examples of the government’s neglect of its own records. He also devoted some close study to the photostatic copies of the Clark notes. “It was funny,” he said afterward. “None of us was at all expert in the field of Americana in general, or Lewis and Clark in particular. My field is really eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature, Mary Hyde’s is Shakespeare, and Don’s is the English eighteenth century.” Still, searching through the notes with an expert’s eye, Metzdorf began to put together a number of clues that led him to a specific theory regarding their nature.

The Lewis and Clark case came to trial in Minneapolis on December 13, 1955. It lasted four days, and, aside from one somewhat acrimonious session, the proceedings often suggested an extraordinarily alert graduate seminar in history—an effect that was heightened by the fact that when the government’s chief witness, Ernest S. Osborn, professor of history at the University of Minnesota, was on the stand, he could discern three of his former students in the government’s camp: Clifford Janes, the government attorney; Miss Lucile Kane, a well-known historical author and scholar in the employ of the Minnesota Historical Society; and Dr. Robert Bohmer, the Assistant Archivist. It was Osborn who had authenticated the Clark notes for the Minnesota Historical Society, and his intimate knowledge of the documents sometimes made him sound as though he had been present on the expedition. “In some cases, Clark wrote the notes on a piece of paper which had been originally used to en...
close a letter,” he explained to the court. “In those days, of course, there were no envelopes, so when you wrote a letter you took another sheet of paper and folded it over and put a red seal on it and you addressed it on the outside. Paper was short, and he saved all those, and he began to use them as he went up the river, writing right across the address on one side of the sheet of paper. . . . I am certain that many of these notes were made on the deck of the keelboat as the keelboat was proceeding up the river. In one place, he notes that his notes blew overboard, and he was rewriting these notes from memory. In recording the courses and distances . . . he crossed out and added and underwrote, and all that sort of thing. Clark was a clumsy man, and in another case he spilled all his ink over the notes. . . . I think he used a quill pen, and I think I can identify when he stopped to sharpen his quill pen, but up to that point sometimes the writing was very difficult.

Another factor that added to the seminar atmosphere was the quiet, attentive personality of the white-haired president judge, Gunnar H. Nordbye. His experience could hardly have furnished him with many guidelines for this case. Instead of dealing with more or less contemporary facts, to be proved or disproved by testimony, the lawyers on both sides had to contend almost exclusively with documents that were a hundred and fifty years old and were written by men whose eighteenth-century syntax and diction often left their meaning decidedly unclear. In addition to the Clark notes themselves, which were received only in camera (a copyright protection insisted upon by Hyde), a total of eighty-three exhibits was offered in evidence—seventy of them by the government—and, as Hyde reflected later, “almost every one of them turned out to be a two-edged sword.” At times, in fact, it almost seemed as though Clark, Lewis, and even Jefferson had gone out of their way to confuse the court.

From the outset, the government based its case squarely on Jefferson’s 1803 letter of instructions to Lewis. Clifford Janes, the young Assistant United States Attorney who argued the government’s case, returned again and again to this letter with Professor Osborn and subsequent witnesses, drawing attention to Jefferson’s request that Lewis make “several copies” of his notes and observations, and that upon his return he should repair with his papers to “the seat of government.” The Clark notes, Janes insisted, were made in direct response to Jefferson’s instructions as to what should be observed and recorded. Much of the information they contained—distances traveled each day, notes on the soil, flora, fauna, and weather of the country they passed through—was admittedly a duplication of similar material in the Lewis and Clark journals as published by Thwaits.

But, Janes pointed out, of the notes—those covering the winter of 1803-04, prior to the start of the expedition—constituted the only record of the expedition; the journals in Philadelphia contained no more than a few scattered references to this period of training and preparation at the Dubois River camp. Janes’ argument was that the notes in litigation were referred to at the trial—should be considered the missing link in a continuous journal that had been started by Lewis when he set out down the Ohio River to join Clark in the summer of 1803, that had been taken over by Clark (with a few Lewis entries) during the winter of 1803-04, when they were getting the expedition outfitted and ready (this was the reg), and that had then been kept by both captains, sometimes alternately but more often in duplicate versions, throughout the long voyage up the Missouri, over the Rockies, down to the Pacific, and then back across the continent in 1806.

Dermot Stanley argued the case for the Hammond interests. Although neither Hyde nor Stanley considered himself an expert trial lawyer, they had agreed that Stanley could present the case the most effectively. Stanley lost no time in getting the government’s star witness, Professor Osborn, to admit that Jefferson’s instructions did not apply to the period when the expedition was at the Dubois River camp. “As your movements while within the limits of the United States will be better directed by occasional communications . . . they will not be noticed here,” this part of the Jefferson letter read. The orders applied only to “your proceedings after your departure from the United States”—that is, after the expedition had set forth up the Missouri River into the Louisiana Territory, which in June, 1803, when Jefferson wrote the letter, was not yet the United States.

Stanley’s main effort, in any case, was to show that the Clark notes were nothing but unofficial jottings that neither Clark nor Lewis (nor, by implication, Jefferson) had ever considered anything other than Clark’s private property. In this connection, he produced a letter that Lewis had written to Jeff-

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expedition left its first winter quarters at Fort Mandan, sixteen hundred miles up the Missouri, in what is now North Dakota. From Fort Mandan on, there would be no opportunity to send letters back until the expedition returned the following year. In his letter, Lewis apologized to Jefferson for not having prepared a clean copy of the expedition's notes and observations, saying, "You will also receive herewith inclosed a part of Capt. Clark's private journal, the other part you will find inclosed in a separate tin box. This journal is in its original state, and of course incorrect, but it will serve to give you the daily details of our progress, and transactions. Capt. Clark does not wish this journal exposed in its present state, but has no objection, that one or more copies of it be made by some confidential person under your direction, correcting it's grammatical errors &c. . . . In this state there is no objection to your submitting them to the perusal of the heads of the departments, or such others as you may think proper."

This letter proved to be a great stumbling block for both sides. On the one hand, it suggested that both Lewis and Clark considered some of their written records private—so private that they could presume to instruct the President of the United States regarding their use. But what did Lewis mean by the word "private"? Did he mean "personal and confidential," or was he merely implying that Clark did not want his material handled around indiscriminately until the spelling and punctuation had been cleaned up? Furthermore, if this private journal could serve to inform the President about the "daily details" of the expedition's progress, did this not imply that it conformed to Jefferson's specific instructions, thereby strengthening the government's claim? And why would Clark's "private," or personal, journal contain insertions in the hand of Meriwether Lewis, as an F.B.I. handwriting analyst had testified that the Clark notes did? There was, however, a further uncertainty. Lewis could have been referring here not to the rough notes of the res but to Clark's notebook journals covering the trip from Camp Dubois to Fort Mandan—the "marble-backed journals"—which were almost certainly sent back from Fort Mandan and are now in the library of the American Philosophical Society. Although these notebook journals appear to have been written up by Clark on the basis of the rough notes of the res, they are not nearly as "finished" in appearance as the red morocco notebooks that were written up later.
and they could credibly be described as a journal "in its original state." The question of just what materials Lewis and Clark kept throughout the trial one of those historical puzzles that defy the legal process.

Stanley fared somewhat better when he elicited testimony to show that the journals of other members of the expedition were unquestionably considered private property. Seven men besides Lewis and Clark kept journals, and all of these were retained, lost, or disposed of profitably by their authors. Moreover, as Stanley pointed out several times, Clark (actually, Lewis and Clark shared the cost) bought Sergeant John Ordway's journal for three hundred dollars, in two installments, in 1807 and 1809, to help in the preparation of the official narrative of the expedition, which finally appeared, after many delays, in 1814.

The story of the struggle to publish this official narrative became one of the fascinating sidelights of the trial. It was related mainly by Dr. Bahmer, the Assistant Archivist. Bahmer described how Lewis—obviously the better qualified of the two men for the job of editing and publishing their joint account—was prevented from doing so by the demands of a political career for which his qualifications were much less evident. After the expedition's triumphant return in 1806, Lewis was appointed Governor of the Louisiana Territory. (Clark, promoted to general, was placed in command of the military defense of this huge area, and was also made Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Central Plains area.) Lewis had little talent for politics. He made enemies, got into financial difficulties, and began drinking heavily. When he committed suicide (or was murdered—history is still uncertain which it was) in October, 1809, he was on his way to Washington to try to redeem his reputation. Apparently, he had also been planning to do something about publication of the narrative, for he had with him two trunks filled with his own and Clark's journals. The job of preparing the narrative now fell to Clark. Realizing that he had no ability for it, he turned over most of the papers of the expedition, including the Ordway journal, to a young littérateur named Nicholas Biddle, of the well-known Philadelphia Biddles, who spent the next four years editing the vast amount of material and trying to get it published. Since the government had no printing office of its own, Biddle...
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right to them, and that they could not convey them had they been capable of intending it.”

This was obviously a crucial statement for the government’s case, and Mr. Janes made good use of it. But as usual, there were ambiguities. In response to Jefferson’s efforts, eighteen notebook journals of the expedition were recovered and deposited in the A.P.S., together with twelve parcels of “loose sheets.” On the other hand, as Stanley was able to demonstrate, neither Biddle nor Clark returned all the Lewis and Clark material in his possession. In 1913, the Ordway journal and the first journal that Lewis kept on his trip down the Ohio River were discovered among the Biddle family papers by a descendant of Nicholas Biddle. More to the point, Clark retained in his own possession no fewer than five of his original journals, nearly all the maps he had made during the trip, and a large number of miscellaneous documents. It was these papers that, having come down through the Clark family, were offered for sale to the Clark Forks Collection, the maps going eventually to Yale, and the journals to the library of the Missouri Historical Society. Why didn't Clark deliver these to Jefferson in 1816? Stanley put this question to Mr. Charles van Ravenswaay, then director of the Missouri Historical Society (and now president of Old Sturbridge Village, in Massachusetts), and received the following reply:

I feel that Clark kept in his possession all of the original documents relating to the expedition which were duplicated in the material already in the possession of Jefferson and the Philosophical Society, and that he interpreted the President's order to mean that he was not to send any duplicate material because all the material which we know of that Clark did retain is, for the most part, duplicate material.

Here, it seemed, was a pivotal issue. When Jefferson referred to the Lewis and Clark papers as “the property of the government” and “the fruits of the expedition,” did he mean to include rough notes that were later duplicated in a more finished form? The government contended that he did, because he had specifically ordered Lewis to make his observations in several copies. The Hammond lawyers maintained that he did not, his interest being focused not on the physical documents as such but on the information they contained. Having touched upon this significant question, the trial then veered off in a new and unexpected direction.
dell Holmes, of the Archives staff, January developed the government's own solution to the mystery of how Hammond had come into possession of the Clark papers. Holmes traced Clark's career as a Superintendent of Indian Affairs, a post that he held from 1807 until the end of his life, including the period when he served as Territorial Governor of Missouri. After Clark's death, in 1838, the office of the St. Louis, or Central, Superintendency was farther and farther from the Indian agencies as the country settled up," Holmes explained. From 1869 until its abolition in 1878, the were situated in Lawrence, Kansas. In 1878, when it was decided to close down this superintendency, the order was carried out by John Henry Hammond, who was then serving as head of the Dakota, or Northern, Superintendency. Hammond went to Lawrence, packed up the books, papers, and other records, itemized them scrupulously, and shipped them to Washington. Among these papers, Holmes testified, were some very early maps of the Indian country of the upper Missouri—two of them maps that Lewis and Clark carried with them on the expedition. This indicated, according to James, that some Lewis and Clark records had remained with the superintendency since Clark's time, and that Hammond had had "a very close connection" with those records.

This came as something of a bombshell. Raudenbush, the First Trust Company attorney, posed an immediate objection: If the government's inference was that Clark notes in dispute had been among the records of the superintendency at Lawrence, "and were, shall we say, set aside from the records by General Hammond," then the inference was "speculative, conjectural, no foundation laid, and also irrelevant."

"The inference, I think, is quite clear that General Hammond must have come into possession of these documents at the Central Superintendency," James replied.

Needless to say, this theory infuriated Louis Starr. It came as a complete surprise to Hyde and Stanley, who sought to bar it as merely speculative and therefore inadmissible as evidence. Holmes conceded under cross-examination that no specific evidence existed to show that the Clark notes or the maps had ever been at the Lawrence office. Judge Nordbye ruled that the evidence could be received, but he added, "Whether the government will be
nings at Fort Mandan, using the rest as a basis. These three journals were sent back to Jefferson by the returning keelboat, but "the present papers were sent back by Clark wrapped in the bundle for his brother."

Although Metzendorf's theory has since been disputed by some Lewis and Clark scholars, both sides in the case now tend to agree that his testimony had a considerable influence on the final decision. As Bahrwe said recently, "You could almost tell the exact moment when Judge Nordbye began to nod his head in agreement. We were just going through the motions from then on." Hyde and Stanley also noted the judge's reaction to the Metzendorf analysis, and decided to call no more witnesses. Stanley rested his case, and the court adjourned soon afterward. "Gentlemen," Judge Nordbye said, at the conclusion, "it has been a very interesting case to hear. I wish all of you and each of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

In a trial as complex as this one, a great deal would obviously depend on the briefs filed by both sides. Since Judge Nordbye had ruled that the government bore the burden of proof in the case, the government filed the first brief. It was a clear and effective summation, which placed primary emphasis on two points: (1) that General Hammond had "obtained the documents 'without authority' from the lawful possession of the government" and (2) that even if he had not obtained them in this manner, title rested with the government because the documents "were made during the course of a military expedition, ordered and financed by the government, pursuant to orders to make the notes contained in the documents." The brief for the Hammonds went beyond mere summation. As a result of intensive new research by Mrs. Hyde, the brief was able to demonstrate that every observation made in the Clark notes after the expedition left the staging area on the Dubois River was duplicated elsewhere in the Lewis and Clark journals. The Clark notes must be judged by the measuring standards of their own time, the brief argued, and "the government's interest at that time was in the acquisition of knowledge; once having those facts, it considered supporting records of no importance."

The point was apparently well taken, for it figured rather prominently in the decision that Judge Nordbye handed down on October 8, 1956. "The situa-

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after Clark’s return, and not as of today when such original notes and data may be of great historical interest to scholars or have a real value as collector’s items,” Nordbye wrote. “The government was not concerned with such aspects of the papers in 1806. Certainly, every inference to be deduced from the evidence herein supports the contention that Captain Clark considered these notes as his personal property.”

Nordbye’s decision, by following the test of “usefulness,” neatly avoided ruling on the more basic question of whether or not the rough notes of a government servant on official assignment belong to the government. Clark’s notes at the Dubois River camp, having been written within the territory of the United States, “could not be anything more than his own personal jottings of interest to himself and Lewis before the expedition was under way.” Jefferson’s main interest was in “timely publication of all pertinent data”—not in physical possession of rough documents. And while the government’s theory of how Hammond came into possession of the notes might “seem tenable,” it was entirely conjectural, and therefore “too tenuous and speculative to provide a basis for a factual finding of title in the government.”

In conclusion, Nordbye wrote, “The court finds that the government has not sustained the burden of proof in establishing its claim to the res in controversy. Therefore, its claim of a paramount title thereto cannot be, and is not, sustained.”

Although the decision, which was upheld a year later by the Federal Court of Appeals, sounded like a complete victory for the anti-government side, it actually left Hyde feeling a little let down. “The result was a negative principle,” he said afterward. “We’d hoped to go further and establish something positively, but, as it was, the trial settled only that these particular papers did not belong to the government. If we’d lost, of course, it would have established clearly that all such papers do belong to the government, so I guess we can’t complain. But sooner or later, I imagine, the government will decide to try again.”

Within the book world, reactions ranged from relief and jubilation to profound disappointment. Some of the professional historians who had declined to associate themselves with Hyde’s cause had done so because they thought he was wrong, and the trial did nothing to alter their convictions. Princeton University’s Julian P. Boyd, a recent president of the American Historical
Association and the editor of the Jefferson papers, stated his own opinions about the case in an address to the Society of American Archivists, which was later printed in the Society’s journal. According to Boyd, Judge Nordbye’s court had become “entraped in its own faulty logic and misuse of history” to the point where the real issue in the case had “disappeared in a fog of legalism.” Aside from his strong belief that the Clark notes were in no sense private but belonged without question to the government, Boyd found it extremely regrettable that “for the first time the interests of libraries, historical societies, and individuals have been put into an unnatural, unjustified, and unfortunate opposition to what were assumed to be the hostile motives of archivists.”

The opposition still exists, unjustified or not. Dr. Bahmer said in 1964 that the National Archives felt continuing concern over the dispersal of federal records, and indicated that his office would recommend action by the Justice Department in a case involving some territorial records of New Mexico, which had become the issue in a dispute between a private dealer and the New Mexico Historical Society. Since then, the Justice Department has entered the case, which is currently awaiting trial. Whatever the outcome, the trial is not likely to further relations between private collectors and federal archivists, and it looks as though a good many curators of libraries will continue to be uneasy about the whole situation for some time to come.

The Lewis and Clark case at least established a precedent. After losing its appeal, the government decided not to take the case to the Supreme Court, and quietly bowed out. The Minnesota Historical Society and the Hammonds settled their dispute out of court, with the Society getting a mutually agreeable sum for its curatorial efforts, and Louis Starr, as unofficial trustee for his mother and her sister, getting the notes. Early in 1960, seven years after their discovery in the attic, the Yale Library announced that it had acquired the papers as a gift from Mr. Frederick W. Beinecke, who had purchased them for an undisclosed sum from Starr, and who subsequently financed their publication in an exceptionally handsome book that was put out in 1964 by the Yale University Press, edited and annotated by Professor Osgood. This conclusion must have appeared eminently satisfactory to most scholars. Even de Tocqueville, one feels, would have approved.

—CALVIN TOMKINS
THE TRAGEDY OF THE BLACKFOOT

BY WALTER McCLEFTOCK

The purpose of this monograph is to make known the results of studies during the transitional period of the Blackfoot Indians of Northern Montana. I was closely associated with them many years ago, when the old generation was still alive, and have continued to study them in the succeeding years.

They have been trying to adapt themselves to their new life, with no alternative but extinction. They face their destiny in competition with aggressive materialistic white men, who have poured into their country seeking to develop its resources and their own interests, without considering the effect upon the Indians. They are passing away or being absorbed before our eyes, overwhelmed in the struggle for existence. The curtain is already falling on this tragedy so little understood by the white race.

I first came into contact with the Blackfoot tribe by chance. An unusual train of circumstances took me into the northwest at different times. On one of these trips I went with a government pack-train—a forestry expedition—into a wild and unfrequented country of the Northern Rockies. It was then a paradise for hunting and fishing, visited only by Indians and trappers and a few hunters of big game. An Indian scout of the Blackfoot tribe was my good friend and companion. We were thrown together in our forestry work. He was the head guide. I was photographer for the expedition and helped in the forest surveys.

When our expedition was finished and the government foresters returned to civilization, I stayed with my friend the scout. We were camped on the western slope of the Rocky Mountains, in the country of the Flathead Indians, on a lovely lake surrounded by forest-covered mountains. We had a good “outfit”—saddle horses and pack horses, a comfortable Indian tipi and plenty of food. Our government work was finished, it was the beginning of summer and we were free to wander.

We journeyed eastward across the main range of the Rocky Mountains. And came finally to a large camp of the Blackfoot, on the plains beyond the foothills. Many hundreds of smoke-colored tipis, pitched in the form of a great circle more than a mile in circumference.

Through my friend, the Indian scout, I met the head men of the tribe—their head chief White Calf, also the war chiefs and medicine men. As we sat smoking a friendly pipe together, he explained that I came from the Great Father at Washington, on the benevolent
mission of protecting the forests of their country for future generations. In this way I also met Mad Wolf, an orator of renown and owner of the ancient Beaver Bundle, an important religious ceremony.

This was the beginning of a friendship, unusual between an Indian and a white man, and lasted as long as Mad Wolf lived. He adopted me as his son in a religious ceremony before a large gathering of his relatives and friends. And in a second ceremony in which he was assisted by the head chief and other prominent men, Mad Wolf opened his sacred Beaver Bundle of which he was the guardian and director. Thus they made me a member of the Blackfoot tribe and baptised me with the Indian name of A-pe-ech-eken (White Weasel Moccasin.)

I was introduced into innermost circles and became intimately associated in their family life. I made friends with Indians both old and young, chiefs and medicine men, and their women and children. I went with them on their travels and hunting expeditions; and thus came to know them well, and their wonderful country—high mountain ranges with virgin forests, lakes, swift streams, as well as boundless grass-covered prairies. I always carried cameras and note books, and made use of every opportunity for study and observation and picture records.

The old generation of Blackfoot were physically a splendid people, virile and warlike, of high intelligence, proud in their bearing, and fine looking; nor were the women less vigorous than the men. They were religious by nature and lived in a sort of dream world of myths and legends and ceremonies.

They were primitive Indians of the Stone Age, using primitive weapons and stone implements in their industries. They clung to their old customs and manner of living and to their native dances and ceremonies; they feared and mistrusted the white race and held themselves aloof.

Of that old generation was White Calf, the venerable head-chief of the tribe. He and Mad Wolf, my Indian father, lived near each other in the valley of Cutbank River. They had been friends for many years. Their families too were on intimate terms and continually visited each other. In this way I often saw the four stalwart sons of White Calf—Wolf Tail, Cross Guns, Night Gun, and Two Guns.

White Calf was then well along in years. But still active in tribal affairs and was a real father to his people. He gave freely to the poor and helped widows and orphans, but was also brave in war and of sound judgment. His most prominent trait was love for his fellow tribesmen.

Mad Wolf, my Indian father, was an orator of renown and director of an important religious ceremony. He was tall in stature, dignified in his manner, with broad and intelligent forehead, high cheek bones, keen eyes, and firm mouth. He wore his long hair falling loosely over his shoulders, an eagle feather in his back hair, and a bone whistle on his breast, with which he was accustomed to lead his religious ceremonies.

I also knew Running Crane, head-man of the band of Fat Melters, a venerable chief loved and respected throughout the tribe for his fine and just character. He was brave in war, yet of a kindly spirit, always ready to help those in trouble, and was known as a wise counsellor, one who acted as father to all the people.

Brings Down The Sun was an aged chief and medicine man of the old generation. I visited him for a week in his primitive camp and met his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. He was sort of a patriarch chieftain and reminded me in his dignity and high standing, of an upright and unapproachable justice of the supreme court. He had a fine mind and wonderful knowledge of the customs and traditions of his tribe, which he told to me in an orderly way,
like one with a trained mind. He stood high as a religious leader and was known as the greatest authority on Sun Worship.

Little Plume, the famous war chief, was also an unusual character. He was a fine type of warrior—a handsome man, dignified, deliberate in judgment and temperate in all things.

The Blackfoot were formerly a horseback people of nomads and hunters who lived in skin tipis which they carried with them, wandering in sort of annual circuit, according to the changing seasons, continually following the great herds of buffalo and other wild game, which furnished them with abundant food and skins for clothes and shelter. They lived a life of primitive wildness, and, in their native costumes of the skins of wild animals, were handsome and picturesque, almost beyond description.

They were tall in stature, aristocratic in spirit and warlike. For headdresses they wore the skins of otter, wolf, and fox about their heads, the tails hanging down behind, and war bonnets of eagle feathers; they had fine suits of soft-tanned deerskin decorated with colored quills and trimmed with black tipped ermine; and for robes the skins of buffalo, elk, and grizzly bear.

They had no written records—all lore and information were handed down from father to son. The family group was their chief educational institution. Until recently the last body of old wise men guarded jealously their traditions and knowledge of their power and religious ceremonies from white people, just as it had been preserved through centuries from their common people and those who were mentally unable to retain it.

The results of my studies of the Blackfoot tribe, were made known first in Germany, (in 1908), before the Anthropological Society of Berlin, in the Royal Ethnographical Museum, in a series of lectures in German, illustrated with photographs and Indian songs. The same year in Great Britain for the Royal Anthropological Society, Royal Institution, Royal Dublin Society. The Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh, and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

The attention given my work by the Learned Societies of Europe, and the whole hearted interest and enthusiasm of their greatest scientists, such as Sir James Frazer, Sir William Ridgeway, Professor Karl Von den Steinen and Dr. Edouard Zeller, made me realize the importance of securing all information possible from the old generation of Indians before it was too late. (They said I had opportunities for gathering from the Blackfoot tribe, a wealth of ethnological material such as could be found in few places of the entire world.)

I returned to America filled with enthusiasm to continue the work. After my travels in Europe and confinement in large cities, I longed for the broad prairies, the bracing air of the high plateau country, the fragrance of flower meadows and pine forest of the Rocky Mountains; to meet again my Indian friends and family of the old chief.

**The Tragedy of the Blackfoot**

Accordingly a few years later I left the Great Northern Railway at a small station on the prairies and went to Browning, the government agency for the Blackfoot Reservation. I met the Indian Agent and presented my credentials from Washington. He was an elderly man, an ex-army officer, recently arrived on the reservation and without experience with Indians.

At Browning I secured horses and provisions and necessary equipment. I had with me a good outfit—a small traveling tipi which the Indians gave me on a former visit, blanket-bed with canvas cover for sleeping in the open, cameras, note books, and an instriment for recording Indian songs and speeches.

Browning was then an unattractive town upon arid stretch of plain. Composed of rough and unsightly wooden buildings—the homes of government employees and administration buildings, four trading stores, a blacksmith shop, and a Catholic Church. The place was exposed to storms and blizzards, and the heavy winds which sweep over the northern prairies both summer and winter.

Not far from the town was a mission and the home of its missionary, established by the Epworth League of the Methodist Church. I arrived on Sunday, but the Protestant Church was closed, so I attended a religious service in the town conducted by a Catholic priest. In addition to their church in Browning, the Catholics had a mission with both school and church in the valley of Two Medicine River about twenty miles from the agency.

The day I arrived the Catholics were soliciting subscriptions for building a church in Browning. But they had a hard time arousing interest among the Indians, who said aptly to the priests: "Why do you want to build another place for the white man's religion, while we have near-by a church which is seldom used?" And they pointed to the empty building of the Protestant Church, which remained closed Sunday after Sunday, although the missionary was there and no one knew the reason. Indians do not understand denominational differences, nor could it be explained to their primitive minds.

On a clear morning of early June, I rode northward with my outfit across the prairies towards the home of Mad Wolf, my Indian father. I was no stranger in the country and knew my way, I jogged along towards a distant sky line, following the trail of former years with a delightful feeling of happiness and exhilaration. The prairies extended endlessly on all sides, billowing into grassy slopes and rising in low hills.
West rose the mighty frontier range of the Rocky Mountains, their high summits glistening with glaciers and snow fields. Dim on the eastern horizon where the sun was rising, were the blue outlines of the Sweet Grass Hills.

I passed familiar scenes—streams and grassy valleys, lakes and cutbanks, lonely graves on the ridges and piles of stones like sentinels on high summits, placed by Indians to mark where notable events took place.

It was a warm spring-like morning. All the birds were singing—western meadow larks, yellow throats, and lovely mountain blue birds; horned larks were fluttering and trilling, hovering like butterflies against a deep blue sky. Along the streams were thickets of willows and snowberry bushes in flower; and in marshy places blue flags, scarlet painted cups, and blue-eyed grasses.

Chief Mad Wolf lived in the northern part of the reservation on Cuthank River and in the foothill country near the mountains; where a high ridge of the Hudson Bay Divide joined the main range of the Rockies. His winter home was in a broad valley which extended to the foot of the mountains; and on both sides of the river were grass-covered uplands so vast, they looked like the open plains.

I crossed a high ridge of the prairies and from its summit looked down upon a green line of vegetation which marked the course of Cuthank River. I recognized the leafy crown of a huge cottonwood tree that rose high over the valley. In former days while riding on the plains, it always marked from a distance the place where Mad Wolf lived in the valley.

I rode down from the hill country and crossed a broad table-land which rose gradually from the river. On the face of the hills and in little ravines which led to the river, were thickets of wild roses, sarsa berry and choke cherry bushes in flower.

On that day in early June, Cuthank Valley was a lovely place. Everything was new—grass, leaves, and the scent of wild flowers. Some of the thickets had small green leaves. Buds were bursting on the big cottonwood trees. Balsam poplars had young leaves in a lovely shade of yellow green and gave forth a sweet fragrance. Wild camas was in bloom, skyblue forget-me-nots and purple geranium.

I found a well remembered trail through thickets of aspen and willows, and came to an open meadow sheltered by poplars and canopied by widespread cottonwood trees, such as are found in some of the larger valleys of the prairies.

Here Mad Wolf, my Indian father, had his winter home—a cabin built of logs for shelter from winter storms and blizzards, also corrals and low-lying sheds for his herds of horses and cattle. But in good summer weather he and his family preferred living in tipis and to camp about on the prairies.

I was not surprised to find his cabin and sheds deserted. Nor was anyone home at the near-by ranches of White Grass, the medicine man, or Morning Plume. So I forded the swift river, high from the melting of deep snows in the Rocky Mountains under a warm sun, and followed a well worn trail which led westwards towards the Rockies. I expected to find Mad Wolf and his followers camping on high ground beyond the river valley, as was their custom in the early summer, because of high water and flies and mosquitoes in the sheltered valley.

Soon a large Indian camp came into view, on a high plateau with many horses feeding on the surrounding hills. I crossed a broad plain and soon found myself among smoke-colored tipis which were pitched in confusion, with wagons and equipment scattered about. Indians came from the lodges to stare at the white man. I saw strange faces and a few that were familiar. There were exclamations of surprise and I heard a voice call: “Look! A-pe-eh-eken has come back.” (White Wessel Moccasin.)

An Indian directed me to a section, where the blood relatives of the Mad Wolf family were camped together. Here I was welcomed by my old friends, Middle Calf, Morning Plume, and Bear Child; they were of the old generation and associates of Mad Wolf. They shook hands, but kept looking at me strangely. They said: “Here
is A-pe-ech-eken." Women and children ran out from the tipis with exclamations of wonder. I heard them say: "Hai-ya! How is this! No one ever expected to see him again."

Soon came an unexpected explanation for their mysterious welcome. Before me stood the large lodge of Mad Wolf, my Indian father, with its decorations of stars and constellations. I lifted the door and entered.

Mad Wolf was not there, but his wife and daughter were home. They gazed at me strangely, as upon one returned from the dead. Neither spoke; they sat silently without a word of greeting. Then the old woman hid her face; and her daughter, whose name was Strikes On Both Sides, said in a low voice: "Mad Wolf, my father, is dead and we thought you were dead too. He told us this before he died."

Finally the old woman raised her head and looked at me; she could not believe I was still alive. Then the recollections of former years were too much for her; she bowed her head and wept; her long hair touched the ground and covered her face. After that no one spoke. There was silence so long, I left them and went outside the tipi.

It was a lovely summer day. The sky was covered with white fleecy clouds, the air over the plains and surrounding hills fairly sparkled it was so clear. In the west rose the majestic summits of the Rocky Mountains, and north the massive grass-covered ridge of the Hudson Bay Divide—an unbroken line of hills and table-lands against the horizon.

The surroundings were the same, prairies and hills and everlasting mountains, but my Indian father was gone. The camp was changed and the Indians too. Wagons and wall tents among the tipis. Tin cans and debris lying about and things in confusion; Indians of the younger generation in modern clothes.

Soon I returned to the lodge and found the wife of Mad Wolf waiting, seated upon her couch and smoking a red stone pipe as if nothing had happened. She directed me to the back of the lodge, Mad Wolf's seat in former years and the place of honor in a tipi. She smoked a few moments, then said: "When you first came into the lodge, we thought you were a spirit. Before Mad Wolf died, he told everyone you were dead. This was revealed to him in a dream and he announced it to the tribe. He said: 'A-pe-ech-eken, my white son is dead. He died fighting bravely in battle."

Then the old woman told me about the death of her husband. She said:

**DEATH OF MAD WOLF**

"Mad Wolf went to the Sand Hills in the moon when grass becomes green. Just before he died four large crosses of light appeared about the moon—the sign a great chief is going to die. He went before sunrise, on the morning of the fourth day when day was beginning to dawn.

"We did not know there was anything the matter, until he asked his friend, Middle Calf, to go for a ride on the prairie. He told Middle Calf he felt badly and thought the ride might make him better. Later that same day he felt so ill, we sent for the doctors, White Grass and Ear Rings. But they did him no good. Mad Wolf kept getting worse. Then Ear Rings, the medicine man, said to him: 'Mad Wolf, you had better make your farewell talk. Say what you want to have done with your horses and cattle and anything else; your sickness is hard to cure and it is not likely you will get well.'

"But Mad Wolf would not give up. He did not trust the white doctor at the agency and asked for a woman doctor, Snake Woman, wife of his friend, Morning Plume. She gave him a drink made out of herbs and roots. It did him no good, so we called in Three Bears, another doctor.

"Mad Wolf was restless and in pain. He could not lie still. At early dawn of the fourth day, he raised himself suddenly and said: 'I want to go into the open and breathe again the fresh air.'"
He went outside but came back quickly. He said: ‘I saw the ghost of my dead friend, Double Runner. He is outside now and says he is waiting for me. He wants me to go along with him to the Sand Hills.’ Middle Calf and his wife and Morning Plume and his wife were with me through that night.

‘Just before daybreak Mad Wolf again went outside the tipi, and we heard him talking. I ran out and found him kneeling with his face towards the rising sun and praying to Morning Star who was high in the sky; it was almost time for the sun to rise.

‘I heard Mad Wolf say: ‘Wait! I am going with you.’ No one was there, so I stood close to him and heard him say: ‘Look! There is the ghost of Double Runner. Do you not see him? He is waiting at the edge of the woods. He wants me; it is now time for me to go.’

‘Morning Plume came out and held Mad Wolf in his arms. Then Mad Wolf gave up. He was going fast. He held both my hands and I saw he was trying to say something. I leaned close and heard him whisper: ‘I love you and Morning Plume also.’

‘Those were the last words of Mad Wolf. He died, and his spirit passed across the heavens by the Wolf Trail (Milky Way), the path running north and south in the sky.’

After the old woman finished her story, there was silence for a while. Then she knocked the ashes from her pipe. She went to the back of the lodge and brought forth a parfleche, from which she took a buckskin bag decorated with beads and sacred red paint. Slowly she untied the thong, and, leaning towards the firelight produced an eagle feather, old and worn. She handed it reverently to me and said: “Mad Wolf wore this when he went to war. He always fastened it in his hair. It was his medicine feather; it had supernatural power to protect him in battle; it is sacred.” Then she said with feeling: “I want you to keep this now; Mad Wolf thought a lot of it; I always kept it safely.”

**The Cutbank Camp**

The women pitched my traveling lodge near the Mad Wolf tipi. It was small and easy to handle. My friend Big Eyes had given it to me many years before. It had picture records on the cover, painted by his wife who had a reputation as a decorator of tipis. Now it was of interest to the entire camp. They were glad to see it, for Indians do not forget. Many came—men, women, and children. They walked round and round, reading the pictures as we would a story. I heard them say: “It is the lodge of a chief, no other tipi in the camp has so many records of war and hunting and important events.”

*A rawhide case.

The design of my tipi originated in a dream of Big Eyes. The top was painted yellow to represent the heavens, in which were colored discs for the constellations of the Pleiades and Great Bear, with the Sun and Morning Star at the back.

At the bottom the earth was represented by a circle of discs for Dusty Stars (buff balls which grew in circles on the prairies were called “dusty stars”). In front and on both sides of the door were the peaks of the Rocky Mountains. Between top and bottom were the most important events in the life of Big Eyes, represented by figures of men and animals and Indian camps, painted in red, yellow, and black. There was an attack by a band of hostile Sioux, and fights with other Indian tribes.

On the north side was an interesting record—a fight with a band of grizzlies in the Rocky Mountains. Big Eyes was sticking his knife into a she-grizzly, which tore him with teeth and claws, then left him for dead and attacked his horse.

After sundown a band of young men gathered to practice songs which they would sing in the circle-camp of the sun dance. They were Hair-Parters, or Grass Dancers, an association of young men, who held their meetings through the winter months, and a public ceremony at the time of the sun dance. Snatches of their songs floated across the camp on the still evening air, accompanied by the drums which they beat steadily and in perfect rhythm.

In a near-by lodge a medicine man was doing something of a sick person. He beat upon his medicine drum, then danced about inside the fire, blowing and grunting and snorting “woof” “woof” like a bear. His power to heal came to him in a dream through the grizzly bear.

Then visitors came to my tipi. First Little Dog, the war chief, always smiling and good natured—his chief characteristic and thus shall I always remember him. Spotted Eagle, the old medicine man, came with his friend Big Moon, a leader of the Brave Dog Society. They were dressed in their best. But instead of their old time native costumes in which they gave the impression of being a superior type
of men, they now wore a modern and grotesque combination. Big Moon had a battered silk hat which was much too small with a bright red handkerchief for a band, crowning a yellow-painted face. He wore his hair in braids, white shell earrings, brown corduroy suit, and an American flag draped about his waist.

Spotted Eagle, the head medicine man of many sun dances, wore a dirty soft felt hat, soiled cotton shirt, blue cotton overalls, and a striped blanket about his waist. These incongruities were amusing, but it was depressing to see two prominent chiefs of strong mental caliber innocently making themselves so ridiculous. In these queer costumes they now appeared at all formal tribal gatherings.

Powder Bull, a prominent chief, came to my tipi together with his friend Medicine Bull, whom I remembered as one of the Weather Makers at former sun dances. They brought articles of beadwork and stayed until late, lying comfortably by my fire, gazing into the flames and watching the shadows on the tipi walls. They were good comrades, both with a sense of humor and showed keen appreciation of jokes.

Powder Bull told of a practical joke played on a prominent chief who was disliked. He said: "There was a blind man well known in the Blackfoot camp. He was sociable and liked nothing better than to be taken along when people went to visit friends. A young Indian who was fond of joking, led him one day to the lodge of the unpopular chief who had a reputation for being stingy. Food was set before him, it was gooseberries and fat, greasy and sour, nothing he liked.

They left this inhospitable place and the blind man asked to be taken to the lodge of a friend. But his guide walked him around for a while and then led him back to the same place. As soon as he entered, the blind man complained of the food he was given. He said: "That stingy old chief gave me sour stuff; it was not fit for a coyote to eat."

It was late when my Indian visitors departed and I lay alone in the tipi, wrapped comfortably in blankets, listening to the characteristic sounds of the camp. The Hair Parters were now singing and dancing with jingling bells and beating of drums. I heard the gutteral talk of Indians in near-by tipis, crying of young children, barking of dogs and neighing of horses; the roar and rushing of the river flowing swiftly from the mountains; the wind as it rose and fell, whistling among the tops of my lodge poles and humming against the ropes.

I thought of the great change that had come over the tribe in the years since I left them, the signs of decay and uncertainty for the future. What would become of this childlike, primitive people, without means of support in a cold northern climate, unsuited for agriculture because of the high altitude and short growing season, subject to drought and sudden cold in the summer and blizzards in winter; where white men had a hard time to make a living. Their wise leaders were dead—White Calf, the head chief, Mad Wolf, Running Crane, Little Plume, and the scout Siksikalkoom. They were now the wards of an unsympathetic government politically corrupt. They were surrounded by white communities which held Indians in contempt; the prey of white liquor peddlers who demoralized them, and of white traders who took advantage of them. Under these depressing influences the whole moral tone of the Indian's life was undermined.

There was now a feeling of resentment between the old generation of Indians and their children who came under the influence and teaching of white people. The young generation were adopting modern ways. They no longer spoke their native tongue and took no interest in the ancient customs and lore of their fathers. They made light of their old religion after the manner of white men and were indifferent to its preservation.

The government played into the hands of youth by removing all that was elevating of the old Indian culture, while the undesirable things of white civilization were permitted and encouraged. The sale of alcohol to Indians was against the law but not enforced. Gambling, whiskey drinking, and horse racing were freely indulged in and tended to demoralize the tribe. And the government helped widen the breach.
between the old generation and the young, by interfering with their religious ceremonies. Thus the white man deprived the Indians of their religion and helped break down their native social structure and gave them nothing to take its place. The old generation saw this. It added to their resentment against the white man and hatred of his civilization and of his ways.

In this “Cutbank Camp” where the Indians of the northern section of the reservation were assembled, they were engaged in ceremonies preparatory to the sun dance. The wife of Morning Plume was this year one of the fasting women. In the winter she had made a vow to give the ceremony with her husband in behalf of their child who was dying. She and her husband were now fulfilling this promise by fasting and prayer; while their relatives and friends joined with them in gathering beef tongues which were being consecrated as sacred food for the ceremony.

On Two Medicine River in the south, the other division of the tribe were gathered in a similar camp, giving ceremonies in behalf of their sick, and were waiting to move to the circle-camp, according to their regular ceremony of the sun dance. But there were no strong men to lead. They wavered about everything, and were like children without a leader.

Unfortunately, in this difficult period, the tribe had a new agent. Their agents were changed frequently—for political reasons, or whenever the administration at Washington changed. And as a rule agents had no previous experience with Indians; they had everything to learn. Another difficulty was the government did not have trained social workers. The agent or superintendent of a reservation needed the services of experts who were familiar with the problems confronting him and the proper methods to use. No attempt was made to administer the reservation as a business. This new agent did not understand personal contact work, nor did any of his employees. He was an elderly man, an ex-army officer, cold and hard and unapproachable, a stickler for military etiquette, and strict disciplinarian. He was stiff and did not mingle with the people, took himself seriously and was lacking in humor. Bound hand and foot by the system, he bowed to his superiors in politics, the State “machine,” and was uninterested in churches and uplift organizations.

The new agent was not in sympathy with Indians. He told me he did not want to come into personal contact. He looked down upon them as savages. He had never seen a sun dance. He did not know what it was about and had an erroneous impression. His mind was closed. He spoke of their religious ceremonies as “heathenish rites.”

There were different rumors in the camp, as to what their new “father,” as they called their agent, would allow them to do. Vows had been made in behalf of the sick and dying and it was now too late to withdraw. It was believed misfortune would come, if these vows were not fulfilled.

As a result of conflicting rumors, everything was at a standstill. One day the Indians would come to a decision as what they would do about their ceremony and the next day would change it. All this time the agent did not appear in the camp, nor had he any interviews or communication with the head men. He was serenely oblivious to the difficult situation.

Finally the head men held a council. They decided that their new “father” being a stranger in their country, might not understand as to the religious nature of the ceremony they had undertaken. They sent word they wanted to meet him and talk things over. But he sent back a curt refusal through a half-breed interpreter, that he would decide for himself and would take advice from no one.

Such was the unhappy and helpless position of this once free and warlike people, together with poverty, maladjustment, lack of nourishing food and spread of disease, principally trachoma and tuberculosis. Their spirit was broken; they had not the courage to revolt. But the lack of courtesy and consideration of their agent and his employees added to their discontent.

Nothing was more irritating to the head men than to be ignored in their own tribal affairs. But they were patient and appeared willing to surrender their most cherished cultural heritage.

In the meantime the life of the camp was going on. The old generation of Indians were happy when they could lose themselves in their religious ceremonies. Through them they could for the moment forget their troubles.

**The Crow Water Ceremony**

I went to the lodge of Bear Child, an old friend and associate of Mad Wolf, to attend the Crow Water Ceremony. This was a sort of religious society or an organized cult, which was said to have originated among the Crow Indians. It was composed of both men and women who gathered together for singing and dancing. The women did most of the singing, while the men beat drums and helped in the songs. It was believed to have power to make its members wealthy, to fulfill their desires, and to cure the sick.

It was a warm sunny day and the front of the lodge was thrown open, ready to receive the crowd of dancers. When it was time for the ceremony to begin, Bear Child carried his sacred bundle to the tipi, bending on his drum as a signal for the Indians to assemble. Many came—men, women, and children.

Bear Child, as leader, sat at the back and in the center. I stood outside, but Bear Child invited me to enter, and the Indians who were
with him in the ceremony called to me: "Yes, come join our circle and help us in the songs." Some of the members were—Arrow Head, Medicine Weasel, Bull Child, Short Robe, Takes Gun, Many Tail Feathers, and Ross White Grass.

The latter was a handsome young Indian, son of White Grass, the well known medicine man. Ross was of the younger generation and had been to school. He wore white man's clothes which were incongruous amid such primitive surroundings, especially as his forehead was painted bright yellow with four red lines, which were said to represent the gift he brought to the medicine. The drum he used in beating time with the songs had a painted design and small stones inside which rattled as he drummed. Young White Grass represented a type of the young generation which had been educated in white men's schools and returned to the reservation without employment and nothing to do. He found himself acquiring only the vices of civilization—his tribe worsted in deals with white men over lands and goods, and generally ill treated from their standpoint by the government. He felt deeply his inferiority before the domineering white men. His early trust in the "all-wise" white man turned to resentment, suspicion, and enmity. He sympathized with the old generation of Indians, their religion satisfied him and he turned back to them.

Bear Child, who was the leader of this ceremony in which Ross White Grass was taking part, was seated behind a kind of altar made of juniper, with green cottonwood branches at the head and sides. It was made by cutting away the grass, forming three sides with an open space towards the east. On the soft earth in the center was painted a yellow ball for the Sun and a blue crescent for the Moon. At the front and bending towards the west was a spray of juniper for the setting sun.

The face of Bear Child was painted yellow. In the center of his forehead was a black ball which he said represented the Thunder, and green zigzag lines across his forehead and down over his temples for lightning. His own personal medicine was the Thunder. In front of him as leader were many medicine bundles—bird skins and feathers decorated with beads and colored ribbons. They were laid in rows and were brought by members of the society. The women sat next to the men and completed the circle. They were the wives of the men who were members and were the only women present. They were dressed in bright colors, red, blue and yellow. The shoulders and backs of the waists of their dresses were covered with colored glass beads and small bells attached. They wore inlaid beaded belts studded in places with brass headed tacks. Beaded leggings and moccasins matched the patterns of their dresses.

The women did most of the singing, while the men beat drums and helped in the songs. They sang and prayed to the Sun, Moon, and Morning Star. The dances consisted of women standing in line in front of the men who sang and drummed, holding their medicines in the right hand as they danced. They extended the arm with the medicine and swayed their bodies to and fro.

After the Crow Water ceremony, I asked Little Creek, the husband of Mad Wolf's daughter, to go with me to see his mother-in-law. He said it was not proper for him to call on her under any circumstances. It was contrary to tribal custom and she would be seriously offended. He said it would be better for me to call on the old woman and find out for myself; ask her if she would not be embarrassed to meet her son-in-law face to face.

I went to the Mad Wolf lodge and found her at home. I asked if it were true she was unwilling to meet her son-in-law. She said: "The old generation taught us we should feel ashamed with our sons-in-law; it is an old custom handed down in the tribe. I had another son-in-law who once came unexpectedly into a lodge where Mad Wolf and I were attending a ceremony. He was so sorry to have caused me the humiliation of meeting him face to face, that he gave me a good bay horse to make amends. It is the custom for a son-in-law to pay." A chief named Many White Horses of the old generation sent word that he wanted to see me. So Little Creek and I went together to his lodge. He was called "Many White Horses," because his herd was composed entirely of white horses. He made a specialty of them
Many White Horses was prominent in the tribe. He was now old and gray, but he still rode horseback and looked after his large herd of white horses. He had a narrow face, prominent nose, and peaked head—unusual in an Indian. Instead of a headdress or hat, he always wore a handkerchief of bright colors.

His interest in seeing me, was to sell a rawhide lariat, which he said was of buffalo hide and very old, having been handed down from buffalo times. I looked it over carefully and found pieces of white hair showing in places on the inside. I pointed this out and to let him down easily, asked if it were made from the skin of an albino buffalo. This was to be tactful, instead of saying it was from the hide of a domestic white cow, for an albino buffalo of the old days was rare and valued highly by the Indians. Many White Horses looked at me sharply, to see if I were making fun. But I made no sign. He felt guilty, I knew from his expression. He put the lariat away and said nothing more about it.

His wife brought forth several small beaded sacks. They were used as charms by children. Worn about their necks for good luck and to ward off illness. For boys the charms were in the shape of a snake and for girls a lizard. She said they contained pieces of the umbilical cord which were taken at childbirth. Mrs. White Horses said: "The women of the white race in your country probably throw them away, but they are valuable to ward off sickness from children. You had better take some of these charms with you to your home and show white women how to use them." She had the true missionary instinct.

With Little Creek and old Morning Plume, I was on my way through the camp to visit the lodge of Last Gun of the White Calf family. We were joined by White Grass, the aged medicine man, so we all went together.

We found Last Gun at home, also his mother, Black Snake Woman, who was known as the youngest wife of the deceased head-chief White Calf.

The lodge was crowded with women and children and more were arriving. Middle Calf came with his family, and Rides Behind. The lodge was thronged to overflowing. It turned out they all came for a feast. Last Gun had just killed a steer; according to Indian custom, his relatives and friends gathered without invitation to help eat it up. They would stay until the supply was finished. This was the way in the tribe and their idea of generosity. Everything was owned in common, and a man was honored for being open handed. Everyone dreaded the stigma of being known as selfish or stingy.

Last Gun's tipi was decorated with symbolic pictures on the cover. Black Snake Woman said they bought it from Blood Indians in the north for a large herd of horses. It was known as a Painted Tipi, and its value to the family consisted in its supernatural power to ward off sickness and misfortune to the inmates. The scheme of decoration originated in the dream of Morning Chief, a Blood Indian.

There was a figure at the back which designated it as the Buffalo Rock Tipi. The top was painted black to represent a cloudy sky at night, with a cross for the Morning Star at the back. On the ears were clusters of discs for the Bunch Stars and Seven Persons (constellations of the Pleiades and Great Bear) with buffalo tails attached to the ear poles.

Under the black top were four parallel red circles for trails of the thunder or lightning. At the bottom mountain peaks were represented and a broad red band with yellow discs for Dusty Stars.

After the feast the Indians sat about the lodge fire. The men on the north side of the fire, the women across from them with the children. The men had a large red stone pipe which they passed to and fro; the women a smaller pipe which they too smoked in turn. All had plenty to eat and were light-hearted and happy. They did not talk loud and when one was speaking the others listened. Everyone was now in a good humor and stories were told.

White Grass, the old medicine man, whose nickname was "Shorty," told one after the manner of the men of the old generation. He had good standing as medicine man for many years, because of his knowledge of ceremonies and handling of sacred bundles. He was a great talker and liked to tell stories of the old days, when his tribe
were free to wander and had many famous chiefs and wise men. He spoke deliberately and in a low voice, using his hands freely in graceful gestures. He told an ancient tale about an Indian who went to live with the wolves. He said:

**The Man Who Lived With a Wolf Pack**

"There was a man who had two wives. He could not live in the camps, because his wives made him jealous. So he took them away from other men, to a lonely place far off on the prairie. He used to go every day to the summit of a hill, where he sat for a long while on a buffalo skull and watched the surrounding country. Meanwhile his wives were lonely; they had no one to talk to. They decided to make way with their husband, so they could return to the Indian camp and be with other men.

"One day when their man was off hunting, the two wives went to the hill and made a trap. They dug a deep pit and covered it over with sticks and grass, putting the buffalo skull back in its place, so their husband could not see the pit.

"That evening the man came home from his hunt. He went to his lookout on the hill and fell into the trap. When the women knew their husband was caught, they took down their lodge and moved to a big Indian camp. They pretended to mourn for their husband as dead; they said he had gone on a hunt and never came back.

"Now when the man fell into the pit, he shouted for help. He thought his wives would hear, but no one came. It happened that a gray wolf passed by. He saw the man in the pit and pitied him. He ran to the summit of a hill and howled, north, south, east and west: 'Ah-o-o-o-o-o! Ah-o-o-o-o-o-o!', until wolves and coyotes came running and badgers too. The big wolf showed them the man in the pit and told them to dig.

"Just before they came to the man, the big wolf said: 'Hold on, my children, you intend to have this man for your brother, but I want to adopt him as my son.'

"To this they all agreed, so the big wolf went into the pit and pulled the man out. Now this wolf was the leader of the pack; he was larger than all the others and had wonderful power. The man became his son and went to live with him. He wore no clothes, and long hair grew over his body. He had long claws on hands and feet and looked like a wolf.

"One time a band of Indians came into that country to hunt. They killed many buffalo by driving them over a cliff. But the wolves and coyotes came and ate their meat. The Indians set traps, but could not catch a single wolf. It was because a man was with that pack, they saw his tracks and knew he ran with the wolves.

"Then the Indians baited their traps with good meat. They hid themselves and watched. They saw a man come with the wolf pack and spring all the traps. With their lariats they roped him and took him to camp. Then some of the Indians recognized him. They said: 'This is the man who was jealous of his wives and got lost.' And the wolf-man told them his story. Then they turned him loose and he went back to live with the wolves.'"

After the story I started a discussion about the names of stars. I asked where the son of Morning Star was in the night sky; the old people called him Scarface.

Black Snake Woman said he was the large star seen in the morning above the horizon. Last Gun said she was wrong. Scarface was the star in the north (he referred to it as "the star-that-never-moves", or North Star). Middle Calf said they were both wrong; that Scarface is a small star near Morning Star.

Then White Grass, the aged medicine man was angry at their display of ignorance of Indian lore. He put an end to the story telling and further discussion by a tirade against the new order of things. He said they were all liars; they no longer knew about the old stories.
and old times; the only people who really knew about these things were all dead. He continued: "Nowadays you tell the old legends and traditions as you imagine them yourselves. You have them badly mixed; you are all wrong and no one remembers the truth."

Thus White Grass spoke his mind and relapsed into silence. He was one of the old generation who was heart-sore at the way their affairs were going to pieces. But the rest laughed and took it as a joke. It was not important; they were not interested in the old tales, which no longer counted in their lives.

With the Mad Wolf family I sat outside their tipi and saw a glorious sunset. Along the horizon in the northwest, appeared two golden streamers extending to the zenith. They were golden bands of light which slowly dissolved into many small streamers, and the entire sky from west to north faded into a golden glow.

The Indians looked in silence. Little Creek was the only one who spoke. He said: "We know that a yellow sunset is a sign of heat and red a sign of high wind. The days will now be clear and warm."

Then we went inside and gathered about the lodge fire. The old woman sat smoking her red stone pipe. Strikes On Both Sides, her daughter, by the light of the fire, was finishing a set of new lodgespins for my tipi, decorating their carved tops with the conventional red paint.

An Indian song was heard in the distance, coming nearer and nearer—a love song with wild melody. I asked about it and Little Creek said:

"A woman sang it just before she tried to kill herself. This happened on Two Medicine River where there are high cliffs. She was a married woman and unhappy. She secretly loved another than her husband. She climbed to the summit of a cliff in view of the camp. They saw her before she jumped and heard her sing this song:

'My lover is gone and I no longer care to live.'

'It happened that she wore a large robe which broke her fall and she was not injured. Her husband was a good natured man and did not cast her off. He said: 'Inasmuch as her lover is dead I won't get mad. But I don't want it to happen again.'"

Little Creek told of another Indian who tried to commit suicide, saying: "A brother of Little Dog, the war chief, had an only child who died. The father and mother went into mourning and did not eat. They kept this up until one day the man said to his wife:

'Cook some food, I am hungry. There is no use abusing ourselves any longer.'

"The woman was angry and said to her husband: 'You don't care much for our dead child if you talk that way.'

"Replied he: 'I will show you how much I care.'

"He went to a cliff overlooking the river valley and jumped. He was so badly injured he has been a cripple ever since.'

Then Little Creek said to me: "Instead of traveling about, you had better remain here with us; take a woman and settle down; trade horses and cattle like we do."

His wife Strikes On Both Sides thought this was a good joke and began to laugh. But the old woman took it seriously. She did not even smile and her only comment was: "We know you were a good friend of Mad Wolf. I always feel glad to see you in our camp, and would be lonesome if you went away."

After that nothing was said for awhile, they all sat gazing into the lodge fire. Then the old woman began rummaging among the robes and bundles at the back of the tipi. She brought forth a parfleche and took out some relics carefully put away in painted buckskin bags. She sat looking at them quietly in the dim firelight, then turned them over to me for safe keeping.

They belonged to Mad Wolf, she said; everything else was buried with him. There was a bone whistle with which he led his ceremonies. It had a small beaded bag attached with some of his teeth. There was also a pair of beaded strips which the old woman opened for me to see the pattern, and explained how she and Mad Wolf got them when they went north to visit the Blood Indians; Mad Wolf always had her keep them safely, expecting to use them some day for a fine war suit of buckskin.

Time was passing and still the head men of the camp did not know what they were going to do about giving the sun dance. They were not even sure they would be allowed to meet together in the circle-camp. It depended upon their agent and he held himself aloof. There was a rumor he had left the reservation and gone to Helena.

I was weary of waiting and asked Little Creek to take his team and wagon and go with me for a trip into the south to visit Indian friends. If the agent should allow the ceremony and the circle-camp, we could return in time.

The morning of our departure from the Cutbank camp, we were ready for an early start, but our horses were missing. It always seemed as if Indian horses had an uncanny instinct of hiding themselves the mornings they were needed for a journey. The sun was high, when they were finally driven into camp by two Indian boys, Small Otter, grandson of Mad Wolf, and his chum, Rides A Black Horse.

Strikes On Both Sides took down my traveling lodge and helped store it in the wagon, together with provisions and camp equipment.
Little Creek rode in the wagon and drove the team, while I followed on horseback. That was the way we always traveled, so I might be free to wander on the prairie and see the flora and fauna as we went along.

The day was cloudless. No haze or smoke over prairies or mountains. The air sparkling, and with brilliant sunshine. Little Creek was ahead, steering towards the southern horizon, moving slowly in the heavy Studebaker wagon towards a distant sky line. All that day the landscape was the same—prairies in all directions, yet the details were ever changing, with long hilly slopes covered with rich grass and wild flowers, rising into hills and long ridges, then flattening out and sinking into an endless plain.

Finally we came to the summit of a massive ridge higher than the surrounding country, where I had a view of the prairie for many miles and westward to the forests of the snow-covered Rockies. On the summit I waited for an Indian family with team and wagon, slowly climbing the long hill on their way north. They knew my Indian name, were friendly and wanted to talk. They had been on a visit to Sun River and were on their way home. They pointed out the landmarks of the country and the mountain peaks which they called by their Indian names. I waited until Little Creek was a mere speck in the distance, going rapidly down the southern slope into the valley of Two Medicine River. But the road was now smooth and free from stones; I overtook him by riding at a gallop, passing through a lovely prairie valley watered by a small stream. On all sides were rich meadows of grass and wild flowers—blue lupine, camas, wild roses of many shades of color.

Near Two Medicine the face of the country changed. High bluffs came into view along the river valley, pinnacles and rocks of fantastic shapes. We saw the cliffs of a piskun or buffalo trap, over which the Indians in former days drove herds of buffalo.

We descended into the valley and rode along the broad-sweeping river, through thickets of aspen and willows and beautiful groves of cottonwood.

Hidden away among the trees of the valley, was the Catholic Mission; and stretching along the green banks of the river were Indian ranches, with barbed wire fences, rude log cabins, sheds and corrals for horses and cattle. White tips were pitched by some of the cabins, which Indians of the old generation used in preference to houses.

We traveled in the cool of the evening until late; crossed a high plateau south of Two Medicine River, and came into the broad basin of Badger Creek.

We camped for the night on the grassy shore of Badger Creek, a stream of ice cold mountain water with excellent fishing. I caught a mess of native trout, which Little Creek cooked over the fire and we had them for supper, on the bank within sound of the rippling stream.

After that we put more wood on the fire and talked. There was a golden sunset and the air became chill. Little Creek after tending our horses for the night, crawled under the wagon and made his bed there.

I slept on the grassy bank of the stream, where I saw the lingering light of the sunset in the northwest, and two brilliant planets in conjunction near the horizon. They were the last thing I remembered before I fell asleep and slept dreamlessly until day began to light up the blue haze along the eastern horizon.

After a plunge in the cold water of the creek we had breakfast. Then went to visit the Old Agency near-by, a dreary and deserted place well named by the Indians "Country of the Dead."

On the plain surrounding the empty buildings were whitened bones of horses and cattle, and Indian graves deserted and forgotten, human bones and skulls scattered about, dragged far and near by wolves and coyotes.
The delapidated buildings were surrounded by a high and weather beaten stockade, after the manner of trading posts and forts in the early days for protection from Indians. The log houses and sheds were tumbling down, but the stockade was still intact; against it the sand was piled in high drifts, carried by the heavy winds which blow continually over the exposed plain. The surroundings were gloomy and terrible, the scene of starvation of the Indians, after the sudden disappearance of the buffalo, then their only means of support; also of the smallpox epidemics.

We saw the grave of Four Bears, a famous medicine man. It was marked by an old wagon box overturned upon the prairie, with the skeleton exposed to view.

Four Bears was a magician and Weather Maker and had power to clear the skies. His power for healing the sick was so wonderful that his medicines were handed down.

Little Creek told a strange story about his death. He said:

"Before Four Bears died he told his watchers that his spirit would talk with them. He died and his body was placed for burial in a wagon box according to his request.

"On the way to the grave, his followers heard a voice speaking. It came from the wagon and they believed it was the spirit of the dead Four Bears. In their haste to get away, they overturned the wagon and fled. They left the body on the prairie under the wagon box and never went back."

White Grass, the aged medicine man, stopped at our camp to make a friendly visit. He was on his way to the lodge of Drags His Robe, a prominent chief, for the purpose of conducting the ceremony of a Medicine Pipe which was being taken over.

Then another member of the old generation, Heavy Shield, arrived and sat by our camp fire, waiting for dinner. He sat quietly until Little Creek began grinding coffee. Then to our astonishment he started to go in a hurry. He forgot all about hunger in his superstitious fear of the coffee mill. A medicine man once warned him against staying any place where a coffee mill was in use. It would have an evil effect, he said, and might even cause his death. He would not wait to eat, but mounted his horse and rode away.

After our evening meal, Little Creek and I went to the home of an old warrior named Skuntaps (Strong). He lived near-by in a small log cabin with sod roof and dirt floor. He and his wife, Different Bear Woman, were both blind from trachoma, but in spite of their troubles they were both cheerful and merry and full of good humor. It was a warm summer evening, but they preferred to sit inside their ill ventilated cabin which was overheated by a stove.

Strong was a venerable man with long gray hair and clean cut Indian features. He liked to tell stories of old times, especially war experiences. I watched his kindly face as he talked; it was hard to realize he had been a famous warrior in his day.

He pointed to an eagle feather hanging on the wall. He said it was given to him by the Sun Above in a dream, while sleeping in the mountains. He always took it to war and wore it in many hard fought battles; it was his talisman and always kept him safe.

Little Creek told him I was the adopted son of Mad Wolf, so he told the following story of a war expedition he made with my Indian father.

A War Story

He said: "I was once with a war party with Mad Wolf. We came upon a camp of seventy lodges of the Flathead Indians. In the fight they got the best of us. When I saw there was small chance of escape, I made a vow to the Sun, that if I came from that fight alive, I would give a feast and ceremony to the Medicine Pipe of my brother Red Eagle. I never had a war song, but I kept shouting and fighting; and all the time made my way towards the Blackfoot lines. In this way I escaped.

We came safely back to our country. The Blackfoot camp was then on the Missouri River, near Fort Benton. I gave the promised feast to the Medicine Pipe three days after I got home—everyone who came to the lodge got a pot of savis berries and choke cherries. I took the Medicine Pipe and danced with it for three hours before the assembled people."

By this time a party of girls and men of the younger generation who were strolling about, stopped at the cabin and stood in the doorway listening. They had no respect for the old man, but talked aloud and made fun of him. They laughed at his tales of the old days and said jokingly to each other; that if Strong kept on much longer telling such big stories, they would have him arrested and put in jail. The old warrior could not withstand the ridicule of the younger generation, he became so confused and self conscious, we left him and returned to our camp.

In most of the homes we visited, the Indians were living in primitive dwellings—tents, rough shacks, and log cabins, like the poorer whites of the frontier many years ago. The tips of the old generation were better ventilated and more sanitary than the log cabins which replaced them. The houses were small, of one or two rooms and poorly constructed, ill kept and in bad repair, with leaking roofs, dirt floors and no protection from flies—sources of contagion and discomfort. They had little light and no ventilation, small windows which were never opened or perhaps no windows at all.

In cold or wet weather it was hard for the women to keep cabins
clean and in good order. The rooms were small and often congested. Whole families visited friends, according to Indian custom, and sometimes stayed indefinitely. They still had the primitive custom of eating, sitting, and sleeping on the floor. Blankets and quilts which were used at night for sleeping, became seats beside their floor beds for meals.

They lived on a restricted diet and were undernourished. It consisted mostly of meat, bread made of flour, baking powder, and water fried in deep fat, a little sugar and tea, no milk and few green vegetables.

Some never had enough to eat and others alternated between starvation and the primitive habit of gourmandizing, which was helped along by the government system of rations. They were hungry when they got their semi-monthly supply of provisions, which they and their friends quickly ate up. Whole families would eat from a common dish with their fingers. Sometimes they might have a few spoons or cups for the use of everyone, which they did not wash after using, but waited until it was time to use them again.

Under such conditions, it was difficult to escape contagion from tuberculosis and trachoma which were prevalent. They spit freely on stoves and floors in unventilated and overheated rooms. Having never been taught, they did not realize the danger of contagion. As a rule they believed that disease came from certain acts and disobedience to the rules of their medicines. In many ways the Blackfoot were like irresponsible and light-hearted children, making merry over their poverty and misfortune.

Maka, a member of the old generation, joked about his diet, because it was so poor and without variation. He and his wife had for a steady diet, tea without sugar, flour fried in fat, which they ate with syrup three times a day; they got tired of it they said, but were too poor to provide anything else.

Last Star was of middle age. He worked hard and put up some hay. But there was no market when he tried to sell it. He and his wife talked the matter over and laughed about it. It was a good joke on him, they agreed, because white men persuaded him to work hard and he got nothing for it.

Difficulties arose in Indian families throughout the reservation, because they were trying to adjust themselves to white standards. Many of the young people who returned from schools and colleges did not fit into their former life. There was a clash between the old and the new, a difficult gap between the ideals of the two generations. I heard mutteredings from old men who were heart-sore and discouraged. They were baffled by the forms of white culture which were incomprehensible to them. The inner meaning was not understood.

This was evident on my visit to the home of White Grass, the old medicine man. His son had returned from school with his hair cut short, smartly dressed in modern clothes and with modern ideas from white associates and friends. The house of White Grass was a board shack of two rooms, perhaps larger and more attractive than most Indian homes. The floor of the room we entered was covered with a carpet of bright colors. In the center of the room was a strange and incongruous sight. The old medicine man had constructed on the new carpet, a sort of altar like the one he always used in his tipi. It was made by forming sod-walls on three sides, with an open place towards the rising sun. At one side was a place for a smudge which was burning. The base of the altar was covered with light-colored earth and had painted symbols to represent Sun Dogs, the Moon, and Morning Star. It was surrounded by a circle of dried cattle chips (dried cow dung), which had a religious significance, but was hard on the new carpet.

They also bought from a store in Browning, a set of furniture—chairs and a large double bed with springs and mattress. It cost them two steers which were turned in for trade.
But it was all a waste. They did not use the chairs and the old medicine man and his wife were more comfortable sleeping in their customary place on the floor. After restless nights in the bed, they relegated it with mattress and springs to the back yard, where I saw them exposed to the weather and fast going to pieces.

This old couple had other remnants of primitive culture which they were afraid to give up. White Grass would not allow anyone to pass in front of him while smoking, lest its cause his death; while his wife was afraid to have anyone walk behind her because it might make her blind.

We left our camp on Badger Creek and went westward across the prairie under a hot summer sun—towards the country of Heart Butte and Black Tail, where prominent chiefs of the southern part of the reservation lived. My lips became swollen and sore from the alkali dust and intense heat; the horses tortured by swarms of biting flies.

A silent Indian of the old generation named Chief All Over, joined us on the way. For a long while he rode without speaking, but suddenly came to life in passing through a hill country. He asked us to go to the summit of a hill near the road; and on the top showed us a pile of stones.

He said it marked the place of a fight long ago, between a war party of Crow Indians and the Blackfoot; he was one of the warriors who took part. He told the story dramatically with many gestures in the sign language, standing bareheaded his long gray hair falling in waves over his shoulders.

It happened in 1884, he said—the last war party of Crows that came into the Blackfoot country. He told how the Crow warriors surrounded them on the summit where he now stood. The Blackfoot dug themselves in and made a brave stand. When Chief All Over finished his tale, he removed the stones and showed us the remains of Blackfoot warriors who were killed in the fight.

We left the hill and came into Heart Butte, the sub-agency of the reservation, where there was a trading store, agency buildings, and a farmer in charge for the government. We visited a saw mill where Indians of the younger generation were at work. They gave us a warm welcome and showed astonishment at my arrival; the report of my death had been spread throughout the reservation, because of Mad Wolf’s dream before he died.

We met Mountain Chief and his wife and family. He was going to conduct a ceremony that evening at the lodge of Big Beaver, and asked us to join them. It was important for him to be on hand, he said, because he had been paid in advance for his services as leader.

As we rode along, Mountain Chief told about the elopement of one of his sons with a young girl named Spotted Forehead, daughter

of Bull Plume, a Blood Indian from the north, who was visiting with his family near Heart Butte. Mountain Chief favored the match although it was a runaway. He was glad his son had secured a girl of good family for a wife. His boy was wild and she might help him to settle down. But Bull Plume felt bitterly towards the boy who he thought had stolen his daughter; it was no marriage and his daughter was disgraced.

Towards sunset we entered a lovely well-watered valley, and came to a lake where a group of white Indian tipis stood. Mountain Chief pointed out the large lodge of Big Beaver where the ceremony would take place; it was near the shore with the lodges of Iron Eater and Calf Robe.

Mountain Chief placed his tipi near that of Big Beaver, while we camped close to Mountain Chief. But this time the sun was setting and the air became suddenly cool. I stretched out on the soft prairie grass, which felt good after our long ride in the heat, and watched the Indians in their camp life.

Many horses were feeding in the meadows; and on the surrounding hills boys were rounding up the herds and driving them to water; snatches of their wild Indian songs, came across the valley on the still evening air. Two young men galloped past riding the same horse and singing a wolf song. They were off for a fast ride over the prairie to visit their sweethearts.

Then a band of Cree Indians arrived from the south. They were returning to their home in the north, after a visit with Blackfoot relatives and friends. Soon their camp fires were burning on the shore of the lake, and a party of young Cree girls strolled over to see our camp and to stare at the strange white man.

**CEREMONY OF THE SWEAT LODGE**

In the meantime the wife of Mountain Chief was busy with their lodge, stacking the poles and fitting the cover, building the fire and preparing the evening meal, while her husband was occupied getting ready for the ceremony. He stripped himself, brought forth paints and decorated his face and body; built a smudge and burned sweet grass for purification and chanted religious songs. On rising ground near the lodge of Big Beaver, he constructed the framework of a sweat lodge, by weaving together willow sticks in the form of an ellipse; gathered round stones for heating and built a fire. A woman with children hanging to her skirts dragged in a hide filled with cattle chips for the fire, because wood was hard to find on the prairie. After sundown Indians arrived to attend the ceremony; and the men who were to enter the sweat lodge appeared from their tipis. They were entirely stripped, with blankets about them, which would be discarded on entering.
I had my camera ready for pictures, but Big Beaver and Iron Eater objected; they were afraid it might bring them bad luck. My friends Mountain Chief and Shoots In The Air, a tribal judge and man of influence, arrived just in time. They laughed at the fears of the others; and the venerable judge was interested to such an extent, that he suggested a position for my camera. Then kneaded for me to take him beside the sweat lodge, smoking his pipe which he handed inside for the inmates to smoke.

Four men entered for the ceremony. They spouted water on the hot stones, and kept wetting their hair. Because of steam rising from the stones, the bathers kept their heads close to the ground and chanted and prayed to the Sun, Moon, and Morning Star. After an hour they came out and with shouts plunged into the lake for a reaction.

That night the air was so mild I slept outside. Heavy clouds, black and threatening, gathered suddenly over the Rockies; the air became sultry and warm. But there was only a vivid display of lightning with heavy thunder; then the clouds rolled away and the stars came out.

Next morning the inmates of Mountain Chief’s lodge were atir before sunrise, preparing to break camp. But in spite of his haste, Mountain Chief delayed to tell me Indian lore. Said he: “People who have died and are unhappy in the spirit world, take the form of owls and come back to their old haunts. They travel at night and dread the sunlight, because their deeds were evil. They like to stay near forests and streams. They often come suddenly from trees and frighten horses. The worst kind of ghosts are the ‘haunting spirits.’ People are always afraid of them. They prowl around at night and try to harm people. They are the ones who use ghost arrows which bring sickness and death. Outside in the dark they shoot at people. They paralyze the limbs of people and make their faces crooked. I have heard ghosts make a noise at night by striking the lodge-poles. Sometimes they make a queer sound like whistling, overhead in the smoke-hole of the tipi, and sometimes they laugh. But they never come inside if a fire is burning; and they are always afraid of burning hair.”

Mountain Chief then told a strange tale of a friendly Medicine Grizzly, which came to a warrior named Calf Robe. He was wounded in a fight with Snake Indians far away in the south and left behind to die. The supernatural grizzly carried the injured warrior on his broad back, until he came to the Blackfoot camp on the Marias River, then mysteriously disappeared. Calf Robe lived many years a cripple. He often told the story of his wonderful escape and it was believed throughout the tribe.

The dignified judge, Shoots In The Air, was an interested listener together with his wife, Day Robe, and their daughter, Night In The Lodge. Every now and then the judge would interrupt with corrections, which were accepted with good grace by Mountain Chief.

Then Mountain Chief and his family left in a hurry. Soon the other lodges were taken down and all started north on important business. This was characteristic of the head-men of the tribe. They were restless and energetic, happier when on the move and usually occupied with affairs.

Little Creek and I rode eastward over the prairie, camping for the night near a pigskin, which Indians of former days used in their buffalo hunts before they had firearms. They drove the herds over a perpendicular cliff, and caught the wounded buffalo in a corral at the foot. Buffalo bones covered the ground at the foot. We found arrow points and stone weapons, also signs of an old camp, where the lodges of those ancient hunters once stood.

In a river valley, we found the lodge of Spotted Eagle, the medicine man. He had come from the agency at Browning and was resting after his journey, lying naked on his couch, except for a loin-cloth. He was a large Indian with an imposing manner. In his youth he must have been fine looking. His wife was homely. But not seem possible she could be the mother of their two pretty daughters. Little Creek, my guide, was on intimate terms with this family.

Spotted Eagle began a tirade against the store keepers at the agency, because they were close and hard-fisted. He took horses to sell and he could get nothing for them. But Spotted Eagle had such a
keen sense of humor, he did not let dealings with white men weigh upon his spirits. He interspersed his talk about the traders with funny stories, telling things with perfect freedom, which are not often talked about by white men. Whenever he cracked a joke, he looked at me and made grimaces; and was greatly pleased when I laughed. If anything startled him he gave an odd cry, made ridiculous by a peculiar intonation.

By this time a storm from the Rockies broke suddenly over the camp, with a gale of wind which violently shook the tipi. The insideline was torn loose and fell upon the old medicine man. He gave his customary cry and making humorous remarks about the storm, tried to protect himself from a deluge of cold rain which ran down the lodge poles and fell upon his naked body.

While we were waiting for the weather to clear, Spotted Eagle told stories. He began with Napi (Old Man), a strange and mythical character. Spotted Eagle liked to tell about the marvellous adventures of Old Man, because of his keen sense of humor, also because they were handed down from the ancients. He told how Old Man in his wanderings first induced men and women to mate, how he started the custom of taking scalps and his strange adventures with birds and wild animals with whom he was able to converse.

In the mean time a Blood Indian from the north, named Big Smoke, arrived and pitched his small traveling tipi. His daughter was married among the Blackfoot and he was on his way to visit her. He entered the lodge and sitting himself near Spotted Eagle, listened with interest to the story telling.

Big Smoke had a peculiar way of dressing his hair—in the old style. He wore it hanging down straight and stiff and in disorder over his forehead and left eye, as described by Prince Maximilian in his early travels.

The men of the old generation of Blackfoot admired long hair and spent a great deal of time in brushing and caring for it. They used charms to increase its length.

It was dark when Little Creek and I left the lodge of Spotted Eagle and returned to our camp under the cottonwoods. The sky was still overcast after the storm; through the branches of the big trees I saw brilliant flashes of lightning. We stretched a canvas cover over our beds and turned in to keep dry. Little Creek told of a large rock not far from camp, a favorite place for lightning to strike. It had been struck so often Indians were afraid to camp in that vicinity.

When I woke next morning the storm had passed and the sky had cleared. I went for an early swim in the cold water of the river. Farther down I heard a loud splashing. It was the wife of Spotted

The Tragedy of the Blackfoot

Eagle taking her morning bath. Then a crowd of Indian boys came for a swim, and finally Spotted Eagle himself.

He stopped at our camp, clad only in a blanket and carrying an eagle wing fan. Our wagon was packed and we were ready to start. I gave him sweet crackers which he took; then made a motion as if to throw them into the brush. But it was his idea of humor and intended for a joke; he winked at me, made a comical face and ate them with relish.

He told how he once fell in with a company of soldiers and traveled with them many days across the prairies; he never came so near starving; they were generous and gave him plenty of food, but it was only white man's food; it was no good and did not satisfy him; he longed for pemmican and dried meat.

In paring, Spotted Eagle asked me to send him the skin of a bird of bright plumage. "Something red all over," he said; it would be "strong medicine" and a great help in his ceremonies.

His last words as we rode away were: "Don't forget to send the red medicine bird." The last I saw of him, he was seated grandly in the midst of his possessions, all the work being done by his wife and two pretty daughters. I afterwards sent him a bird skin bought in a millinery store for the decoration of hats of white women.

On our way north, Little Creek pointed to a hill where Ear Rings, a well known doctor, was found dead; and told this strange tale about his death:

The Death of Ear Rings

"When White Calf, our head-chief died of pneumonia in Washington, his body was embalmed and brought back to the Blackfoot Reservation. It lay in Browning and was viewed by many Indians. With them came Ear Rings, a friend and associate of White Calf for many years.

Ear Rings stood and gazed at the body, then spoke to the Indians, saying:

'When I looked upon the face of White Calf he smiled. Now I know he is going to take me with him to the Spirit World. Before the sun again rises I shall be dead.'

'These were the last words of Ear Rings. No one ever saw him alive after that. He mounted his horse and rode away from the agency. He did not return home, so his son Wolf Chief went to look for him. He found the saddle horse of Ear Rings wandering on the prairie without a rider; and on the following day the body of his father was discovered on the summit of that hill. No one knows what killed him. He died facing the Rocky Mountains, with
his head towards the rising sun. Two piles of stones mark the place where his body lay.”

We arrived at the Indian camp on Cutbank River, and found the people still in doubt whether their agent would allow them to give the sun dance. By this time they were losing interest, because of the uncertainty of having the circle-camp.

The women straightway pitched my traveling lodge close to the tipi of the Mad Wolf family. I did not ask them to do this, and it was not the custom for Indians to serve anyone. But it was their idea of hospitality. They wanted to do the right thing by me before the tribe.

They brought a fresh pail of water and piled firewood beside my door. Takes In The Night, a daughter of Little Creek, brought me a present of a miniature squaw saddle, with a little shield and medicine cases attached. Her mother, Strikes On Both Sides, came with a bunch of strawberry plants covered with ripe fruit which she gathered in a meadow. They were all hospitable and on the lookout to do something kind.

Little Creek had some relics from the ancient Beaver Bundle of Mad Wolf. They had been replaced in the Bundle and were no longer used in the ceremony. He asked me to look them over, and, surrounded by the Mad Wolf family we examined them. I found the hoofs of a young antelope, skins of a prairie dog, squirrel, mallard duck, eagle feathers, buffalo snow, bird wings, and pieces of bone whistles.

Then Little Creek spoke for the family and asked me to take charge of these relics. He said I should place them in the medicine case of my Iniskim, which they had given me. I could hang them all together on a tripod behind my tipi in the conventional way. They agreed this was the best thing to do. It would bring me greater power and give protection from illness and misfortune.

Then the head men of the camp held another council and decided to give the sun dance. Their agent was still away and it was too late to withdraw from the ceremony. Women had made vows to the Sun; it might bring death and misfortune if their vows were not carried out. Better to risk the disapproval of a new agent than stop the ceremony now; there was nothing harmful in the ceremony; it was for the benefit of the tribe, to help them lead better lives and to restore to health those who were ill.

So it was agreed among the leaders to go ahead. The ceremony of the tongues was finished in haste, and a messenger sent to the southern division of the tribe which was camped on Two Medicine, to move on the following day. They would all gather on the broad plain south of the agency. There the sun dance would take place.

Early next morning I was wakened by sounds of confusion—

herds of horses driven into camp, shouting of herdsmen, barking of dogs, and neighing of horses. I dressed and went out from the lodge. The sun had not risen. Along the horizon was a supernatural light—a glow of pale yellow, mingled with touches of red and gold. It spread upwards towards the zenith; the glow grew stronger and the sun rose. Its bright rays of yellow light streamed across the plain, and touched the snow-capped summits of the Rocky Mountains.

Soon a change came over the camp. Places where tips had stood the night before were vacant now. In other places were stacks of bare poles, women were pulling away lodge covers which were flapping in the wind.

Now the camp was full of horses, some tied to wagons, others wandering loose and busily feeding. All about were piles of robes and blankets, bundles, saddles, and cooking utensils; women gathering their property together, tying up and packing on horses. Noise and confusion. Colts screaming shrilly, mares neighing, camp dogs excited and barking, howling, yelping. Boys shouting and whooping, running races, wrestling. Anxious mothers, worried by the labor of packing and looking after children and horses, calling to people in shrill voices; the crying of frightened and angry babies.

A line of wagons began to form, headed south, towards the river valley and the direction they would move to the circle-camp. Soon there was a long line of Indians in wagons piled with household goods. The old and middle aged and children were in the lead in wagons, and behind them came a throng of young men riding their best horses.

The strong voice of the herald was still heard as he rode about the camp urging the people on, saying: “Listen! Everybody hurry and

Head of the Procession, On the Way to the Sun Dance.
The Fainting Woman and Her Travois.
get ready. Now we are going to start. So the chiefs have ordered.” He repeated this over and over.

Now the last families were nearly ready. They were packing furiously, ashamed to be the last. The women had a sort of pride in being ready with the others—a superstitious fear of being left.

White Grass, the aged medicine man, was in the lead. He carried a Sacred Lance wrapped in an elk-skin and attached to a pole. With him were the chief’s Middle Calf and Bear Child. They followed no road, but took a short route through the hills, towards the big flat near the agency, the meeting place agreed upon for the circle-camp.

I joined this strange procession and rode with the Mad Wolf family where I belonged. But I kept moving along the line stopping now and then to chat with friends. They liked to hear me speak in the Blackfoot tongue. A joke was always greeted with smiles and laughter. They had an unfailing sense of humor and liked any kind of repartee; it was the spirit that counted. No matter how depressed an Indian might feel, bantering always brought a laugh, and they rattled off something foolish in reply.

This journey to the circle-camp was an impressive occasion and to me deeply moving; traveling with that long line of Indians, slowly over the prairies on their way to the sun dance, their greatest ceremony—and I believed it would be the last. A strange scene for this modern age—those primitive children of nature, stone men, a last remnant of our aborigines, soon to disappear forever and be forgotten, submerged by the onrush of a materialistic civilization.

I watched their eager, rapt faces. Forgetful for the moment of their agent and white men; oblivious to anything but the circle-camp which brought associations dear to the Indian heart—old friends, feasting and social dances, singing and religious ceremonies.

We passed through a grassy valley and climbed to the summit of a ridge. Here we had our first view of the big camp distant on the prairie—already many tipis were there and the great circle was being formed.

As soon as the Indians caught sight of the camp, they began traveling faster down the long slope. Along the line they shouted to each other with excitement—nothing escaped them, the Painted Tipis of head men, where different bands were camped, what families had arrived, and where each family belonged in the circle.

In the line was a dilapidated vehicle drawn by an aged horse, blind, and lame, hobbling painfully on three legs, with head down and eyes closed. Three aged women rode in the wagon, laughing and chattering, as excited as young girls, eager to keep up with the procession and to get quickly to the big camp. They hated being left, but the line moved too fast for them.

During the first day of the big camp there was confusion. The Indians from the north and the south did not come in two divisions as in former years when their strong leaders were alive. This time they kept straggling in, and many families were late.

Vacant places were in the camp-circle which were depressing to see. They were mostly on the north side, where prominent men had died. The families of White Calf, Mad Wolf, Bear Paw, Double Runner, Siksikaikoa, the scout, and many others were in mourning. They did not join the circle, but camped outside in the hills. They held themselves aloof and took no part in the ceremonies; it was not proper for them to be with the crowd. The bands of Small Robes and Worm People were not represented by any families; all of them were dead.

On my arrival, there was a council of the head men of the camp, as to a suitable place for my lodge.—Curly Bear of the band of Buffalo Chips, Bear Chief of the Don’t Laughs, Big Moon of the All Chiefs, Bull Calf of the Bloods, White Man of the Lone Eaters, and Wades In Water of the Grease Melters. They said my tipi should be on the inside-circle among the chiefs.

In former years when Mad Wolf, my Indian father, was alive, there was no question where I belonged. I always went with his band. Now he was gone; his family were in mourning and not included in the circle. The head men of the south realized this and wanted me to camp with them. I had many friends in the south and decided to accept; I wanted to get to know them better. This was the cause of trouble; I was too popular in the camp.

They pitched my tipi on the south side, in a prominent place on the inside-circle next to the Black Buffalo Tipi—where the best families were. Now I was more prominent than ever.

Near-by were White Man in the Striped Tipi, Big Moon in the Bald Eagle Tipi, Mountain Chief, Calf Robe, and Oneota—all old friends; and they were outspoken in their expressions of good will and pleasure at my joining them.

An interesting feature of this camp-circle was a band of visiting Blood Indians from the north, who came to fulfill vows made to the Sun for people who were ill. They too were on the inner-circle and had a group of Snake Painted Tipis, which had black tops to represent a cloudy sky at night, with discs for constellations on both ears and serpents in color round the center.

My lodge was so close to Cold Body and Wolverine I could hear everything. Cold Body was dying of tuberculosis and had a cough. It was so bad he could not sleep. But his son snored contentedly through the night.

I was so interested in the camp life, I did not want to sleep, but lay awake listening to all that was going on. It was so different
from life in civilization I wanted to record everything. The striking extremes of wealth and poverty so evident in large cities were absent, but the lights and shadows of domestic joy and sorrow, of health and sickness, of pathos and humor, were all present in this Indian camp, with even sharper contrasts, because of the close association of the people.

In the lodge of Wolverine, his children were restless and a young baby cried fretfully. The mother rocked it in a little hammock cradle fastened to the lodge poles, singing an old cradle song: “Come wolf eat this baby if he don’t sleep.”

Beyond Wolverine, was the lodge of Okyio, a poor young man. He had one wife and their only child was dying. It grew worse in the night and a doctor came. I heard the monotonous beating of his medicine drum, not loud but very soft and regular. It had a solemn sound in the night, and continued until I saw the first sign of light in the sky.

When day was beginning to dawn, the drum of the medicine man stopped; and I knew the child had died. For a while there was stillness, not a dog barked. Then I heard the sobbing of the young mother, and soon it became a mournful wail.

With the day came a light breeze from the mountains, making a humming sound against the ropes of my lodge and the ears at the top flapped gently in the changing wind. Through the smoke-hole I saw two morning stars in the sky—bright and beautiful in the clear air of that high altitude. On the ground sounded the quick thud of horse-hoofs. It was the day herder crossing the meadow towards the hills to watch the horse herds.

Then I heard the strong voice of Elk Horn, the herald, as he rode through camp and made announcements for the day. People began talking in near-by lodges and women were preparing the morning meal.

**A Child’s Burial**

Soon after sunrise the women of neighboring lodges went to the tipi of Okyio to help with the body. A small box was secured, the dead child was washed and dressed, wild flowers of the prairie placed in its hands and on its breast. Many Indians came to the funeral. That afternoon the solemn procession passed my tipi, going to the summit of a lonely ridge where the body was placed. The young father and mother walked close to the little box, weeping and with heads bowed.

In the meantime, the warriors of the camp were assembling, dressed in fine costumes, with feathers and war paint. They gave horseback dances and sham battles. They galloped through the camp with shrill cries, in imitation of war parties of former days. Then the society of Brave Dogs came forth from their lodges and marched and danced and assembled to feast at the tipis of prominent chiefs.

Again I heard the continuous drumming of a doctor at work on a boy who was dying. He was the grandson of Little Plume, the famous war chief. In his behalf a woman relative had made a vow to give the sun dance. But the agent had interfered and now the boy was dying; it caused a superstitious fear.

Big Plume, the medicine man, also was dying. I heard a strange tale as to the cause of his illness; it shows the fear Indians have of disobeying the rules of their medicine bundles.

Big Plume found an old flageolet or reed pipe in a field and took it home, not knowing anything was wrong. He suddenly became ill. They could not tell what was the matter, until some one examined the place where the flageolet was found and discovered an old grave. Now Big Plume as the owner of a Medicine Pipe should not use anything that belonged to the dead. The flageolet he had found was therefore taboo. It was said to be the cause of his illness—the penalty for his disobedience.

There were signs in the sky that bad weather was coming—heavy clouds enveloped the mountains and spread over the plains. I made ready my tipi for a blow from the north, roping it to the ground on the north side, with lariat noosed round the tops of the lodge poles and fastened to strongly driven stakes. I adjusted the ears at the top and drove the pegs into the ground, so my lodge would not be overturned by the wind.

That night a heavy gale with rain and sleet came straight from the north and beat violently against the tipi. But it held fast. I built a wood fire to last through the night and went to bed.

It was not a night for sleep. I heard the wailing and crying of women, mourning for their dead. It came from all sides, distinctly through the storm. They kept it up through the night. Many families were in mourning and illness widespread. It added to the gloom of the Indians, already depressed by the ban placed upon their religious ceremonies by the agent.

In the middle of the night, Mountain Chief whose tipi was near mine, began a sort of chant in a strong voice to drive away the storm. Then his women joined in, with a chorus in a minor key. This was to add power to their prayers. They kept up this chanting and singing until day began to dawn.

Their prayers were answered later in the morning, when the
cloud banks rose over the Rocky Mountain chain and the sun was soon shining in a clear sky.

Some of the women who were in mourning, were accustomed to go daily at sunrise and sunset to the lonely hills outside the camp, to weep and gash themselves with knives. They did this to excite the pity of the Great Spirit; to show their indifference to pain and their high regard for the dead. As a sign of deep mourning, they might cut off a finger, generally the first joint of the small finger. People in mourning wore old clothes and gave up painting themselves and ornaments. They kept away from public gatherings, dances, and religious ceremonies. When a prominent chief died, as in the cases of White Calf and Mad Wolf, the family lodge was placed outside the circle-camp, among the hills and at a distance from the others.

With their strong leaders dead and no one to restrain, there was confusion in the big camp. Young men of the new generation, eager for excitement rode wildly at night. For a practical joke, they lassoed the small tipi of an old woman; she lived alone and had no one to defend her. They threw a rope round the top of her lodge, the other end fastened to the horn of a saddle. The rider rode at a gallop and jerked the lodge from its foundations, leaving the old woman bewildered in bed, exposed to public view, surrounded by all of her possessions.

They played a joke on an unpopular chief, by taking a colt and pushed it into his lodge at night. Inside it made havoc in the dark, kicking and squealing and racing about.

Bad whiskey was freely distributed by white peddlers. It was against the law to sell whiskey to Indians, but there was no sign of enforcement.

The young generation were beyond control. They were returning to their families and primitive conditions, coming from distant schools and colleges. Now they had short hair, modern clothes, and manners strange. At first they made a fight and failed, as anyone would fail, without employment and exposed to the ridicule of families and friends. Quickly disillusioned, their education became a bitterness. They deteriorated morally and physically. White men took away their old culture and gave nothing to take its place.

The government failed to understand and take a sympathetic attitude towards Indian ways. No attempt was made to use what was sound and good in Indian ethics and their religion.

The agent of the Blackfoot Reservation was ignorant of Indian life and customs; and he had no experts to advise him. His assistants were incompetent to handle the difficult situation.

From the start I was at home in this big Indian camp. I was identified with the head men and everyone was friendly. They made me feel as if I belonged there and were one of them. I had access to all dances and ceremonies, and had opportunities to make picture records that would be of great value—of ceremonies that had never been photographed and would soon vanish forever.

But one can not be sure of anything when dealing with a primitive people. Suddenly a subtle change took place which I did not realize at first. There was jealousy and dissent within the tribe.

The camp was organized according to bands of blood relatives who camped under the head men of different bands. They spoke of families as belonging to the north and south sides of camp.

I properly belonged with the north people. They were formerly on top when their leaders were alive. But the deaths of their head men was a blow to their prestige. Now they were in mourning and depressed. They no longer held the leadership and seemed to have developed a sort of inferiority complex. They realized their lowered prestige, and were jealous of the increasing power and importance of the south people.

Then the Indians of the south side became jealous and were irritated, because I returned to visit friends on the north side. I did this openly and without suspicion, intent on my work and without thought of trouble. I felt friendly towards all and knew no distinction between the people of the north and those of the south.

The trouble was aggravated by the appearance of a half-breed grocer, educated at Carlisle School in the east. He spoke English fluently, and followed corrupt ideas he got from white men by demanding $300.00, or he would put me out of business. I refused and told of a letter from the Indian Commissioner at Washington granting permission. Out of spite he spread reports among the Indians that I made a lot of money through my work among them and aroused suspicion. Here a new and modern element entered into my relations with the tribe.

The circle-camp was a public place and a hive of gossip. Everyone could see what was going on. Whenever I crossed the camp and visited a lodge, it was gossiped about. If I took a picture or gave a present it was known. And everything was exaggerated.

For instance Wolf Plume and his wife who lived on the south side were old friends. She bragged to a woman of the north that I gave her a handsome present; and that woman, also of prominent family, the wife of Heavy Breast, not to be outdone by her rival, stretched things. She boasted of my fine presents to her and what I was doing for the north families. She wanted to prove that I thought more highly of her and her relatives. This had a bad effect upon the wife of Wolf Plume. Heretofore she was pleased with the present I gave her; now she was jealous, dissatisfied and angry. She no longer felt preferred above the others.
Almost A Ducking

This trouble among the women had an unexpected climax. In the early morning I went to the lake for pictures of women and children coming with their water pails and dogs. First I took pictures of Morning Eagle, a famous old warrior, picketing his favorite war horse on the lake shore. Then came some women with children and dogs and buckets. It was an interesting group. I had no thought of trouble; even when I saw them whispering together in a mysterious way.

Suddenly they made a rush and tried to seize my cameras. I was taken by surprise and at a disadvantage for such an onslaught, having many things to look out for—two cameras, a tripod, cases of films and glass plates. It would be a tragedy to have my cameras damaged. With both hands filled I was in a predicament. They tried to drag me to the lake. I threatened, but it was of no avail. Then I yielded as a ruse, and they thought they were going to duck me without trouble. Quickly I wrenched loose and got away.

This incident was a shock to my feeling of security in the camp. A change had come over the tribe. Nothing like this had happened before, nor would it have happened when their old leaders were in power.

The ring leader of the women was the youngest wife of a prominent man on the north side. Later I met her face to face when visiting her husband at their tipi. She was embarrassed, uncertain what I might do. But I made no sign. She tried to make amends by presenting me with a dress tobacco pouch, which I accepted and did not allude to the affair.

Afterwards I heard a strange report that was being circulated among the Indian women about picture taking—that a white man with a camera could see through their clothes. It was said to have been started by an Indian who was jealous of a favorite wife; she was being photographed too frequently by a white man. Her husband said this white man liked to look at her through his camera, because he saw her without clothes.

I went to the lodge of Eagle Plume to attend the ceremony of a Medicine Necklace, which was being transferred in behalf of someone who was ill. In the ceremony a smudge was made of sweet grass on a hot coal; songs were sung through which the supernatural power of the Necklace was transferred to its new owner. The former owner was paid a horse for the charm, and gave up all benefits to be derived from it. The important part of the transfer of power was in the songs.

I never tired of watching these Indians in their camp life, night and day there was generally something going on. They were so different from white people—as if they belonged to another world. That same morning, which was always the quietest time when few people were stirring, I saw a strangely assorted pair walk through the camp—Petanesta, an aged medicine man of the old generation, and a pretty young girl of sixteen.

Crabbed Age And Youth

He bent over her lover like and talked earnestly. In contrast to his ardent manner, the girl walked meekly with head down. They passed near and I heard the old man talking in a wheedling, coaxing tone. She was pretty and fresh looking with a slender graceful figure.

Closely following the old medicine man and his sweetheart came two prominent men, Three Bears and Black Weasel. Something unusual was taking place. Everyone turned to look and people came from the lodges.

Petanesta took the girl to his own tipi and disappeared inside, followed by Three Bears and Black Weasel. He needed the moral support of the two chiefs to get her back. She was his wife and I found out how it happened.

The old medicine man had fallen in love with this young girl who did not return his affection. The only way he could marry her was through his prominence in the tribe. The girl had a sweetheart of her own age and wanted to marry him. But she had little to say in her choice of a husband. Her parents decided for her. They believed it was for her material good and their own happiness to have her marry this prominent man who could provide well for her.

Soon the girl tired of her aged husband and longed for the young lover from whom she was separated. Unluckily for the fortunes of the medicine man he went for a visit to the Flathead Indians. While he was gone, the girl announced she was going on a visit to the home of her mother. But instead ran off with her lover. Nothing was known about it, until the old medicine man returned from his visit and found his young wife gone. In vain he sought her; he was jealous and mourned her deeply. He met her in the circle-camp for the first time, and with the help of two prominent chiefs, persuaded her to return to his tipi.

The Tragedy Of The Sun Dance

That day came a messenger from the agency. He was a half-breed interpreter of no standing with white men or Indians. The agent was absent from the reservation and his office clerk sent the message; that they might have horse racing and games for two more
days, but the government would not allow them to give religious ceremonies; after two days they must break camp and return to their homes.

Then Elk Horn, the herald, rode through the camp and called upon the Indians to build the sun lodge. He shouted in a powerful voice:

"Men and women! Come forth and help! Let everyone do their share to keep up our worship of the Sun. You are no longer helpers, but sit idly in your lodges and seem willing to abandon all of our old religious customs. While we live we should keep up our religion. It is bad to care only for horse racing, gambling, and whiskey of the white men."

But the entreaty of the old herald did not stir the Indians to action. Everyone was afraid to take the lead, lest they be thrown into jail at the agency. The heavy girders and poles and piles of green branches still lay unused in the center of the camp-circle. Nothing was being done—not even post holes were dug—all were afraid of the agent.

That evening there was a fine sunset, the third day of the big camp. Over the Rockies the sky was golden, with many tints in purple and sombre red. In the thickets of the river valley many birds were singing,—white crowns, thrushes, and meadow larks. Soon the lodges of the big circle became illuminated by bright inside-fires, until the camp looked like a enormous group of colored lanterns. Then a full moon rose over the prairies and flooded the camp with its light. Lodges with their crowns of tapering poles stood out in sharp relief against the burnished eastern sky.

In spite of the ban placed on their worship by the United States Government, a quiet ceremony took place that night in the sacred lodge. I heard the solemn chanting of many voices in unison, and saw women passing silently in and out bearing mysterious looking bundles.

Round the outside of the lodge green branches were placed—the sign an important ceremony of the sun dance was taking place and only those taking part were expected. But I had friends there and entered. By the dim light of the fire, I saw a circle of seven men and fourteen women, seated silently with heads bowed in prayer. Spotted Eagle, the head medicine man, was at the back, the place of honor and importance. He was acting as advisor to the givers of the sun dance.

There were also present, Old Chief, Big Moon, Bull Plume, Red Plume, Don't Go Out, and Dog Skin. To the right of the medicine man was the Fasting Woman, she who had made the vow and was the object of interest through the ceremony, all the serious and solemn aspects of the sun dance centered about her.

Rattles were handed to me with a request that I help them in the ceremony, which I did by joining in the chants and beating time with the rattles. No one spoke loud; everyone whispered. All who came entered quietly and reverently. That night throughout the big camp no noise was allowed, because of the fasting woman and her ceremony.

Some of the men prayed and there was a long prayer by the wife of Bull Plume, after which a case of tongues was opened and pieces of the consecrated food passed around. Before eating, a piece was planted in the ground as a sacrifice.

Next morning an astonishing message came to the Indians from the clerk at the agency, their time would be up by twelve o'clock that day; they must build the sun lodge that same morning and then go home; the timbers and branches they had cut and brought from the river valley must be used and not wasted; they must break camp and be back at their ranches before sunset; the agent left these orders before he went away; if they were not carried out, the tribe would not be allowed to have a circle-camp next summer.

The head-men were astounded. This agent was new and might
be ignorant of their customs. But he must know they had a council of chiefs to talk over important matters. They deeply resented being ignored in their tribal affairs. He had never summoned them together, never consulted their wishes, or tried to be friendly. And the boy who was ill, in whose behalf the vow was made to give the ceremony was now dead. The body lay near by in his father's tipi. Many believed his death was caused by the interference of their agent.

Then the head-men met in council. They gathered in the open space, near the unfinished sun lodge. I followed their proceedings and made picture records. I took a photograph of the chiefs seated in a row on the prairie—Curly Bear, Middle Calf, Shoots In The Air, Cream Antelope, and Bull Calf, in the order named. Scattered about were piles of timbers and poles, everything in confusion; and a throng of Indians, men, women, and children, all excited and eager to know what their leaders were going to do.

I finished my work and made haste to get away. I had no defense to make, for this stupid and autocratic agent, and the blundering management of reservation affairs by the government. The agent rules with an iron hand; he was still away and nothing could be done.

But Middle Calf had been watching. He was of the old generation, an associate of Mad Wolf, my Indian father. He spoke to the council and they sent a messenger asking me to come and sit with them. It showed their confidence and was a great honor, but it was an awkward situation.

My sympathy was with the Indians. And I was ashamed of the agent and the government at Washington. The Indians had been patient. They showed more tolerance and restraint in their troubles than their narrow and bigoted agent. Now they were angry and dissatisfied; there was smouldering unrest, but their spirit was broken. They were suffering from the disintegrating and corroding effects of poverty, illness, and inability to adjust themselves quickly from their primitive life to our modern civilization.

The chiefs motioned me to a seat in their midst. And a throng of Indian spectators crowded around to hear what was said.

For a moment no one spoke. Even the crowd was silent. Then Curly Bear as the oldest took the lead of the council. He was a fine looking man of dignity and force, one of the tribal judges or counsellors; known for his justice and wisdom and sound judgment.

Curly Bear asked me to be seated in front of their council. Then as leader he addressed me as follows:

"Our father, the agent, has been telling us first one thing and then another. He has never allowed us to talk with him and we do not understand what he wants us to do. He sent us word through a messenger, that we could camp here for several days. Now he commands us to build the sun lodge and move camp while the sun is in the south (midday). Our father warns if we disobey he will not allow us to meet in a circle-camp next summer. This is unreasonable; we cannot build the sun lodge and carry through the ceremony in so short a time. We know you are our friend. We ask you to advise us what to do; and to tell us the truth."

After Curly Bear finished, all waited while I considered carefully my reply. Then I said:

"When I last saw your agent he said he was going away. He told his clerk what he wanted you to do."

Bull Calf said bitterly: "What is your opinion of this agent?"

I answered guardedly: "Before I came to your country this summer, I did not know him. He is a stranger to me."

Middle Calf said: "What do you think of the way things are now being run on our reservation?"

I replied: "There are so many rumors it is hard to know the truth. Your agent is a stranger here and has not lived among you long. It is too soon to judge."

Bull Calf said sharply: "It would be better if he did not remain longer with us." Then he continued sadly: "You have known our people through many years and have been present at many sun dances. Have you ever seen a disturbance, or known anything harmful that was caused by our ceremonies. We gather every summer to give this festival in honor of the Sun. We fast and pray, that we may feel better in our hearts and able to lead straight lives. We get to
know each other better and feel more kindly to each other. Why does the Great Father at Washington try to put an end to our ceremonies? What harm does he think comes from them? When white men take away from us our religion, we have nothing left. If the Indians should go to a place where white men were gathered in a religious ceremony and interfered, what would the white men do?"

I said earnestly: "The reason I came among you was to find out about these things and to explain them to white men in the east who have power. Now they are ignorant about your religion. I will tell them the truth, and then they may act more wisely. The hearts of many white men in my country are warm towards the Indians. If they interfere wrongly, it is through ignorance and because they do not understand. When they know better, they may act more wisely."

I turned to my friend Middle Calf and said: "Have you ever tried to talk these things over with your agent?"

He replied: "We have a council of fifteen chiefs appointed for this purpose, but the new agent has never even called us together."

"I think the new agent is a stranger and perhaps does not understand about your council. It is time you were getting better acquainted. The best way is to go to him and talk things over. If you never meet, how will it be possible for you to get to know each other better?"

The council then broke up, and the head men showed astonishing submission to the unreasonable orders of their agent. They set to work to finish the sun lodge quickly. Some dug post holes, others harnessed teams and started in wagons for the river valley for necessary timbers. They worked hard; and when the sun was high in the sky, the lodge was nearing completion. Under ordinary conditions and with the regular ceremony, it would have taken an entire day.

This time there were no tribal customs, no tribal feast, no religious ceremonies so dear to the Indian heart. There was just the manual labor of building the structure, which they were forbidden to use, according to the whim of their agent.

I was taking pictures of the Indians at work on their sun lodge. It was now midday; the sun was in the south and high in the sky. I saw a team of horses coming from the agency. There were two in a light wagon, both on the front seat. The half-breed interpreter was driving and beside him the office clerk. He was the first white employee or representative of the government to appear in any of the camps.

The wagon drew up beside the sun lodge and the half-breed interpreter summoned the head men, who left their work and grouped themselves round the wagon.

The clerk was a small and insignificant youth, very young and inexperienced. He was at a loss to know what to do or say. He looked about twenty, had light hair, mild blue eyes, and weak face—just an ordinary office clerk, in fear of the autocratic agent. The only way he knew, was to obey literally the instructions of his superior.

The chiefs waited anxiously, while the young clerk asked through his interpreter; who had given them permission to remain so long in the camp. Then he took out his watch and said it was half past twelve; they were already half an hour late; they had strict orders to leave by noon.

The dignified chiefs made no reply. They looked at each other and turned their backs upon the clerk and half-breed. They gloomily finished building their worthless sun lodge. It now had no religious or social significance and was all a waste. And the child in whose behalf the vow was made now lay dead in the camp.

Silently they took down their tips and departed for their distant homes. It was not possible for Indians to fathom the strange ways of white men. They were baffled by him and by his culture.
ROUTE OF LEWIS'S TRAVELS ON WHAT IS NOW THE BLACKFEET RESERVATION
In July, 1806, on the Lower Two Medicine River, in the southern reaches of what is today the Blackfeet Reservation occurred perhaps the most dangerous and dramatic episode in the long and eventful trip of Lewis and Clark, from the mouth of the Missouri to the Pacific Ocean and back again. Here Meriwether Lewis, with three of his best men, on a side trip to explore the headwaters of the Marias River on the party’s return from the Pacific had an encounter with eight Piegan, the southermost tribe of the Blackfeet Confederacy, in which two Indians were killed.

One finds this incident mentioned as one of a handful of highlights of the entire expedition in even the most simplified accounts. Yet until recently no one had succeeded in locating the site in the field.

We here attempt to locate this site in detail, tracing also Lewis’s route through the entire area, from the forks of the Marias, up the Cut Bank River to Camp Disappointment, south to the Two Medicine and east from there to the site of the actual encounter, a sojourn of seven days for Lewis and his men in the dreaded Blackfeet country, all of the route on what is now the reservation belonging to those Indians.

This side trip exploring the headwaters of the Marias deserves such detailed treatment, since it embodied two of President Jefferson’s primary reasons for the entire exploratory expedition. Foremost in Jefferson’s mind was the necessity for finding a more direct and economical route to eastern markets for the rich fur trade hitherto controlled entirely by the British. He hoped some tributary of the Missouri would provide this route, thus breaking the lucrative British monopoly, with its political as well as economic overtones. Although this objective was not publicly stated in Jefferson’s letter of instruction to Lewis, for obvious reasons of international diplomacy, it was uppermost in the mind of his emissary. Lewis, speculating on the sources of the Marias when he reached its mouth on the Missouri, writes, on June 8, 1805, in his daily Journal entry that he feels sure that the Marias “most probably furnishes a safe and direct communication to that productive country of valuable furs exclusively enjoyed at present by the subjects of his Britannic Majesty.”

The letter of instruction referred to above was written by Jefferson on June 20th, 1803. By July 1st, on the eve of the party’s departure, momentous news came to the President that materially altered the expedition’s complexion. The Louisiana Purchase had been successfully negotiated. Now Lewis had another assignment. It was assumed that the northern boundary of Louisiana, which consisted of the Missouri drainage basin, was the 49th parallel. However, Jefferson believed if any portions of the Missouri drainage basin extended north of 49°, they were part of Louisiana. Lewis shows himself well aware of this additional commission, stating in his Journal entry of July 1, 1806, as they are contemplating
dividing the party for their various missions, that he will "ascend Marias river to explore the country and ascertain whether any branch of it reaches as far north as the latitude of fifty degrees."

The results of this side trip which culminated in the episode with the Blackfeet proved even more important than its purposes. The skirmish on the Two Medicine was the party's only contact with the Blackfeet Indians, under whose shadow they had travelled for so long upon the Missouri. It represented the only hostile encounter of the entire expedition, in their three year trip from St. Louis to the Pacific and back again, in dealings with unnumbered Indian tribes, many of whom had never before seen a white man.

John C. Ewers, eminent authority on the Plains Indians, has given his appraisal of Lewis's encounter with the Blackfeet, writing that 4 "... it was very significant historically for the following reasons:

1. It marked the first meeting of official representatives of the United States with members of the northwesternmost group of people residing in the recently purchased Louisiana – the Piegan Indians.

2. It marked the first armed conflict between official representatives of the United States and Plains Indians.

3. It marked the only armed conflict between members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and Indians, and probably the most serious single threat to the successful accomplishment of that great exploring expedition.

4. It marked the beginning of hostilities between members of the most powerful tribe of Indians on the Northwestern Plains and American citizens. It was the first cause of Blackfeet opposition to Americans which continued for a full quarter century (until 1831), and effectively prevented the establishment of American trade in a large segment of the northwestern portion of our country as it was constituted at that time."

This detailed study has yielded several incidental dividends.

Only by a close examination of the pages of the Journals and by a comparison of a given stretch of the journey in the field with that described by the Captains can their powers of observation be adequately appreciated. One follows their trail to the Two Medicine River and realizes that there, in this river bottom, are the rose and honeysuckle bushes Lewis describes, the three species of cottonwood, and even the yellow-bellied marmot (name of the small animal which fits Lewis's description) peering out from his sandstone cave. Too, one marvels at the powers of recall of a man, under as great a stress as it is possible to imagine, in a life-or-death struggle: Lewis must have
written his entry describing the encounter of July 27th at least twenty-
four hours afterward and many miles away, yet he was still able to de-
scribe the incident with such precision that today we can step off the
distances and recreate the encounter exactly as it happened.

Such a close examination also reveals two other aspects one might
otherwise overlook.

The advantages of one edition of the Journals over another is not
entirely clear cut. There is on the one hand, the first edition in 1814
by Biddle, on the other the only edition of the complete original in
1904 by Thwaites, and in between what is essentially an annotated version
of the Biddle edition by Coues. The only edition possible to use for
detailed study, of course, is the Thwaites, since it is the original,
yet there are advantages in consulting the other two.

For instance, on July 22nd, Lewis errs in the body of his entry
and in his course summary, which is added at the end of the day, by a
difference of two miles (From the river crossing to Camp Disappointment.)
Thwaites and Coues do not pick this up; Biddle does and presents a logical
course.

Elliott Coues's editorship is impressive. With the addition of the
codices-Lewis's courses and distances-in his footnotes, the information
in the entries here considered is in reality the same as that in the
Thwaites edition. His footnotes on the country covered indicate a commend-
able thoroughness and knowledge of the topography. His is the only
commentary which accurately follows Lewis's route on this side trip.
Although Coues was casual in his care with the original text, it occurs
to one that had he not been so pressed by printers' deadlines, after his
discovery of the existence of the original material, we might have had the
definitive edition ten years earlier, with the additional benefit of his
informative notes.

Possibly most interesting of all has been the problem of Lewis's
techniques and accuracy in measuring distance.

Everyone seems in agreement that Lewis's navigational abilities leave
something to be desired. John Bakeless, in assessing Lewis's capabilities,
remarks that, "The idea was that, in the uncharted wilderness through
which the expedition would pass, where there were practically no known
points, navigation offered the easiest way of showing where the explorers
had been. Mr. Jefferson, however, greatly overestimated the capacity of
an infantry officer to navigate."

Too much was expected of Lewis. Although he was trained in Phila-
delphia, then the map-making center of the country, under the leading
experts of the day, Lewis was there for only ten to twelve days and it
was a cram course at best. In addition, and more important, on several
occasions his chronometer ran down, and, in his three years absence he had no way of, in his own words, "setting her to going again," without an error in minutes which, as any navigator might realize, would throw his calculations in longitude off by many miles.

The navy may discount the navigating abilities of an infantry officer, but one cannot stand in anything but admiration of Lewis's powers to note and describe. Herman R. Friis, chief archivist, Cartographic Records Branch of the National Archives, assesses Lewis and Clark's map-making ability. He concludes that while Lewis's celestial observations, especially as to longitude, were approximations and consequently the maps dependent on them only sketches, the Journals' wealth of topographical detail was a major cartographic contribution.11 "... a reading of the Lewis and Clark journals and an examination of their maps reveals that these men quickly learned the fundamentals of observation and description sufficiently well to give us a remarkably clear view of the geographical landscape as well as a reasonably accurate knowledge of where they were in terms of cartographic presentation."12

Our careful examination of the country described by Lewis's entries from July 21st to 27th, 1806, bears this out.

While we may assume then that topographical detail is all we need to accurately determine Lewis's route, it has proved of interest to check the accuracy of his compass courses. Here a knowledge of contour elevations in the field is essential. With the benefit of this, it is possible to work back accurately from information in the Journals to Lewis's probable course, comparing the bearings he gives with our results.

More study is required on Lewis's techniques,13 but the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. Lewis's course measurements were a straight line, from point to point.14
2. His mileages, in the eight measurements considered in this route from the forks of the Marias northward, ending at the forks of Two Medicine River and Badger Creek, total 55 miles, in contrast to 54 measured by map.
3. The accuracy of his compass courses is equally impressive. Of the eight bearings noted, three are exactly correct, one has a minor error of 7-1/2°, and the remaining four are uniformly short the approximate number of degrees of magnetic declination for this area.15 This would suggest that sometimes Lewis allowed for compass variation, and sometimes, possibly due to carelessness, did not. Allowing for this, his courses are astonishingly accurate.

One further observation resulted from this study. The two most important sites in this area, Camp Disappointment and Lewis's encounter with the Blackfeet, although of undisputed significance, have not been
located in the field before because of a combination of difficulties.

The idea was conceived in the course of this study of flying

Lewis's route by plane. In this way, proceeding, for instance, from a

logical river crossing to a high butte described by Lewis from which he
could determine his next objective, all data could be correlated (using
the plane's compass, mileage from aeronautical charts, and the view
below) and groundwork laid for a more specific surface approach.

One observes in this section of the Journals those literary
characteristics which give an epic quality to the entire seven-volume
report. Lewis had arrived on July 16, 1806, at the Great Falls of the
Missouri. Time was a premium. The party was homeward bound, yet two
foremost objectives of the expedition remained yet to be accomplished.
Bearing in mind the importance of this exploration of the Marias's
headwaters, as if this were to be his special trial, Lewis selects his
three best men to accompany him: the two Fields brothers, Reuben and
Joseph, active and enterprising young Kentuckians, and that standby
of the entire expedition, George Drouillard (Drewyer). Drouillard, son
of a French Canadian and an Indian woman, adept at sign language and
an instinctive hunter, was always selected when a task required intelli-
gence, dependability and frontier craft. It is doubly ironic that he
met his death four years later on a fateful trading expedition near the
Three Forks of the Missouri, at the hands of the Blackfeet. "I am too
much of an Indian to be caught by Indians," he had said, when warned of
the danger.

As there are growing tensions and a sense of narrative in the body
of the Journals, so we are built up toward a climax in this self-contain-
ed incident. We share the forebodings and apprehensions of the small
party of four valiant men on this vast and hostile prairie.

Lewis had premonitions of disaster. He told the remaining men in
the party to wait until September 1st for him at the mouth of the Marias,
"at which time should he not arrive, we were to proceed on and join
Capt. Clark at the mouth of the Yellowstone River and then to return
home; but he informed us that should his life and health be preserved
he would meet us at the mouth of the Marias river on the fifth of August."

When the horses are temporarily missing on July 16, Lewis, think-
ing of Gros Ventres or Blackfeet (the two tribes seem to be interchange-
able to him) is "allarmed." On July 17th, they encounter a bleedin-
buffalo and conclude that "the indians had been running them and were
near at hand. The Minnetarees of Fort de prairie [Gros Ventres] and the blackfoot indians rove through this quarter of the country and as they are a vicious lawless and reather abandoned set of wretches I wish to avoid an interview with them if possible. I have no doubt but they would steel our horses if they have it in their power and finding us weak should they happen to be numerous wil most probably attempt to rob us of our arms and baggage; at all events I am determined to take every possible precaution to avoid them if possible."

Is this a premonition or merely a judgment based on an accurate assessment of that particular tribe?

On July 18th and after, Lewis institutes a strict lookout every night, taking his turn with the men. By July 22nd, the trail gets warmer and their apprehensions mount. "game of every discription is extremely wild which induces me to believe that the indians are now or have been lately in this neighbourhood." The next day, Drouillard finds recently abandoned Indian camps. The weather is cold and wet, game is scarce, rations are exhausted, "rain renders our situation extremely unpleasant." Lewis at Camp Disappointment, his farthest point north, is dispirited, unable to complete important celestial observations due to unremitting clouds, and when finally his chronometer stops, it is "as if the fates were against me." (July 25, 1806)

When finally, on July 26th, Lewis raises his glass on top of a hill on the south side of the Two Medicine River to a most unwelcome sight - eight mounted Indians - we have the climax which they had been anticipating with increasing dread for nearly three years, their confrontation with the Blackfeet.
II

The following notes and comments on Lewis's route through Blackfeet Country are keyed to selected sites on the accompanying map.19

July 21, 1806

This study begins at the forks of the Marias River. (A) From A to B is six miles, on a course N 40° W, which agrees exactly, in both mileage and bearings, with Lewis's account. (The bearings of the Marias which they had been following to this point, A, is 280°, 20° more than Lewis observed.) Lewis accurately describes this stretch of the Cut Bank River as "30 yds wide confined closly between cliffs of rocks, shallow rapid and not navigable." Already he fears that its headwaters "will not be as far north as I wished and expected," a surprising conjecture, since he cannot see from here the river's bend to the West.

Lewis sets a new course here (B) of N 25° W, for seven miles. Our mileage and readings also agree here exactly with the Journals. The country is as he describes it, "hills broken, land poor," with no timber. He must deviate from his course, skirting ravines, but he crosses it again at (C), two miles from its commencement, where he fords the river to the south side, continuing on up river until dark. They still do not find any timber, so they make a fire of buffalo dung and camp in a narrow bottom under a cliff at (B). This is the logical place for the party to descend to the river to camp, since there is a natural declivity leading down to the water in the otherwise steep cliffs which confine the river here. Coues, in a footnote to the July 21st entry, places this camp about a mile further upriver, but this site fits more accurately the designated mileage and contours.

July 22

From (D) to (E) we disagree with Lewis on both mileage and compass bearings. He states this distance was 7 miles on a course of N 30° W. It is more nearly 5-1/2 miles on a course N 37-1/2° W. The course Lewis gives would have put him north of the river, where he did not go. Again he describes the topography accurately: ravines "steep and numerous... river closely confined between low but steep and rocky cliffs." They travel over "a greater quantity of gravel than usual."

At (E), the river begins a "considerable bend to the wright or N.W.," as is apparent on the map. He sets a new course, S 80° W, which he pursues through the plains for 10 miles. We
agree with his compass bearings exactly but find him to be a mile long on his distance (from E to F) which on the map is 9 miles.

After leaving (E), Lewis describes the country as "more-level
les gravely and some bottoms to the river but not a particle of
timber nor underbrush of any description is to be seen," which
accurately fits this stretch of country today.

Here (F) he changes his course once again, and from this
point on, by adding 20°, the approximate magnetic declination
for this area, to allow for compass variation in transposing
Lewis's observations to the map, we are right on course with
every reading. His course here which he gives us S 75° W (255°)
is actually 275°. His mileage once again is long by 1-1/2 miles:
it is 9-1/2 miles to the end of the course where they decide to
camp rather than the 11 which Lewis gives.

Here (from F to G) Lewis contradicts himself. In the body
of the entry, his daily mileage adds up to 29 miles; in his table of
courses and distances which he summarizes at the end of the day,
28 miles. In addition, in the former, he indicates the distance
from the river crossing to the bluff above Camp Disappointment (G)
as 12 miles; in the latter, since he did not cross the river until
one mile from the beginning of his new course, the distance is
ten miles. For our purposes, however, since it was apparently
an oversight on Lewis's part, and since the difference is neg-
ligible, we will use the more accurate table of distances.

As to topographical description, once again Lewis's descrip-
tion tallies with the country as we see it today. There is still
no wood on the river where they stop to eat and graze their horses.
He describes the river here, at the crossing, as making "a con-
siderable bend to the left or South," which could refer to either
the immediate part of the river or its general direction, in either
of which case, the description is correct. They continue on the
north side of the river through "a level and beautifull plain.
The country has now become level, the river bottoms wide and the
adjoining plains but little elivated above them; the banks of the
river are not usually more than from 3 to four feet . . .," again
this exactly describes the country here.

Lewis is now heading for high country, (G) from which, suddenly
and dramatically, as a visit to the spot will confirm, he can see
for the first time the point at which this most northerly tributary
of the Marias enters the mountains. There is no reason for him to
continue further, since this answers for him the two reasons for
this exploratory trip. Although Lewis believes the Milk River may
do so, it is clear that the Marias headwaters do not go beyond 50°
latitude; consequently this holds no hope that the boundaries of
the Louisiana Purchase may be extended farther or that this river
may furnish a navigable connection with the fur-trading land of the British. For several reasons, this most northerly point reached by the expedition is truly Camp Disappointment.

Lewis here makes another of his intuitive geographical deductions: "I believe that the waters of the Suskashawan approach the borders of this river very nearly." We find the Hudson's Bay Divide - the elevation separating the waters of the Missouri from the Saskatchewan - a mere 20 miles north of this point.

He makes some other observations. He notes this range of the Rockies continues from S.E. to N.W.; that they appear to be composed of clay rather than rock (the snow cover and the subsequent rainy days in which visibility was limited may account for this misconception); and that they terminate abruptly at about 35 miles to the N.W. Chief Mountain, a prominent landmark of the Blackfeet, thrusts itself out from the main range of the Rockies at about 40 miles from this spot.

The party crosses the river and encamps on its south side at (H), which Lewis describes as "a beautifull and extensive bottom of the river about 10 miles below the foot of the rocky mountains where this river enters them." Checking the mileage once more, we find this to be slightly short. However, the exact mileage is open to debate, since at the distance of 10 miles the foothills do indeed begin. He also notes that the party encamps in "a clump of large cottonwood trees," the first they had seen since ascending this river. Although we find today that timber extends slightly below here in the river bottoms, cottonwoods of any size or age do not appear to grow east of this point.

Taking into account mileages, Lewis's topographical descriptions, and the purposes of this journey, there is no mistaking this location. Suddenly it is not necessary for them to proceed farther, and just across the river is an ideal campsite.

Thwaites, in a footnote to the July 22nd entry, marks this site by quoting Wheeler, whose location is an approximation and wide of the mark by several miles, but Coues once again locates this spot accurately (footnote, July 22nd entry.) He describes it as a little short of 113° longitude W., 48° 40' N latitude, and a little west of the Ft. Macleod road. As we find it here, the old Ft. Macleod road crosses the river between Lewis's lookout bluff and the site of Camp Disappointment!

July 23

The party rests here for three days, while Lewis attempts again and again to "take the necessary observations."
I am advised20 that here Lewis observed the altitude of the sun's lower limb at 56° 8' 45" (see appendix). From this reading, assuming the sun's declination and ignoring refraction corrections, we reach a latitude of 43° 55.4'. The actual latitude here is 48° 40'. Coues observes (in a footnote to entry on Aug. 18, 1805) that Lewis's observations for latitude are generally about one-half degree too far south. His uncorrected error here surpasses that by a good deal and would put him, roughly, in Wyoming.

As to longitude, we are worse off yet. Since his chronometer had stopped several times since leaving St. Louis, and since an error of one minute at a latitude of 45 degrees would mean an error of 7-1/2 astronomical miles (an error of thirty minutes at that latitude would introduce an error of 225 astronomical miles!) he may as well not have attempted an observation. Lewis was unable to complete his observations, since the clouds kept obscuring the heavenly bodies upon which he was apparently attempting to take a "time-sight" at a meridian crossing.

Other difficulties presented themselves. The men were running short of game. The inference was that the surrounding country had been recently hunted by the Indians, which added to their apprehensions. Drouillard, dispatched to hunt toward the mountains, reported "eleven leather lodges" recently abandoned, the poles only remaining. Since Drouillard was near timber country, one would assume the Indians had cut new poles and left the old. Drouillard, on this same hunting expedition had been commissioned by Lewis to go up the river to "observe its bearings and the point at which it "entered the mountains." He did this and returned to report to Lewis, who then "observed the point at which the river entered to bear S 50° W." Once again, if we add the 20°, the bearing is exact (1). Lewis also remarks on a "considerable bend to the West just above us," which the river makes, possibly noted by Drouillard on his foray. This is plainly observable (J) on aerial photographs and the topographical map approximately four miles west of camp.

July 24

Lewis is still having difficulty with his observations and the rain. To add to their troubles, the hunters return empty-handed. "The air has become extremely cold which in addition to the wind and rain renders our situation extremely unpleasant."

July 25

They have used up the last of their provisions, and Lewis directs Drouillard and Joseph Fields to go as far south as "the main branch of Marias River" in search of game. They return late
in the evening with "a fine buck on which we now fared sumptuously," and with the information that it was about ten miles to the Two Medicine, the valley there wide and well-timbered. The map measures about twelve miles due south from Camp Disappointment to a bottom of that description on the Two Medicine, where the Holy Family Mission is now situated, and which was a favorite wintering ground of the Blackfeet. Besides old winter camps, the hunters also saw several which had been more recently evacuated. "we consider ourselves extremely fortunate in not having met with these people. I determined that if tomorrow continued cloudy to set out as I now begin to be apprehensive that I shall not reach the United States within this season unless I make every exertion in my power which I shall certainly not omit when once I leave this place which I shall do with much reluctance without having obtained the necessary data to establish it's longitude as if the fates were against me my chronometer from some unknown cause stoped today, when I set her to going she went as usual."

July 26

We are now leaving Camp Disappointment with Lewis, heading south to his reunion on the Missouri with the rest of the party. It is not the intention here to recount in detail the events of this and the following day – for that one must go to the lengthy account in the original Journals attached – but rather to follow closely his route in order to locate the scene of the encounter with the Blackfeet.

Lewis sets off through the open plains in a southeasterly direction for 5 miles. (Here Lewis's distance is short. We find it to be 6-1/2 miles from H to K on the map.) At two miles from camp (K), he crosses a small creek, which is Willow Creek, the junction of which with Cut Bank River went unnoticed by Lewis on his route west on July 22nd because he was travelling on the north side of the river.

Here (L) he changes course from a general direction to S 75° E (105°). When we add again the degree of magnetic declination we once more have his true course (125°). He proceeds on this course for 7 miles, when he strikes the Two Medicine River (M). Here too his mileage is slightly short; we find a map measurement of 7-1/2 miles.

He crosses the river to its south side and proceeding on the same course, at 2 miles farther (map distance of 3 miles) meets the junction of Badger Creek (N). Lewis notes the characteristics of both streams which we may observe today: The Two Medicine River is markedly more turbid than Badger Creek.
The party crosses Badger Creek just above its junction, and, still on the south side of the river, proceeds downstream, "a little N of E" one mile (0). They stop here to dine on a deer killed by Reuben Fields and to "graize our horses," in a large and fertile bottom. Lewis describes the rose, honeysuckle and redberry bushes which are characteristic of this spot today, as well as three species of cottonwood.

After dinner, they proceed down river about three miles, "when the hills, putting in close on the S. side I determined to ascend them to the high plain." (P)

For anyone interested in making time, Lewis had no other choice. A glance at topographical map and photograph will show the country which Lewis describes: "much more broken than that above and between this and the mountains." Drouillard here leaves them, crossing to the north side, presumably to hunt.

Lewis has scarcely ascended the hills (Q) before he is greeted with "a very unpleasant sight:" an assemblage of about 30 horses and several Indians, who were "on top of an eminence" (R), presumably looking across the river at Drouillard whom they had just discovered. Lewis gives the distance of the Indians from him (from Q to R) as a mile. The butte proves, however, to be more nearly 1-3/4 miles away. It would appear that Lewis was in error on this since he needs his spyglass to pick out the Indians on the hilltop, which would scarcely have been necessary if they had been one mile distant. Also Lewis, in approaching these Indians to within one-quarter of a mile (S), while they scurried back and forth in alarm, in order to allow for so much activity would surely have used more than the time necessary to travel only 3/4 of a mile horseback. However, such an inaccuracy is trifling at a time of emergency.

Although Lewis identifies these Indians as Gros Ventres, there seems to be no question that they were a party of Piegans, probably returning from a horse stealing raid.

Lewis and the Fields brothers meet the Indians at (S) and Drouillard joins them here. "As it was growing late in the evening," Lewis proposes that the four white men and the party of eight Indians "should remove to the nearest part of the river and encamp together," the river being "at but a short distance."

We are now inundated by Lewis with such a wealth of specific topographical detail that it leaves no doubt as to the exact location of the dramatic incident to follow. The country here, as anyone in the field would readily perceive, is sharply broken, a series of "bad lands." Because of this, the canyon has been
unfarmed and largely ungrazed and must look virtually the same as it did on that summer day in 1806.

The party descends "a very steep bluff about 250 feet high to the river where there was a small bottom of nearly 1/2 mile in length and about 250 yards wide in the widest part, the river washed the bluffs both above and below us..." This is the only conceivable place which could fit such a description. The descent into the canyon is precipitous but still possible to negotiate with horses. Topographical map and field examination show this bottom to be about 250 yards wide, 1/2 mile long, surrounded by bluffs almost 250 feet high, with - and this is possibly the most conclusive identification - cliffs washed by the river both above and below. In addition, as described by Lewis, we find that "the bluffs are so steep that there are but few places where they could be ascended, and are broken in several places by deep notches which extend back from the river several hundred yards, their bluffs being so steep that it is impossible to ascend them."

As an additional and scarcely believable bonus we find at (T) the probable location of the camp, three large and venerable cottonwoods. Is it possible that they are the "three solitary trees" described by Lewis under which his party and the Indians camped?

The evening was spent in talk around the campfire, with the help of Drouillard as interpreter. The Indians said a large band of which they were members was encamped on the "main branch of Maria's river" one-half day's march away near the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and that there was a white man encamped there with them. Lewis spoke of the necessity for peace with their neighbors and of a future trading post to be built at the mouth of the Marias. He "found them extremely fond of smoking and pained them with the pipe until late at night."

July 27

It is possible to determine in this bottom the probable locations of the events, identified by roman numerals in accompanying photographs, of this day. Lewis awakes in camp (T) to see a struggle, as an Indian attempts to make off with Drouillard's gun. Meanwhile the Fields brothers have pursued another Indian who had seized both their guns: they overtake him at (I), "50 or 60 paces from the camp," where Reuben Fields killed the Indian. Drouillard and Lewis also succeed in retrieving their guns, when the Indians suddenly attempt to drive off all the horses. Drouillard and the Fields brothers pursue the main party of Indians who are attempting to drive the horses upriver (II).
Lewis runs after two Indians who are taking part of the horses "to the left of the camp ... at the distance of three hundred paces they entered one of those steep nitches in the bluff [III] with the horses before them" being nearly out of breath I could pursue no further. I called to them as I had done several times before that I would shoot them if they did not give me my horse." The Indians stop at a distance of 30 paces. Lewis shoots one through the belly, who fell to his knees and "partly raised himself up and fired at me ... he overshot me, being bearheaded I felt the wind of his bullet very distinctly." Lewis's escape from death could hardly have been by a narrower margin.

Meanwhile, Drouillard returns to look for Lewis, having heard the gunfire, and the Fields brothers continue in pursuit of the Indians. They give this up as they see it is impossible to overtake them and return to camp, reporting that three of the Indians swam the river with some of the horses (IV) and that two more ascended the hill (V) and escaped with others. Lewis here does some disgraceable arithmetic and adds up the Indians: three across the river, two up the hill, two which he had pursued, and one dead near camp. He arrives at a total of seven, wondering what had become of the eighth, who "we could not account for but suppose that he ran off early in the contest."

Fearing that additional numbers of Indians may be nearby and realizing that their lives depend on their haste, Lewis and the men burn all baggage left by the Indians, pack their horses, and leave the canyon as rapidly as possible, taking a course South of East through the plain (U) toward the Missouri where they are reunited with the rest of the party.
The two other campsite locations described in both articles agree closely. The fact that two independent researchers arrive at the same location for these two campsites tends to reinforce the assertion that the locations are correct.

Landmark names are given, first, as in the journals and, second, in parentheses, by their current names. The distance and direction of the various courses are also given as in the journals and, in parentheses, as corrected for the 1805-06 declination. Declination is the difference between the true north and the magnetic north. The United States Geological Survey calculated the magnetic declination for various areas in the state as it probably was in 1803-06. For the area under discussion the declination was between 25° and 27° as compared with current readings of 19° to 21°. This means, for example, that when Lewis and Clark followed their compass reading of due north, they were actually proceeding in a direction which was 25° to 27° east of north. In order to trace their route on a current map it was necessary to apply the corrections to their readings. Based on a sample of their travel in Montana, 87 percent of the magnetic readings ended in 5 or 0. Apparently they usually approximated their magnetic readings to the nearest multiple of five. This means that their magnetic readings are subject to a tolerance of plus or minus 25°.

As far as distances are concerned, some of their values are very close to the measured distance today. Other readings vary up to a factor of one-third. In practice, the criterion of distance has been the measurement between known landmarks. This whole matter of distances shown by the Lewis and Clark Expedition, as compared with measured distances today, is the subject of a current study by the author and others. Results will be published following completion of the study.

The location of various points and campsites is stated in terms of the current county maps and is known as the legal description. For example, a location description such as Sec. 1 - 27N - 8E is an abbreviation for Section 1, Township 27 North, Range 8 East, Montana Meridian.

The appended map shows the Marias River and its tributaries, together with Lewis' route along the river in 1805 and 1806. If this area was mapped by Lewis, no copy is now known. My map is based on the reconstruction procedure outlined above.

The Route Of Captain Lewis

In 1805 when Lewis and Clark came up the Missouri River, they stopped at the mouth of the Marias River and camped there for ten days until the Captains could decide which fork to take. During this time, Lewis, with five men, went up the Marias about 70 miles. Leaving their main camp at the confluence of the rivers on June 4, Lewis and his small group proceeded on a N 30° W 1 (N 5 W) course to a "commanding eminence," from whence they took several bearings of the adjacent mountains. The place where the highway now goes over the hill north of Loma is believed to be the "com-

manding eminence". It is in the same direction that Lewis gives and is the 
approximate distance. This spot is the highest point of ground within sev-
eral miles; the ground slopes away from this "eminence" in all directions.

From this point Lewis' reading for the termination of the North Moun-
tains (Bear Paw Mountains) was N 48 E² (N 23 E). Current Measure-
ments show it to be N 26 E. They then took a S 38 W⁴ (S 63 W) bearing on a peak which 
they called Barn Mountain. There is no hill, peak or mountain in the direc-
tion given. However, if the W is changed to E then this course, S 38 E 
(S 13 E), points to a conspicuous peak of that description north of the High-
wood Mountains now called Square Butte. The courses for Lewis' trip as given 
in Clark's journal for June 8 show a reading of S 80 W³ (N 75 W) for the ter-
mination of the South Mountains (Highwood Mountains). Lewis' reading of 
S 8 W⁶ (S 33 W) is correct for this termination.

From this point, Lewis next states, "... a range of hills about 10 mls 
long appear to lye parallel with the river and from hence bear N 60 W (N 35 W) 
to the N of this range of holls an Elivated point of the river bluff on its 
lar'd side boor N 72 W (N 47 W) distance of 12 miles". Since it is obviously 
impossible to have a N 72 W reading north of a N 60 W reading, it may be that 
these figures are transposed. If so, Lewis' readings correspond well with 
the current readings.

Their fourth course for the day, N 30 W² ² (N 5 W ²), brought them to 
"... the entrance of a large creek on Lar'd side now called Sheep Coulee. 
Their fifth course of the day was from the mouth of Sheep Coulee to the 
mouth of Lark Creek (Black Coulee), N 20 E ¹⁰ (N 45 E), a distance of 12 
miles (8 miles). They traveled four miles on this course and camped "... on the Star'd side in a bend." Lewis over-estimated the distance for this 
course by one-third. If we apply a one-third correction to the four mile 
figure, their camp for June 4 would be in Sec. 2–27 N–8 E.

The morning of June 5 they finished this course by proceeding up the 
river to a place where "... a large creek falls in on the Star'd." Lewis 
called this Lark Creek, which is now known as Black Coulee as indicated 
above. Six miles farther the river makes an abrupt turn to a northerly 
direction to a course almost due west. At this point (Sec. 19–29N–9E), 
Lewis first saw one of the peaks of the Sweetgrass Hills. He thought it 
was the peak which he later named Tower Mountain and which is now known as 
the Middle Butte of the Sweetgrass Hills. It is surprising that he did not see 
the Broken Mountains (Sweetgrass Hills) before he reached this point as 
they are visible, in clear weather, from any high point along the Marias 
from its beginning to its mouth.

Thwaites, in a footnote states, regarding Lewis' first view of the 
Sweetgrass Hills, that, "This was the main peak of the Three Buttes, or 
Sweetgrass Hills, which from Lewis' point of view would appear as a single 
mountain". At no place along the Marias River do the Sweetgrass Hills ap-
pear as a single mountain. From this point (Sec 19) the author observed
the East Butte and the Middle Butte simultaneously both of which were
clearly visible and well separated. However, the West Butte is in line
with the Middle Butte from this point.

The first sentence of Lewis' entry for June 5 states, "... the morning
was cloudy, etc." and apparently the weather was cloudy until they reached
this point, when the clouds lifted enough for them to see a mountain with a
conical top. However, Lewis' reading of N 52 W°, when corrected for the
1805 declination, reads N 27 W or 120° east of the Tower Mountain reading
from this point. Instead of pointing toward Tower Mountain this reading
points to the largest peak of the East Butte of the Sweetgrass Hills. The
top of this peak is conical. Possibly Lewis saw this peak of the East
Butte when the clouds lifted temporarily and then when he saw the Sweet-
grass Hills again he assumed the Middle Butte was the conical peak he had
first seen.

The third course of the day (June 5) which is the first course after
turning west, checks out with the current map both as to direction and
distance, S 60 W 1 1/16° (S 35 W 1 1/8°). The fourth course of the day, however,
reads, "... S 10 W 17° (S 15 E) along the river" which is evidently a mis-
take since this course would take them over the 50-100 foot bluffs our on the
prairie. The direction of the river on this course is due west. The
fifth course, N 50 W 1 1/8° (N 25 W 1 1/10°), the sixth course, West 10°
(N 65 W 8°) and the seventh course N 80 W 220 (N 55 W 1 1/2°) correspond well with the
current directions although his distances are long as indicated by the
mileage in parentheses.

This would place their campsite for June 5 in Sec 17 - 29N - 7E. At
this camp Lewis stated, "I now became well convinced that this branch of
the Missouri had its direction too much to the North for our rout to the
Pacific and therefore determined to return the next day." They then
returned to their camp at the mouth of the Marias.

A year later, in 1806, when Lewis returned to the Marias River area,
he left the Great Falls of the Missouri on July 17 and took a N 10 W 20
(N 15 E 20) course which brought him to the Rose (Teton) River in Sec. 6-
24N - 6E where they camped. On a current map this distance measures 19 3/4
miles.

The next morning (July 18) they traveled on a N 25 W 23° (due north)
course for about 6 miles where they reached "... the top of an elevated
plain" in Sec. 31 -26N -6E. One mile further they reached the source of
Buffalo creek, now called Dugout Coulee, in Sec. 30 -26N -6E. Their sec-
ond course of the day took them on a N 15 W 24° (N 10 E) course parallel to
Buffalo Creek until they intersected it at noon. After dinner they "... pro-
ceeded about 5 miles across the plains to Marias' River where arrived at
6 P. M." Their north course would have intersected the Marias in Sec 24-
29N 6E at the mouth of Buffalo Creek. However, their campsite of July 18 may have been about 2 miles upstream from Buffalo Creek or 4 miles west, in a straight line, from Lewis' camp of June 5, 1805. This campsite (in Sec 15, 20N - 6E) would then correspond with Lewis' remarks for July 19 that "Drewey & J. Fields set out early this morning in conformity to my instructions last evening, they returned at 1/2 after 12 o'clock and informed me that they had proceeded down to the river to the place from which I had returned on the ___ of June last and that it was 6 miles distant they passed the entrance of Buffalo Creek at 2 m."

Levi's courses and distances for July 19, 20 and the first course for July 21 add to 63 miles in a straight line on a N 80° W (N 74° W) course. When measured on a current map this distance is 62 miles. The direction measured on a current map is N 76° W.

On July 19 they traveled on the north side of the river for 20 miles and encamped. This would put their July 19 campsite in Sec 16 -30N - 3E, not under the water behind Tiber Dam.

During the courses and distances for July 19, they mentioned passing "a creek on S side at 8 miles." The Pondera Creek runs into the Marias from the south, 5 miles straight west from the July 19 campsite and there are no other creeks on either side which are anything but small dry coulees.

The editor of the journals, Reuben Gold Thwaites, in commenting on these two creeks states, "Apparenty these are the Dry Fork of Marias River on the south, and Sweetgrass Creek on the north, although the distances do not correspond with their present courses." However, Lewis did not pass either the Dry Fork or Sweetgrass Creek until July 20 since these creeks are several miles west of his July 19 campsite.

It appears strange that Lewis did not mention the creek which is now the Dry Fork. However, after studying a map of this area and going to the area for a detailed visual inspection, it seems that Lewis may have cut across the deep bend the river makes at this point. The Dry Fork flows into the Marias from the south at the center of this bend and is not visible unless one goes south for about 2 miles toward the center of the bend. About 1½ miles up the Marias from the mouth of the Dry Fork, a large dry coulee is found on the north side. This parallels the Marias for several miles in a northwest direction and the rough breaks or "dry ravines" of the two water-courses together form a rather extensive area of rough, broken country. Since Lewis and his party were trying to avoid traveling over this type of country, they probably would have directed their course across the bend to a point just north of these breaks. This course would have brought them too far north to see the Dry Fork. The author made observations from several points in the area and found the Dry Fork extremely hard to distinguish even when the observer knew the location and is much closer to
to it than Lewis' party would have been while on this course.

Their campsite of July 20 is believed to be in Sec. 24 - 31N - 3W as it is a measured 28 miles from the July 19 camp and Lewis shows 28 miles for the day. This camp of July 20 is a measured 14 miles from the junction of Cut Bank Creek and Two Medicine Creek. Lewis' figures for the first course of July 21 show 15 miles to the junction of the two creeks from the July 20 campsite. An inspection of Section 24 would appear to place the campsite in the NE¼, as abrupt river bluffs farther west are too steep to come down with horses.

The first course of July 21 brought them to the junction of Cut Bank Creek and Two Medicine Creek. Here we run into quite a discrepancy between Lewis' reported direction and the current direction. Lewis' second course of July 21 reads N 40 W 6 (N 14 W 6) and this would have brought them to Sec. 32 - 33N - 5W, two miles east of the river. If we then plot their third course of July 21, which reads N 25 W 7 (N 1 E 7), we end up in Sec. 27-34N-5W, which is about 5 miles east of the river! Mrs. West, in her article, states that the directions and distances agree exactly with Lewis' readings. The directions would agree closely if we do not take the corrected magnetic declination into consideration. However, it would not be consistent to use the corrected magnetic declination on some readings and leave it out on other reading.

In considering the distance of this leg of their journey we find that Lewis gives a total of 20 miles (by adding the three courses), for the distance from the forks of the Marias (at the SE corner of Sec. 34 - 32N - 5W) to the point where Cut Bank Creek turns west (5¼ of Sec. 17 - 34N - 6W). If we measure between these two points we find the distance to be 18 miles. Mrs. West, in her article, has assumed that the error in Lewis' readings between these two points under discussion was all in the last course (the first course of July 22). However, since this author has checked a random sample of Lewis and Clark's figures and has found them to be internally consistent, this article will assume that Lewis' readings for this stretch of their journey are consistent with each other and that the 2 mile difference should be pro-rated equally among the three courses. Therefore, if we draw a straight line between these two points and measure the second course of July 21 along this line using the corrected figure of 5 miles, the end of this course would be about in the middle of Sec. 8 - 32N - 5W. The last course of July 21 would end in Sec. 14 - 33N - 6W and their campsite would be in Sec. 14 "...on the south side in a narrow bottom under a Cliff." If we use this distance it would more nearly fit Lewis' statement in the third course of July 21 where he mentions that "...we struck the river at 2 miles from the commencement of this course." If we use Lewis' distance of 6 miles we would be across the river before starting this third course.

This location for the July 21 campsite has been carefully observed and it meets Lewis' description given above. There is not a good place for a
campsite for the next mile or two until we come to the place where the present (1965) highway bridge crosses the river. The distance from this location of the July 21 campsite and the point where the river bends west is about 6\frac{1}{2} miles.

We find a great discrepancy between the directions given by Lewis and the directions on a current map. Lewis' figures show a direction of N 31\textdegree 34\textprime (N 5 W) from the mouth of Cut Bank Creek to the point where the creek bends west. This direction on a current map is N 32 W, or a difference of 27\textdegree. Their first course westward, S 80 W 10\textdegree 35\textprime (N 74 W 10) would have put them four or five miles north of the river, although Lewis describes their course as being south of the river. Since there is such a major discrepancy between the directions for this day and the directions on a current map, perhaps a truer picture can be obtained by following the course of the river on a current map and checking it with Lewis' description of the country and the bends of the river. Lewis' two courses of S 80 W 36\textdegree and S 75 W 37\textdegree are almost a straight line. If we draw a straight line from the river bend in Sec. 28 - 34 N - 7 W in a westerly direction to the north half of Sec. 24 - 34 N - 10 W, the distance measures 23 miles. Lewis' distance was 21 miles. This course we have plotted would then show the river in a big bend to the right. Lewis states for this course that "...the river making a considerable bend to the right or N.W."

At 10\frac{1}{2} miles this course would cross the river to the north side in Sec. 24 - 34 N - 8 W. Lewis' figure for this course is 10 miles. A little over 12 miles from this point in Sec. 24, this course crosses the river on the south side. Lewis' distance for this course north of the river was 11 miles. On this course the river makes a large bend to the left. Lewis states that "...the river which here made a considerable bend to the left or South". Just above this campsite the river makes a large bend to the northwest. Lewis states that "...the river making a considerable bend to the West just above us". In traveling west along the river this is the first location that meets Lewis' description: "...we arrived at a clump of large cottonwood trees in a beautiful and extensive bottom of the river." Therefore, it appears that this point in the NW of Sec. 34 - 34 N - 10 W, just west of the river would be the campsite which Lewis named "Camp Disappointment."

They camped there for three days during which time Lewis tried to take the longitude but was unsuccessful due to the cloudy, rainy weather. Due to this cloudy weather he did not see the main range of the Rocky Mountains about 30 miles west of their camp. The gap in the mountains where the present Marias Pass is located is readily visible from their campsite on a clear day.

The party left this camp July 26 and started back towards the Missouri River on a SE course. About four miles below the mouth of Badger Creek they met eight Indians with whom they camped that night. Early next morning (July 27) the Indians tried to steal rifles and horses from the party.
but were routed in a fight in which two of the Indians were killed. Lewis' group then took a SE course which brought them to the Rose (Teton) River about 3 P.M., approximately five miles above where they had crossed it on July 17. This would place their crossing of July 27 in Sec. 28 - 25N-5E. Lewis estimated this distance at about 63 miles. The distance measured on a current map is 61 miles. They then went 37 miles by their estimate, along the south side of the Teton River where they camped. If we measure 37 miles east (S 65 E) we are about 19 miles east of the Missouri. The next morning, Lewis stated that we had proceeded about 12 miles on an East (S 65 E) course when we found ourselves near the Missouri. This would have placed them 49 miles east of the point where the crossed the Teton! This is too great a discrepancy to reconcile with the available information.

On July 28 Lewis states that after reaching the Missouri they continued 8 miles down the river to a point within 5 miles of Grog Spring (Croon du nez). Measuring 13 miles up the Missouri in a straight line from Grog Spring would have placed them in Sec. 10 - 23N-7E when they arrived near the Missouri. A straight line east from the point where they crossed the Teton would bring them within a mile or two of this point (Sec. 10 - 23N-7E). It would seem, therefore, that Lewis' mileage figures for July 28 are more accurate than his readings for the last courses for July 27.

Let us consider the possibility that Lewis had reached the Teton on July 27 at a point much farther west than five miles from his July 17 crossing. Lewis stated that when they left the scene of their battle with the Indians, they took a course a little to the south of east. Measuring the direction from the battleground to a point 5 miles west of their July 17 crossing shows a reading of S 56 E on a current map, which, when corrected for 1806 declination, gives an 1806 reading of S 31 E, or 90° south of east. This corresponds well with Lewis' statement.

Proceeding down the Missouri they met with the other members of the party who were bringing the canoes down to the mouth of the Marias from the Great Falls. After joining the remainder of their party, they went on down to the mouth of the Marias, dug up the supplies they had cached the previous year and proceeded on down the Missouri to their rendezvous with Clark and his group at the mouth of the Yellowstone River.
## Footnotes

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Routes Explored by Lewis in 1805 & 1806

Based on the Official Map of Montana as Published by the Board of R.R. Commissioners.
THE TWO MEDICINE RIVER FIGHT SITE - LEWIS AND PARTY'S SKIRMISH WITH THE BLACKFEET INDIANS

In the most recent issue of HISTORICAL ANECDOTES (Jan./Feb. 1975) we detailed Captain Lewis's exploration of the Marias River and visit to his "Camp Disappointment" with a party of three (Drouillard, Joseph Field, and Reuben Field) in July 1806. While Lewis's party was in this area, the remainder of the expedition's personnel were actively engaged in other travel routes involved with the return journey, and this was recapitulated in the text of the previous "Camp Disappointment" article.

A unique accomplishment for the expedition was the lack of serious incidents and bloodshed involving the many Indian tribes that they encountered along their route. The one occurrence which resulted in the death of two Indians took place at the location identified by the expedition's historians as "The Two Medicine River Fight Site." Today the site is in Pondera County, Montana, and may be technically located* as NE 1/4 SW 1/4 of Section 12, Township 31 North, Range 7 West, and is owned by the United States of America in trust for Sally Lone Eater, deceased Blackfeet Allottee #766. The site is about 12 to 14 direct line miles, and about 22 miles by road and trail in a southwesterly direction from Cut Bank, Montana. (See map facing page 2.)

In the literature about the expedition there are several references concerning Lewis's side-adventure on the Marias River and its tributaries that would tend to indicate some apprehension relating to the possibility of Indians, who might prove to be hostile, as being in this area. Olin D. Wheeler, in his Volume 2, page 299, indicates this:

"It was really a great risk that Lewis took when he started upon this trip with but three men, and it was only time that there seems to have been any apparent premonition of the trouble to come."

Sergeant Gass's journal entry for July 16th (in the 1959 Ross & Haines reprint edition, page 289-290; in the 1904 Hosmer edition, page 261; in the original editions 1807-1810, page 240) reveals that Lewis's orders to the Sergeant indicated that he was cognizant of perhaps dangers to himself and party. Gass states:

"When Capt. Lewis left us, he gave orders that we should wait at the mouth of Maria's river to the 1st of Sept. at which time, should he not arrive,"

- continued page 2 -

* This information supplied by Mr. Wilbur P. Werner of Cut Bank, Montana, who is one of several individuals responsible for the preservation of this site. In August, 1972, Dr. and Mrs. Chuinard, Mrs. Lange, and your editor visited the site with Mr. Werner, President of the Montana Historical Society. Werner is also serving as Vice President (1974-1975) of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.
Map Showing Route of Captain Lewis' Expedition into the Marias Country, July, 1806

Map is from: A Glance at the Lewis and Clark Expedition, by Grace Flandrau, in an undated publication of the Great Northern Railway, pages 16-17.
we were to proceed on and join Capt. Clarke at the mouth of the Yellowstone river, and then to return home; but informed us, that should his life and health be preserved he would meet us at the mouth of Maria's river on the 5th of August."

In Dr. Elliot Coues' rewrite of the Biddle/Allen narrative, Vol. 3, pages 1086-1087, we find the following dissertation:

"The tribes who principally frequent this country are the Minnetarees of Fort de Prairie and the Blackfeet Indians, both of whom are vicious and profligate rovers...we have therefore everything to fear."

Lewis's apprehension at being separated from the main forces of the expedition, together with a fear which he documented in his journal entry for July 25, 1806, that if he delayed at his "Camp Disappointment" much longer he would: "...not reach the United States within this season unless I make every exertion in my power...", forstalled any attempt to wait out the weather for the desired astronomical observations and prompted his setting out, with his party of three toward the Missisquoi River and the return journey. Taking leave of their "Camp Disappointment" on the morning of July 26th, the party traveled in a southeasterly direction to the Two Medicine River fork of the Marias. They arrived at this river where the small stream known today as Badger Creek joins the Two Medicine. It was here that Reuben Field killed a deer, and the party halted to dine and graze their horses.

After dinner Lewis (Thwaites, Vol. 5, pp. 219-228) records:

"Saturday July 26th 1806"

"...I continued my route down the river to the North and East about 3 Ms. When the hills (were) putting in close on the S. side I determined to ascend them to the high plain which I did accordingly, keeping the Fieldes with me; Drewyer passed the river and kept down the valley of the river (Obiously Drouillard was hunting)...I had scarcely ascended the hills before I discovered to my left and at a distance of a mile an assemblage of about 30 horses, I halted and used my spyglass by the help of which I discovered several Indians on the top of an eminence just above them who appeared to be looking down towards the river I presumed at Drewyer, about half the horses were saddled, this was a very unpleasant sight, however I resolved to make the best of our situation and to approach them in a friendly manner. I directed J. Fieldes to display the flag which I had brought for that purpose and advanced slowly towards them, about this time they discovered us and appeared to run about in a very confused manner as if much allarmed, their attention had previously been so fixed on Drewyer that they did not discover us untill we had began to advance upon them. ...I calculated on their number being nearly or quite equal to that of their horses, that our running would invite pursuit as it would convince them that we were their enemies and our horses were so indifferent that we could not hope to make our escape by flight; added to this Drewyer was seperated from us and I feared that his not being apprized of the indians in the event of our attempting to escape he would most probably fall a sacrifice, under these considerations I still advanced toward them;...I counted eight of them but still supposed that there were others concealed as there were several other horses saddled. I told the two men with me that I apprehended that these were the Minnetarees of Fort de Prairie and from their known character I expected that we were to have some difficulty with them; that if they thought themselves sufficiently strong I was convinced they would attempt to rob us in which case be their numbers what they would I should resist to the last extremity preferrig
death to that of being deprived of my papers instruments and gun and des-ired that they would form the same resolution and be alert and on their guard. When we arrived within a hundred yards of each other the indians except one halted. I directed the two men with me to do the same and advanced singly to meet the indians with whom I shook hands and pass-ed on to those in his rear, as he did also to the two men in my rear; we now all assembled and alighted from our horses; the Indians soon ask to smoke with us, but I told them that man whom they had seen pass down the river had my pipe and we could not smoke until he joined us. I request-ed as they had seen which way he went that they would one of them go with one of my men in surch of him, this they readily consented to and a young man set out with R. Fields in surch of Drewyer....I now concluded they were only eight in number and became much better satisfied with our sit-uation as I was convinced that we could managge that number should they attempt any hostile measures, as it was growing late in the evening I proposed that we should remove to the nearest part of the river and encamp together, I told them that I was glad to see them and had a great deel to say to them. we mounted our horses and rode towards the river which was at but a short distance, on our way we were joined by Drewyer Fields and the indian. we decended a very steep bluff about 250 feet high to the river where there was a small bottom of nearly ½ a mile in length and about 250 yards wide in the widest part, the river washed the bluffs both above and below us and through its course in this part is very deep; the bluffs are so steep that there are but few places where they could be ascended, and are broken in several places by deep nitches which extend back from the river several hundred yards, their bluffs being so steep that it is impossible to ascend them; in this bot-tom there stand t(h)e ree solitary trees near one of which the indians formed a large simicircular camp of dressed buffaloe skins and invited us partake of their shelter which Drewyer and myself accepted and the Fieldes lay near the fire in front of the she(l)ter, with the assist-ance of Drewyer I had much conversation with these people in the course of the evening, I learned from them that they were a part of a large band which lay encamped at present near the foot of the rocky mountains on the main branch of Maria's river one half days march from our pre-sent encampment....I told these people that I had come a great way from the East up the large river which runs towards the rising sun, that I had been to the great waters where the sun sets and had seen a great many nations all of whom I had invited to come and trade with me on the rivers on this side of the mountains, that I had found most of them at war with their neighbours and had succeeded in restoring peace among them, that I was now on my way home and had left my party at the falls of the missouri with orders to descend that river to the entrance of Maria's river and there await my arrival....I found them extramely fond of smoking and ployed them with the pipe untill late at night....I took the first watch tonight and set up untill half after eleven; the indians by this time were all asleep, I roused up R. Fields and laid down myself; I directed Fields to watch the movements of the indians and if any of them left the camp to awake us all as I apprehend-ed they would attemp to s(t)eal our horses, this being I fell into a profound sleep and did not wake untill the noise of the men and indians awoke me a little after light in the morning.

"July 27th 1806. Sunday"

"This morning at daylight the indians got up and crowded around the fire J. Fields who was on post had carelessly laid his gun down be-hi(n)d him near where his brother was sleeping, one of the indians... ...sliped behind him and took his gun and that of his brother unper-
ceived by him, at the same instant two others advanced and seized the
guns of Drewyer and myself. J. Fields seeing this turned about to
look for his gun and saw the fellow just running off with her and his
brother's he called to his brother who instantly jumped up and pursued
the indian with him whom they overtook at the distance of 50 or 60
paces from the camp she seized their guns and rested them from him and
R. Fields as he seized his gun stabbed the indian to the heart with
his knife the fellow ran about fifteen steps and fell dead; of this
I did not know until afterwards, having recovered their guns they
ran back instantly to the camp; Drewyer who was awake saw the in-
dian take hold of his gun and instantly jumped up and seized her
and rested her from him but the indian still retained his pouch, his
jumping up and crying dam you let go my gun wakened me I jumped up
and asked what was the matter which I quickly learned when I saw drew-
ryer in a scuffle with the indian for his gun. I reached to seize my
gun but found her gone, I then drew a pistol from my holster and turn-
ing myself about saw the indian making off with my gun, I ran at him
with my pistol and bid him lay down my gun which he was in the act of
doing when the Fieldses returned and drew up their guns to shoot him
which I forbid as he did not appear to be about to make any resistance
or commit any offensive act, he dropped the gun and walked slowly off,
I picked her up instantly, Drewyer having about this time recovered
his gun and pouch ask me if he might not kill the fellow which I also
forbid as the indian did not appear to wish to kill us, As soon as
they found us all in possession of our arms they ran and indeavored to
drive off all the horses. I now hollered to the men and told them to fire
on them if they attempted to drive off our horses, they accordingly pur-
sued the man who had taken my gun who with another was driving off a part
of the horses which were to the left of the camp. I pursued them so close-
ly that they could not take twelve of their own horses but continued to
drive one of mine with some others; at the distance of three hundred paces
they entered one of those steep nitches in the bluff with the horses before
them being nearly out of breath I could pursue no further, I called to
them as I had done several times before that I would shoot them if they did
not give me my horse and raised my gun, one of them jumped behind a rock
and spoke to the other who turned around and stopped at the distance of 30
steps from me and I shot him through the belly, he fell to his knees and
on his wright elbow from which position he partly raised himself up and
fired at me, being bearheaded I felt the wind of his bullet very distinctly.
not having my shotpouch I could not reload my piece and as there were
two of them behind good shelters from me I did not think it prudent to
rush on them with my pistol which I had discharged I had not the means of
reloading until I reached camp; I therefore returned leisurely towards
camp, on my way I met with Drewyer who having heared the report of the guns
had returned in surch of me and left the Fieldses to pursue the indians, I
desired him to hasten to the camp with me and assist in catching as many
of the indians as were necessary and to call to the Fieldses if he
could make them hear to come back that we still had a sufficient number of
horses..... we reached the camp and began to catch the horses and saddle
them and put on the packs.... we had caught and saddled the horses and
began to arrange the packs when the Fieldses returned with four of our
horses; we left one of our horses and took four of the best of those of
the indians;.....we took some of their buffaloe meat and set out ascending
the bluffs by the same rout we had descended last evening leaving the
balance of nine of their horses which we did not want."

A visitor to this remote and quite inaccessible area today will be astounded at what
little changes have taken place in the 168 years since Lewis and his party were in
this region. The Captain's narration concerning the terrain and locale would suffice
as a description today! The highland from which Lewis first sighted the Indians and their horses, and the adjacent prominence which they occupied, together with the route used by the Captain's party and the Indians to reach the bottomland near the river and the "three solitary trees" where Lewis indicated that they made camp with the Blackfeet, are unmistakable.

If the distance is traversed over the escarpments of rocks to the bottomland and to the three cottonwood trees, and particularly if the visitor has Lewis's journal to refer to, the actual happenings at this locale may be clearly visualized. At the distance of "50 or 60 paces" can be located the place the first Blackfoot fell dead, Reuben Field had stabbed the Indian as he was recovering his gun. The "steep notch" in the bluff at "three hundred paces", and the spot where Lewis shot the second Indian, who would not stop driving off their horses, and who returned the fire that so miraculously missed Lewis's head, is clearly identifiable.

As Lewis continued his journal, he documents their strenuous journey away from the fight site, and he indicates his concern as to the urgency of returning to that segment of the exploring party on the Missouri below the Great Falls, should the Indians elect to pursue them. Excerpts from the Captain's journal for the evening of July 27th, and for the next day, July 28th, follow:

"...by dark we had traveled about 17 miles further, we now halted to rest ourselves and horses about 2 hours, we killed a bufalo cow and took a small quantity of meat. After refreshing ourselves we again set out by moonlight and traveled leisurely, heavy thunderclouds lowered arround us on every quarter but that from which the moon gave us light....we traveled untill 2 OCh in the morning having come by my estimate after dark about 20 ms. We now turned out our horses and laid ourselves down to rest in the plain very much fatigued as may be readily conceived...."

"July 28th 1806. Monday"

"The morning proved fair, I slept sound but fortunately awoke as day appeared, I awaked the men and directed the horses to be saddled, I was so soon from my ride yesterday that I could scarcely stand, and the men complained of being in a similar situation however I encouraged them by telling them that our own lives as well as those of our friends and fellow travellers depended on our exertions at this moment; they were alert soon prepared the horses and we again resumed our march;...I told them that we owed much to the safety of our friends and that we must wrack our lives on this occasion,....that it was my determination that if we were attacked on the plains on our way....that the bridles of the horses should be tied together and we would stand and defend them or sell our lives as dear as we could. We had proceeded about 12 miles on an East course when we found ourselves near the Missouri; we heard a report which we took to be that of a gun but were not certain; still continuing down the N.E. bank of the Missouri about 8 miles further,...we heard the report of several rifles very distinctly on the river to our right, we quickly repared to this joyful sound and on arriving at the bank of the river had the unspeakable satisfaction to see our canoes coming down, we hurried down from the bluff on which we were and joined them..."

The location where Lewis's party rendezvoused with Sergeants Ordway's and Gass's parties was downstream from, and between present Fort Benton, Montana, and the confluence of the Marias with the Missouri River. (See map facing page 2.)
THE LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES OF CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS

The exceptional qualities of leadership and judgement possessed by Captain Meriwether Lewis in the foregoing critical situation serves again to underscore his consistency as a commander of his men:

1. His concern over the possibility of losing his papers, instruments, and guns, and the determination to "resist to the last extremity preferring death" to such a circumstance.

2. His apprehension for the safety of one of his men, Drouilllard, who was separated from Lewis and the Field brothers, and hunting alone in the bottomland, and under surveillance by the Indians, even before they knew of Lewis' and his two companions' presence.

3. His use of Drouillard's circumstance, by advising the Indians, who wished to smoke, that he (Drouillard) had the pipe, and that it would be necessary to effect his return to his (Lewis') party.

4. His offer of peace to the Indians, by the presentation of a peace medal and other gifts.

5. His order to his men forbidding them to fire on the troublemaking Blackfeet. This, in order to avoid bloodshed, and further breakdown of Indian relations.

6. His final determination, after recovering their guns, that there must be bloodshed in order to prevent the loss of their horses, so necessary for their escape from this hostile Indian country, and the only means of returning to the main force of the expedition, who were descending the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers.

7. And lastly, his avoidance of any documented reprimand in his journal with respect to Joseph Field, who allowed the Indians to start the skirmish, when he permitted an Indian to get behind him and steal his gun, as well as the guns of Lewis, Drouillard, and Reuben Field. So well did the men conduct themselves during the skirmish, and on the long hard ride out of the hostile Indian country, that it is apparent that Lewis did not wish to record such a reprimand.

"Omne Solum Forti Patria Est"  "To the brave man, everything he does is for his country."
(the Lewis family motto)  

"Vi Et Consilio"  "By strength and by judgement."
(the Meriwether Family motto)

Thomas Jefferson wrote* about Meriwether Lewis as follows:

"Of courage undaunted; possessing a firmness and perseverance of purpose which nothing but impossibilities could divert from its direction; careful as a father of those committed to his charge, yet steady in the maintenance of order and discipline; intimate with the Indian character, customs, and principles; habituated to the hunting life; guarded, by exact observation of the vegetables and animals of his own country...; honest, disinterested, liberal, of sound understanding, and a fidelity to truth so scrupulous that whatever he should report would be as certain as if seen by ourselves ---"

* From the "Life of Captain Lewis", supplied in a letter dated August 20, 1813, to Nicholas Biddle, in response to a request for same from Paul Allen. The "Memoir", as Coles titled Jefferson's material in 1893, first appeared in 1814, in Volume 1, pages vii - xxxiii, in History of the Expedition under the Command of Captains Lewis and Clark, prepared for the press by Paul Allen, Esquire, in two volumes, Bradford and Inskeep, Philadelphia, 1814. (Often referred to as the Biddle/Allen Narrative.)
The masthead photograph (page 1) is of Captain Lewis's "three solitary (cottonwood) trees", and was taken by Dr. "Frenchy" Chuinard on a visit to the site in August 1972.

Photograph taken by Ruth Lange, in August 1972, from Lewis's "eminence" where he met the Blackfeet Indians prior to their descent into the bottomland. The terrain described by the Captain detailing the bottom as "nearly ½ a mile in length and about 250 yards wide in the widest part", together with the "deep nitches which extend back from the river several hundred yards" remain unchanged today! Just in front of the long line of trees which mark the course of the Two Medicine River, and in the open bottom, stand the "three solitary trees" where camp with the Indians was made.

Wilbur P. Werner (left) of Cut Bank, Montana, and Dr. E. G. "Frenchy" Chuinard of Portland, Oregon, at the site of the three cottonwood trees. The historic marker was erected in 1968 by the Nu-Oon-ska District, Boy Scouts of America. Status is being sought to declare the site a National Historic Landmark. The photograph was made by R. E. Lange in August 1972.
THE "THREE SOLITARY (COTTONWOOD) TREES"

In 1964, Helen B. West in her treatise entitled: Meriwether Lewis in Blackfeet Country, Museum of the Plains Indians, Browning, Montana (U. S. Dept. of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs), writes concerning the identification of the site and the trees:

"This is the only conceivable place which could fit such a description (as Lewis's). The descent into the canyon is precipitous but still possible to negotiate with horses. Topographical map and field examinations show this bottom to be about 250 yards wide, ⅓ mile long, surrounded by bluffs almost 250 feet high, with — and this is possibly the most conclusive identification — cliffs washed by the river both above and below. In addition, as described by Lewis, we find that 'the bluffs are so steep that there are but few places where they could be ascended, and are broken in several places by deep nitches which extend back from the river several hundred yards, their bluffs being so steep that it is impossible to ascend them.'"

"As an additional and scarcely believable bonus we find at the probable location of the camp, three large and venerable cottonwoods. Is it possible that they are the 'three solitary trees' described by Lewis under which his party and the Indians camped?" (page 13)

In Paul R. Cutright's Lewis and Clark: Pioneering Naturalists, Univ. of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1969, pages 321-322, we find his account of a visit to this locale:

"And right now, more than a century and a half later, we found that we were standing, incredibly, in the shade of three narrow-leaved cottonwood trees!...

"The three cottonwoods lifting their shiney-leaved crowns to the sun are indeed venerable. Close examination reveals them to be wind-shaken and rotten at the core, the latter condition precluding any possibility of determining their age by borings. It may be too much to conclude that these are the same identical trees that gave shelter to Lewis, though by coincidence — if it is a coincidence — is most remarkable. But everything else in this remote, picturesque valley is remarkable."

Since Cutright's visit to this place, which he describes as "...the small bottom on the Two Medicine River where occurred long ago the most dramatic event of Lewis and Clark's 28-month journey from the Mississippi to the Pacific and back**, Wilbur P. Werner (see footnote page 1) advises that U. S. Forest Service dendrologists have visited here, while the trees in question did not provide evidence of age, when bored, due to their rotten cores, similar cottonwoods of the same size, and in this vicinity, revealed when bored, ring systems to indicate a life in excess of three hundred years. Further, it is well to consider, that had the original trees in this bottomland perished and disappeared, the three we find there now could not have attained, since 1806 - 168 years ago, their present size! We might also observe that for several months each year the climate in this locale is so cold and dry that insects and fungi become inactive and inhibited from contributing to the depreciation of this type of vegetation.

RELATED MAGAZINE ARTICLE


RELATED ART WORK

Several artists have portrayed the incidents that took place at the Two Medicine River Fight Site. Reproductions of same may be found as follows:


Richard Schlect, Maryland artist. A drawing entitled: "...R. Fields as he seized his Gun stabbed the Indian in the Heart..." (Title is a quote from Lewis's journal.)

Reproduced in: In the Footsteps of Lewis and Clark, by Gerald S. Snyder, National Geographic Society, 1970. Reproduction is in sepia tone on page 188.

THE BROTHERS, JOSEPH AND REUBEN, LAST NAMED SPELLED "FIELD" OR "FIELDS"?

Writers and historians seem to be divided as to the spelling of the last name of the two brothers who were members of the exploring party. The journals abound in a variety of spellings, particularly in the plural, as will be noted in that part of the Lewis journal pertaining to the excitement on the Two Medicine River which is quoted above.

The earlier Lewis and Clark scholars - Coues, Wheeler, Quaife, and Hosmer - lean towards the spelling "Fields". DeVoto lists "Fields" in his Index, Charles G. Clarke in his volume* stays on middle-ground with the connotation "Fields (Field)". More recently litterateurs for the Expedition - Bakeless, Dillon, Jackson, Cutright, and Snyder - favor the spelling "Field".

Your editor joins the latter and offers justification for this stand, as he assumes the others do, from documents still in existence and of an official nature, where correct spelling for legal reasons, etc., must be accurate. Dr. Jackson, in his Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition - with Related Documents, 1783-1854, reproduces these, and in every case the spelling is "Field". The references in Jackson are as follows:

Letter 236, pages 364-373 (specifically page 367), "Lewis to (Secretary of War) Henry Dearborn", January 15, 1807.


Document 245, pages 378-379 (specifically page 379, both brothers have signed document), "Petition to the Senate and House", after March 3, 1807.


party at that place having no doubt but that they would pursue us with a large party and as there was a band near the broken mountains or probably between them and the mouth of that river we might expect them to receive intelligence from us and arrive at that place nearly as soon as we could, no time was therefore to be lost and we pushed our horses as hard as they would bear. at 8 miles we passed a large branch 40 yds. wide which I called battle river.3 at 3 P. M. we arrived at rose river about 5 miles above where we had passed it as we went out, having traveled by my estimate compared with our former distances and courses about 63 ms.6 here we halted an hour and a half took some refreshment and suffered our horses to graze; the day proved warm but the late rains had supplied the little reservoirs in the plains with water and had put them in fine order for traveling, our whole rout so far was as level as a bowling green with but little stone and few prickly pears. after dinner we pursued the bottoms of rose river but finding inconvenient to pass the river so often we again ascended the hills on the S. W. side and took the open plains; by dark we had traveled about 17 miles further, we now halted to rest ourselves and horses about 2 hours, we killed a buffaloe cow and took a small quantity of the meat. after refreshing ourselves we again set out by moon light and traveled leisurely, heavy thunderclouds lowered around us on every quarter but that from which the moon gave us light. we continued to pass immense herds of buffaloe all night as we had done in the latter part of the day. we traveled until 2 Ock in the morning having come by my estimate after dark about 20 ms. we now turned out our horses and laid ourselves down to rest in the plain very much fatigued as may be readily conceived.7 my indians horse carried me very well in short much better than my own would have done and leaves me with but little reason to complain of the robbery.

1. This man's name is variously given as He-that-looks-at-the-calf and Sidehill Calf. Ewers (BRNP), 48; Ronda (LCAl), 242; Wheeler, 2:311–12.

2. There is some doubt as to whether this man died of his wound or not, since the fragmentary evidence conflicts on whether one or two Pieagns lost their lives. Apparently there is no doubt that the man stabbed by Reubin Field died. Bradley (MS), 135; Wheeler, 2:311–12; Glover, 273.

3. The Piegan almost certainly carried a North West trade musket, much less accurate

than Lewis's rifle; indeed, "30 steps" would be about the limit of accuracy for such a weapon. In any case, a man shot in the abdomen was unlikely to shoot very well. Ewers (ILUM), 34–44; Russell (GEF), 104–50, 162–64; Hanson.

4. A type of dagger or stabbing knife with a hole or eye in the handle for inserting a loop; see April 15, 1806.

5. Present Birch Creek in Pondera County, Montana, a tributary of Two Medicine River.

6. Heading southeasterly from the site of the fight, Lewis's party passed near present Conrad in Pondera County and reached the Teton (Rose) River in either northeast Teton County or western Chouteau County, Montana.

7. This camp was some miles west of Fort Benton in Chouteau County.

[Lewis]

The morning proved fair, I slept sound but fortunately awoke as day appeared, I awaked the men and directed the horses to be saddled, I was so soor from my ride yesterday that I could scarcely stand, and the men complained of being in a similar situation however I encouraged them by telling them that our own lives as well as those of our friends and fellow travellers depended on our exertions at this moment; they were allert soon prepared the horses and we again resumed our march; the men proposed to pass the missouri at the gog sprin where rose river approaches it so nearly and pass down on the S. W. side, to this I objected as it would delay us almost all day to reach the point [EC: mouth of Marias] by this circuets rout and would give the enemy time to surprise and cut off the party at the point if they had arrived there,2 I told them that we owed much to the safety of our friends and that we must wrisk our lives on this occasion, that I should proceed immediately to the point and if the party had not arrived that I would raft the missouri a small distance above, hide our baggage and march on foot up the river through the timber until I met the canoes or joined them at the falls; I now told them that it was my determination that if we were attacked in the plains on our way to the point that the bridles of the horses should be tied together and we would stand and defend them,91 sell our lives as dear as we could. we had proceeded about 12 3 miles on an East course when we found ourselves near the missouri; we heared a report which we took to be that of a gun but were not certain; still continuing down the N. E. bank of the missouri about 8 miles further, being then within five miles of the gog

July 28th 1806 Monday.
us that he fell among a party of Indians which were troublesome as they took his gun & rode off he rode after them and got his gun from out of an Indians hand. their was Several Squaws which had considerable of their kinds of food and Skins. they went and left it all he took it and brought it in with him. a clear pleasant morning three men went to finish in hiding the baggage. the men at Camp employed dressing their deer Skins & making their mockasons &c. i am employed making up their leather Shirts & overalls. about 11 o’clock A.M. one tribe of the Snake nation 50 odd in number arrived here on horse back some women & children. they have now come over the dividing ridge to trade their horses &c. with us. Capt. Lewis counseled with them made 2 of them chiefs, and told them that we had come to open the way and try to make peace among the red people, and that they would be Supplyed with goods and necessaries, if they would catch beaver and otter and Save their Skins which the white people were fond of and would trade with them as soon as times would admit &c. Capt. Lewis traded with them & bought 3 horses & 2 mules or half mules, for a little merchandize &c. we being out of fresh meat & have but little Salt meat we joined and made a fish dragg out of willows tyed bunches of them together and made it long ene to reach across the River, and Caught with it 520 different kinds of fine pan fish. we divided them with the natives. Gave them a mess of boiled corn which they were fond of. they appear to be very kind and friendly. we trade with them for dressed mounts. rams skins and otter skins &c. our Interpreter & wife came over with them & were all Scarse off for provisions killed nothing but one or 2 mountain Sheep & rabbits &c. they all Camp with us and are peacable, do not attempt to steel any thing. borrow nothing but what they return. they appear to live in fear of other nations who are at war with them, but Capt. Lewis tells them that these other nations promise to let them alone and if they do not, their Great father will Send them arms and amunition to defend themselves with, but rather that they would live in peace &c

Thursday August 22nd This morning we had a white frost & cold weather. Our hunter returned late last night & had a fawn deer with him, which he had killed. he informed us that he had met with a party of Indi-
that he fell among a party of Indians which were troublesome as they took a gun & rode off he rode after them and got his gun from out of an Indians hand. their was Several Squaws which had considerable of their kind of food and Skins. they went and left it all he took it and brought it with him. a clear pleasant morning three men went to finish in hiding the baggage the men at Camp employed dressing their deer Skins & making their mockasons &c. i am employed making up their leather Shirts overall. about 11 o'clock A. m. one tribe of the Snake nation 50 odd in number arived here on horse back some women & children. they have now come over the dividing ridge to trade their horses &c. with us. Capt. Lewis unciled with them made 2 of them chiefs, and told them that we had come open the way and try to make peace among the red people, and that they could be Supplied with goods and necessaries, if they would catch beaver otter and save their skins which the white people were fond of and would trade with them as soon as times would admit &c. Capt. Lewis traded with them & bought 3 horses & 2 mules or half mules, for a little marchanze &c. we being out of fresh meat & have but little Salt meat we joined mad made a fish drag out of willows tied bunches of them together and made it long enoue to reach across the River, and Caught with it 520 different kinds of fine pan fish. we divided them with the natives. gave them a mess of boiled corn which they were fond of. they appear to be very kind and friendly. we trade with them for dressed mountn. rams Skins and otter skins &c. our Interpreter & wife came over with them & were all Scarce off or provisions killed nothing but one or 2 mountain Sheep & rabbits &c. they all Camp with us and are peaceable, do not attempt to steal any thing. borrow nothing but what they return. they appear to live in fear of other nations who are at war with them, but Capt. Lewis tells them that these other nations promise to let them alone and if they do not, their Great father will end them arms and ammunition to defend themselves with, but rather that they would live in peace &c.

Thursday August 22nd This morning we had a white frost & cold eather. Our hunter returned late last night & had a fawn deer with him, which he had killed. he informed us that he had met with a party of Indians, which took away his <the> Gun from him & rode off, & that he had pursued them, & forced his Gun from one of those Indians. there were several Indian Squaws, with that party of Indians, that he had met, who had a considerable quantity of their kind of food (roots) & some Skins, those squaws ran off whilst he was forcing his Gun from the Indian, & left all, & he took <it> & brought <it> them in which him to our Camp. The morning got pleasant & 3 of our party went and finished hiding the baggage &c. The Men left in Camp <are> were employed dressing of deer Skins & making moccasins & I am employed in making leather Shirts & overall—About 11 o'clock A. M. part of a tribe of the Snake Nation of Indians, fifty odd in number, arrived at our Camp on horse back, they had Women & Children with them, they came across the dividing ridge of Mountain; to trade their horses with us—Captain Lewis held a Council with them & made two of them Chiefs.—Captain Lewis told those Indians that we had come to open the way & try and make peace among the Red people, & that they would be supplied with goods & necessaries, if they would catch beaver & Otter & save their skins, which he told them the white people were fond of & would traffic with them as soon as times would admit.—Captain Lewis traded with them & bought 3 horses & 2 Mules for a small Quantity of Merchandise.—We being out of fresh meat, & having but little Salt meat, we joined with the Indians & made a drag out of willows which was done by tying bunches of them together long enough to reach across the River, and we caught with it 520 different kinds of pan fish. We divided them with the Indians, and gave them a mess of boiled Corn, which they <were> appear'd to be fond of & they appeared to be very kind & friendly.—We traded with them for mountain Ram (Ibex) skins, which they had dressed & some Otter skins &ca. Our Indian interpreter & his wife came over with those Indians, they were badly off for provisions, they had killed only 2 Mountain Sheep, or Ibex & some Rabits &ca—These Indians all encamped with us, & behave peaceable, & do not attempt to steal any thing, & borrow nothing but what they return again.—They appear to be in constant dread of the other Nations Indians, who are constantly at War with them. Captain Lewis told them that the other Indian nations promised to let them alone, and if they did not, that their Great father (meaning the President of the United States)
streams are pebbly particularly the S. branch. the water of the N. branch is very terbid while that of the S. branch is nearly clear not withstanding the late rains. I passed the S. branch just above its junction and continued down the river which runs a little to the N of E 1 ms. and halted to dine and graize our horses. here I found some indian lodges which appeared to have been inhabited last winter in a large and fertile bottom well stocked with cottonwood timber. the rose honeysuckle and redberry bushes constitute the undergrowth there being but little willow in this quarter both these rivers above their junction appeared to be well stocked with timber or comparatively so with other parts of this country. here it is that we find the three species of cottonwood which I have remarked in my voyage assembled together that species common to the Columbia I have never before seen on the waters of the Missouri, also the narrow and broad leafed species. during our stay at this place R. Fields killed a buck a part of the flesh of which we took with us. we saw a few Antelopes some wolves and 2 of the smallest species of fox of a redish brown colour with the extremity of the tail black. it is about the size of the common domestic cat and burrows in the plains. after dinner I continued my rout down the river to the North of East about 3 ms. when the hills putting in close on the S side I determined to ascend them to the high plain which I did accordingly, keeping the Fields with me; Drewyer passed the river and kept down the valley of the river. I had intended to descend this river with its course to its junction with the fork which I had ascended and from thence have taken across the country obliquely to rose river and descend that stream to its confluence with Maria's river. the country through which this portion of Maria's river passes to the fork which I ascended appears much more broken than that above and between this and the mountains. I had scarcely ascended the hills before I discovered to my left at the distance of a mile an assembleage of about 30 horses, I halted and used my spy glass by the help of which I discovered several indians on the top of an eminence just above them who appeared to be looking down towards the river I presumed at Drewyer. about half the horses were saddled. this was a very unpleasant sight, however I resolved to make the best of our situation and to approach them in a friendly manner. I directed J. Fields to display the flag which I
had brought for that purpose and advanced slowly toward them, about this time they discovered us and appeared to run about in a very confused manner as if much alarmed, their attention had been previously so fixed on Drewyer that they did not discover us until we had began to advance upon them, some of them decended the hill on which they were and drove their horses within shot of its summit and again returned to the hight as if to wate our arrival or to defend themselves. I calculated on their number being nearly or quite equal to that of their horses, that our runing would invite pursuit as it would convince them that we were their enemies and our horses were so indifferent that we could not hope to make our escape by flight; added to this Drewyer was seperated from us and I feared that his not being apprized of the indians in the event of our attempting to escape he would most probably fall a sacrefice. under these considerations I still advanced towards them; when we had arrived (at the distance of) within a quarter of a mile of them, one of them mounted his horse and rode full speed towards us, which when I discovered I halted and alighted from my horse; he came within a hundred paces halted looked at us and turned his horse about and returned as briskly to his party as he had advanced; while he halted near us I held out my hand and beckoned to him to approach but he paid no attention to my overtures. on his return to his party they all decended the hill and mounted their horses and advanced towards us leaving their horses behind them, we also advanced to meet them. I counted eight of them but still supposed that there were others concealed as there were several other horses saddled. I told the two men with me that I apprehended that these were the Minnetares of Fort de Prarie and from their known character I expected that we were to have some difficulty with them; that if they thought themselves sufficiently strong I was convinced they would attempt to rob us in which case be their numbers what they would I should resist to the last extremity preferring death to that of being deprived of my papers instruments and gun and desired that they would form the same resolution and be alert and on their guard. when we arrived within a hundred yards of each other the indians except one halted I directed the two men with me to do the same and advanced singly to meet the indian with whom I shook hands and passed on to those in his
rear, as he did also to the two men in my rear; we now all assembled and alighted from our horses; the Indians soon asked to smoke with us, but I told them that the man whom they had seen pass down the river had my pipe and we could not smoke until he joined us. I requested as they had seen which way he went that they would one of them go with one of my men in surch of him, this they readily concented to and a young man set out with R. Fields in surch of Drewyer. I now asked them by sighns if they were the Minnetares of the North which they answered in the affirmative; I asked if there was any cheif among them and they pointed out I did not believe them however I thought it best to please them and gave to one a medal to a second a flag and to the third a handkerchief, with which they appeared well satisfied. they appeared much agitated with our first interview from which they had scarcely yet recovered, in fact I believe they were more allarmed at this accedental interview than we were. from no more of them appearing I now concluded they were only eight in number and became much better satisfied with our situation as I was convinced that we could manmage that number should they attempt any hostile measures. as it was growing late in the evening I proposed that we should remove to the nearest part of the river and encamp together, I told them that I was glad to see them and had a great deal to say to them. we mounted our horses and rode towards the river which was at but a short distance, on our way we were joined by Drewyer Fields and the indian. we decended a very steep bluff about 250 feet high to the river where there was a small bottom of nearly ½ a mile in length and about 250 yards wide in the widest part, the river washed the bluffs both above and below us and through its course in this part is very deep; the bluffs are so steep that there are but few places where they could be ascended, and are broken in several places by deep notches which extend back from the river several hundred yards, their bluffs being so steep that it is impossible to ascend them; in this bottom there stand tree solitary trees near one of which the indians formed a large simicircular camp of dressed buffaloe skins and invited us to partake of their shelter which Drewyer and myself accepted and the Fieldses lay near the fire in front of the shelter. with the assistance of Drewyer I had much conversation with these people in the course of the evening. I
learned from them that they were a part of a large band which lay encamped at present near the foot of the rocky mountains on the main branch of Maria's river one ½ days march from our present encampment; that there was a whiteman with their band; that there was another large band of their nation hunting buffaloe near the broken mountains and were on there way to the mouth of Maria's river where they would probably be in the course of a few days. they also informed us that from hence to the establishment where they trade on the Suskasawan river is only 6 days easy march or such as they usually travel with their women and childred which may be estimated at about 150 ms. that from these traders they obtain arm amunition spurious liquor blankets &c in exchange for wolves and some beaver skins. I told these people that I had come a great way from the East up the large river which runs towards the rising sun, that I had been to the great waters where the sun sets and had seen a great many nations all of whom I had invited to come and trade with me on the rivers on this side of the mountains, that I had found most of them at war with their neighbours and had succeeded in restoring peace among them, that I was now on my way home and had left my party at the falls of the missouri with orders to decend that river to the entrance of Maria's river and there wait my arrival and that I had come in surch of them in order to prevail on them to be at peace with their neighbours particularly those on the West side of the mountains and to engage them to come and trade with me when the establishment is made at the entrance of this river to all which they readily gave their assent and declared it to be their wish to be at peace with the Tushepaheh whom they said had killed a number of their relations lately and pointed to several of those present who had cut their hair as an evidence of the truth of what they had asserted. I found them extremly fond of smoking and plyed them with the pipe untill late at night. I told them that if they intended to do as I wished them they would send some of their young men to their band with an invitation to their chiefs and warriors to bring the whiteman with them and come down and council with me at the entrance of Maria's river and that the ballance of them would accompany me to that place, where I was anxious now to meet my men as I had been absent from them some time and knew that they would be uneasy untill they saw.
that if they would go with me I would give them 10 horses and some tobacco. To this proposition they made no reply. I took the first watch tonight and set up until half after eleven; the Indians by this time were all asleep, I roused up R. Fields and laid down myself; I directed Fields to watch the movements of the Indians and if any of them left the camp to awake us all as I apprehended they would attempt to steal [steal] our horses. This being done I fell into a profound sleep and did not wake until the noise of the men and Indians awoke me a little after light in the morning.—

1. Willow Creek, a tributary of Cut Bank Creek, in Glacier County, Montana.
2. Two Medicine River, in Glacier County.
3. Badger Creek, meeting Two Medicine River in Glacier County. Just below its mouth the party passed into Pondera County, Montana.
4. That is, about one mile below the mouth of Badger Creek, on Two Medicine River in Pondera County. Actually, the general course of the river is a little south of east in this area.
5. Lewis makes an astute ecological observation; the three major cottonwood species typical of the plains, the Rocky Mountains, and the Pacific Coast all occur together here in the eastern foothills of the Rocky Mountains. The species of the Columbia is black cottonwood, the "narrow leafed" is narrowleaf cottonwood, and the "broad leafed" is plains cottonwood. Cf. Gutright (LCPN), 316, 316 n. 7.
7. Lewis intended to follow Two Medicine River to its junction with Cut Bank Creek, then head southeasterly to Teton River and follow that stream down to the junction with the Marias.
8. This conversation almost certainly was in sign language. Actually these Indians were Piegans, members of one of the three main divisions of the Blackfeet confederation, the other two being the Bloods and the Blackfeet proper. They were an Algonquian-language people who had evidently moved west onto the high plains centuries before. In the eighteenth century they acquired the horse and became a classic example of the bison-hunting nomads of the Great Plains. In 1754 Anthony Hendry, or Henday, a Hudson's Bay Company trader, was the first white man to make direct contact with these people, in Canada. Equipped with horses and traders' guns, by Lewis and Clark's time they had become "the dominant military power on the northwestern plains, feared by all neighboring tribes." Their range straddled the present U.S.-Canadian boundary in southern Alberta and northwest Montana. Relatively friendly toward Canadian traders, they became notorious for their enmity toward the American mountain men. Some writers have traced the origin of this hostility to these Piegans' violent encounter with Lewis's party, but it is just as likely to have arisen because the Blackfeet resented the Americans trading firearms to their enemies, like the Shoshones, Crows, Flatheads, and Nez Perces. Today some of the Blackfeet live on the Blackfeet Reservation in northwest Montana, and others on reserves.
in Canada. Many years after the encounter with Lewis, Wolf Calf, supposedly a member of this Piegan party, gave an account of the episode which was printed in Wheeler, 2:311–12. Ewers (BRNP); Ronda (LCA1), 243–44; Bradley (MS), 135.

9. This campsite was in Pondera County, on the Blackfeet Reservation, along the south side of Two Medicine River about four miles below the mouth of Badger Creek and downstream from Kipps Coulee, about one and one-half miles south of the Glacier-Pondera county line and some fourteen miles southwest of the town of Cut Bank. A spot identified as the actual site has been marked in recent years based largely on the work of Helen West, along with Robert Anderson, and Ed Mathison in 1964 (see West). A more recent study by Bergantino casts doubts on the marked site being the actual spot of the camp of July 26–27, 1806. The limitations of Lewis's journal comments, course and distance references, and compass sightings, along with the similarity of terrain in the area opens the possibility that other nearby spots may be likely competitors for the designation. Due to the difficulties involved, an incontestible locating of the site may never be made. The same can be said for pinpointing most Lewis and Clark camps.

10. Three very old cottonwoods were standing in the location West identified as the campsite. Their proximity to the marked site seemed to validate the designation. Nevertheless, the results of borings have been inconclusive and the trees cannot be positively identified as the ones Lewis mentions. The trees presently suffer from heart rot and were partially burned some years ago.

11. Lewis probably means "hemispherical"; skins thrown over a rough dome formed of branches made a type of temporary shelter common to many Western tribes.

12. Lewis's estimated distance would take one to the Bow River in Alberta, where there was a North West Company post reportedly abandoned in 1804. However, the company's principal post for the Blackfeet trade was Rocky Mountain House, founded in 1799 on the North Saskatchewan River, near the site of the present Alberta community of the same name. That would be a distance of some 240 miles from Lewis's current location, a considerable journey to make in six days even for these mobile people. Innis, 284; Coues (NLEH), 2:705; Ewers (BRNP), 31; Glover, 79 n. 1.

[Lewis]

July 27th 1806 Sunday.

This morning at day light the indians got up and crowded around the fire, E. Fields who was on post had carelessly laid his gun down behind him near where his brother was sleeping, one of the indians the fellow to whom I had given the medal last evening slaped behind him and took his gun and that of his brothers unperceived by him, at the same instant two others advanced and seized the guns of Drewyer and myself, E. Fields seing this turned about to look for his gun and saw the fellow just running off with her and his brothers he called to his brother who instantly jumped up and pursued the indian with him whom they overtook at the distance
of 50 or 60 paces from the camp sized their guns and rested them from him and R Fields as he seized his gun stabed the indian to the heart with his knife the fellow ran about 15 steps and fell dead;¹ of this I did not know untill afterwards, having recovered their guns they ran back instantly to the camp; Drewyer who was awake saw the indian take hold of his gun and instantly jumped up and sized her and rested her from him but the indian still retained his pouch, his jumping up and crying damn you let go my gun awakened me I jumped up and asked what was the matter which I quickly learned when I saw drewyer in a scuffle with the indian for his gun. I reached to seize my gun but found her gone, I then drew a pistol from my holster and terning myself about saw the indian making off with my gun I ran at him with my pistol and bid him lay down my gun (at the instant) which he was in the act of doing when the Fieldses returned and drew up their guns to shoot him which I forbid as he did not appear to be about to make any resistance or commit any offensive act, he droped the gun and walked slowly off, I picked her up instantly, Drewyer having about this time recovered his gun and pouch asked me if he might not kill the fellow which I also forbid as the indian did not appear to wish to kill us, as soon as they found us all in possession of our arms they ran and indeavored to drive off all the horses I now hallowed to the men and told them to fire on them if they attempted to drive off our horses, they accordingly pursued the main party who were drving the horses up the river and I pursued the man who had taken my gun who with another was driving off a part of the horses which were to the left of the camp, I pursued them so closely that they could not take twelve of their own horses but continued to drive one of mine with some others; at the distance of three hundred paces they entered one of those steep nitches in the bluff with the horses before them being nearly out of breath I could pursue no further, I called to them as I had done several times before that I would shoot them if they did not give me my horse and raised my gun, one of them jumped behind a rock and spoke to the other who turned arround and stoped at the distance of 30 steps from me and I shot him through the belly,² he fell to his knees and on his wright elbow from which position he partly raised himself up and fired at me, and turning himself about crawled in behind a rock which was a few
feet from him. he overshot me, being bearheaded I felt the wind of his bullet very distinctly. not having my shotpouch I could not reload my piece and as there were two of them behind good shelters from me I did not think it prudent to rush on them with my pistol which had I discharged I had not the means of reloading until I reached camp; I therefore returned leisurely towards camp, on my way I met with Drewyer who having heard the report of the guns had returned in such of me and left the Fieldes to pursue the indians, I desired him to hasten to the camp with me and assist in catching as many of the indians horses as were necessary and to call to the Fieldes if he could make them hear to come back that we still had a sufficient number of horses, this he did but they were too far to hear him. we reached the camp and began to catch the horses and saddle them and put on the packs. the reason I had not my pouch with me was that I had not time to return about 50 yards to camp after getting my gun before I was obliged to pursue the indians or suffer them to collect and drive off all the horses. we had caught and saddled the horses and began to arrange the packs when the Fieldes returned with four of our horses; we left one of our horses and took four of the best of those of the indians; while the men were preparing the horses I put four shields and two bows and quivers of arrows which had been left on the fire, with sundry other articles; they left all their baggage at our mercy. they had but 2 guns and one of them they left the others were armed with bows and arrows and eyedags. the gun we took with us. I also retook the flagg but left the medal about the neck of the dead man that they might be informed who we were. we took some of their buffalo meat and set out ascending the bluffs by the same rout we had descended last evening leaving the ballance of nine of their horses which we did not want. the Fieldes told me that three of the indians whom they pursued swam the river one of them on my horse. and that two others ascended the hill and escaped from them with a part of their horses, two I had pursued into the nitch one lay dead near the camp and the eighth we could not account for but suppose that he ran off early in the contest. having ascended the hill we took our course through a beautifull level plain a little to the S of East. my design was to hasten to the entrance of Maria's river as quick as possible in the hope of meeting with the canoes and
sive from that date. There can be no certainty, however, that was the date when Codex G was sealed up.

From September 21, the elkskin book consists of regular daily entries in the conventional form, not in the form of courses and distances. September 20 was the day Clark met the Nez Perces at Weippe Prairie, Idaho, a meeting described in some detail in the elkskin notebook courses and distances. Lewis and the main party did not catch up until September 22. If Codex G was in a tin box on a packhorse with Lewis's group, we can understand why Clark wrote his regular September 21 entry in the elkskin book. He traveled a few miles that day but gave no courses and distances until the next day, September 22, when he wrote, "our first course of yesterday was nearly . . . ." as if he had not written it down anywhere else and was going by memory. There may have been no notes other than those in the elkskin book.

Clark's courses and distances for September 11-21 and September 25 are together in Codex G after the September 30 entry; he may have taken the notebook out on that day and brought it up to date, or he may have been keeping entries in it and simply have delayed copying the courses and distances because he was busy. In any case, he continued to keep journal entries in the elkskin book until December 31, paralleling notebook journal entries in Codices G, H, and I. That the Elkskin-bound Journal entries were the first draft and the codices the second seems probable. For much of the period from early October to early December the expedition was going downriver in small dugout canoes, and when they neared the Pacific Coast they entered an area of almost constant rain and storms. It may have seemed wise to keep the red books in their waterproof boxes much of the time and continue to use the sheets that became the Elkskin-bound Journal.

The elkskin book begins on the exact date of starting on the Lolo Trail, which may indicate that Clark had not kept detailed field notes for some time before that but had written daily information directly into his notebook journals. He could well have been keeping course and distance notes, with sketch maps of the route, as he had earlier, notes such as the pages in the elkskin book apparently started out to be. But why were those bound notes preserved if similar ones for an earlier period (the summer and fall of 1805) were not saved also? We must, of course, allow something for shear chance, but the special care taken to bind the notes suggests a particular need to preserve material covering that period. One reason for preserving them might be the exceptionally large number of maps (nine) along with the journal material; none of the maps of the Elkskin (nineteen) along with the journal material; none of the maps of the Elkskin (nineteen) amount in the codices for the same period. Again note that

The Elkskin-bound Journal ends the day before Lewis is known to have resumed his journal-keeping, the first day of 1806. It would be a remarkable coincidence if Clark just happened to run out of paper in the book on that day. Internal evidence indicates that large portions of Clark's notebook journals after early November 1805 were probably written months later. If the sheets in the elkskin book were the only continuous record by either captain for a period of over three and one-half months, then we can readily understand why they took special care to preserve them. If Clark's red books were sealed up and packed away for much of that time, we can also understand why what started out as rough notes and sketch maps became a journal of events as well.39

What was Clark doing with his notebook journals during the period (September 11-December 31, 1805) covered by the Elkskin-bound Journal? Entries in late September and early October 1805 in Codex G are generally more extensive than those in the Elkskin-bound Journal; both are brief during periods when Clark was ill or particularly busy. After the party set out down the Clearwater River in canoes on October 7, the Elkskin-bound Journal again becomes primarily expanded courses and distances. Codex H, however, begins on October 11, and from this point the elkskin book entries again become progressively more detailed and lengthy, as if it were again the record actually kept on the given dates. On November 7, 1805, the day the party arrived, or so they thought, in sight of the Pacific, Clark records the event in both journals in terms suggesting immediate emotion.

The Codex H entry for November 7, however, also contains a passage in quotes describing the dress of the local Indian women, noting that it was so skimpy that the "lather of venus is not altogether impervious to the penetrating eye of the amorous." Not only is the language most unlike Clark's, but the whole paragraph is placed in quotation marks to indicate that it was not Clark's. In fact, the whole paragraph occurs verbatim in Lewis's Codex J entry for March 19, 1806—over four months after the ostensible date of Clark's entry. This forces us to conclude that Clark wrote the November 7, 1805, entry in Codex H on or after March 19, 1806. Lacking any indication that the page with the quoted paragraph was inserted later, we must assume that the remainder of Codex H after that date—and Clark's subsequent notebook journals, largely copied from Lewis—were written on or after March 19, 1806—an assumption that creates some intriguing problems.39

There is some evidence, moreover, that much of Codex H before November 7, 1805, was not written until months after the given dates. In the entry in that journal for October 18, Clark notes how "the Great Chief and one of the Chin-nd-pum-pum" on the Columbia used to give a sketch of the upper Columbia and its
in spite of weather, fatigue, grammar, or spelling.

Whitehouse's original journal, as we now have it, consists of a single volume of three parts bound in animal skin, running from May 14, 1804, to November 6, 1805. It was once thought that he ceased writing on that last date, but we now know that this is certainly not the case. On his deathbed, Whitehouse gave the original journal to his Catholic confessor, Canon di Vivaldi; this may have been around 1860. Later, Gerrtrude Haley of San Francisco loaned the priest money, and he gave her the journal in return. It passed into various hands, including those of the New-York Historical Society. Haley regained possession and tried to sell it to the Library of Congress, which would not pay her asking price. Finally, Dodd, Mead and Company purchased it for the use of Reuben Gold Thwaites in his edition of the expedition journals.13

Seeing Whitehouse's difficulties with the language, Thwaites and others assumed that he had simply grown weary of writing in November 1805 and stopped. That notion was exploded by another of the fortuitous discoveries that mark the entire history of the Lewis and Clark journals. In February 1966, Professor George White, a geologist from the University of Illinois--Urbana, visited Philadelphia and in a bookstore was shown the manuscript of a journal by Joseph Whitehouse. Returning home, he told his university colleague Donald Jackson, editor of the Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, who in turn informed the Newberry Library of Chicago, then and now holder of the original journal. The Newberry obtained the new find and Jackson was able to examine it. It was a single notebook, written by someone other than Whitehouse himself, running from May 14, 1804, to April 2, 1806. Just before the March 23, 1806, entry there is a heading, "Volume 2nd"; this would seem to indicate that there was a good deal more to come, and that Whitehouse may have completed his journal to September 23, 1806. This paraphrased version fills in some gaps in the original as we now have it.14

Jackson finally concluded that the new find, interesting as it was, did not provide enough new information to justify publication on its own.15 It does, however, extend Whitehouse's record of the expedition by several months, and appears here so that this edition may be as complete as possible.

Notes


xvi
SEPARATION NOTICE

The following items have been removed from Box 175, Folder 5, Collection 2602, for oversize storage elsewhere.

Items Removed:

35 mm slides: #522-531. Removed from series 10 - Research, subseries 2 - Research topics. Transparencies were relocated to series 8 - photographs, subseries 1 - 35mm slides.

X Material has been placed in Box 155, Folder NA, Collection 2602.

___ Location information is available from the Special Collections Staff.
SEPARATION NOTICE

The following items have been removed from Box 175, Folder 5, Collection 2602 for oversize storage elsewhere.

Items Removed:

Photographs: #4387-4389 were removed from Series 10 - Research, subseries 2 - research topics. Images were relocated to Series 8 - photographs, subseries 3 - photographic prints.

X Material has been placed in Box 163, Folder 13, Collection 2602

___ Location information is available from the Special Collections Staff.
SOUTHWEST MUSEUM PAPERS

Number Three

The Tragedy of the Blackfoot
by Walter McClintock, M.A. (Yale)
Research Fellow in Ethnology

Published by the
SOUTHWEST MUSEUM
Highland Park, Los Angeles, California

April, 1930