



Meriwether Lewis

Field Notes



William Clark

From the Badger State Chapter of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc

April 2009

Wisconsin's Chapter ~ Interested & Involved

Number 30

**During this time in history:
(April-May 1804-1806)**

(The source for all entries is, "The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition edited by Gary E. Moulton, The University of Nebraska Press, 1983-2001.)

May 24, 1804, Franklin County, Missouri, Clark: "...Passed a very bad part of the river called the devil's race ground. This is where the current sets against some projecting rocks for half a mile...The swiftness of the current wheeled the boat and broke our tow rope and was nearly over setting the boat. All hands jumped out on the upper side and bore on that side until the sand washed from under the boat..."

April 24, 1805, Williams County, North Dakota, Lewis: "The wind blew so hard during the whole of this day, that we were unable to move...Sore eyes is a common complaint among the party. I believe it originates from the immense quantities of sand which is driven by the wind from the sandbars of the river in such clouds that you are unable to discover the opposite bank of the river in many instances...so penetrating is this sand that we cannot keep any article free from it; in short we are compelled to eat, drink, and breath it very freely..."

April 18, 1806, the Dalles, Oregon, Lewis: "...The long narrows are much more formidable than they were when we descended them last fall. There would be no possibility of passing either up or down them in any vessel... we determined to make the portage to the head of the long narrows with our baggage and five small canoes. The two pirogues (larger canoes) we could take no further and therefore cut them up for fuel..."

A 21st Century US Army Sergeant's Impression of His 19th Century Counterpart



Above is a US Army Statue, dedicated to Sergeant John Ordway of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, extolling Ordway as a model for today's NCOs. Following is an essay by one of today's sergeants, on what John Ordway signifies to him.

Cont. on Pg. 2

Ordway and The Creed of the Non-Commissioned Officer

By: SSG Michael Lubovich
4th Platoon BNCO

A creed is a statement of belief or faith, derived from the Latin: *credo* for *I believe* and *credimus* for *we believe*. It signifies a "token" by which persons of like beliefs might recognize each other. The Creed of the Non-Commissioned Officer is no different. In this essay I will argue that almost 200 years before its existence, Sergeant John Ordway of the famed Lewis and Clark expedition, used the NCO Creed to lead his men, accomplish his mission, and earn the respect and confidence of those with whom he served.

In 1803 Sergeant Ordway stepped forward as a volunteer for the expedition. He was responsible for issuing provisions, appointing guard duties, and keeping records. Having these assigned responsibilities made him accountable as the backbone of the expedition. Without his senior NCO management, confusion and disorder would have brought the mission to a halt. Although tough terrain movements, starvation, and several possible dangerous Native Americans were a constant on the exploration, Sergeant Ordway never used his grade to attain pleasure, profit, or personnel safety. He expected each participant to shoulder their responsibility and he enforced that by setting the example himself.

Being one of only a few educated men on the trip, he proved himself competent on several occasions, one of which was suggesting the selection of their guide Sacagawea, who also served as an interpreter. The sight of a woman and her infant son would have been a reassuring sight to Native Americans who might have mistaken the armed explorers as a group on a warlike mission. Ordway kept the mission of the expedition from President Jefferson in constant focus: "To explore the Missouri river.....by its course and communication with the waters of the Pacific Ocean offer the most direct and practicable water communication across this continent for the purposes of commerce". Ordway proved to be a tough but fair NCO as well. On March 29, 1804, Privates John Shields and John Colter threatened Ordway's life. Both were put on trial for mutiny. However, both of them pleaded for, and received, forgiveness. Ordway knew the importance of discipline on a journey of such magnitude: He also equally understood the need for skilled men, and even losing one would carry great consequences. Private Colter later proved useful as a hunter, possibly the best among the men.

Ordway quickly and quietly earned the respect and confidence of CPT Lewis and 2LT Clark. Having an advanced education made him stand out. His attention to detail and meticulous recordings in his journal were also equally impressive. But a silent nod went to 2LT Clark as Ordway addressed him as "Captain" Clark throughout the trip, following CPT Lewis' lead. Even after the expedition ended, the men never knew Clark's true rank.

Ordway had earned his officers' respect, but a situation in Sioux territory would be the first example of loyalty and courage to his soldiers. The Teton Sioux received their gifts with ill-disguised hostility. One chief demanded a boat from Lewis and Clark as the price to be paid for passage through their territory. As the Indians became more dangerous, Lewis and Clark prepared to fight back. At the last moment before fighting began, Ordway noticed a lull on the Teton side. They had fallen back.

Ordway retreated his men quickly and then informed CPT Lewis. Knowing they are up against a superior foe, they rapidly continued westward (upriver). Ordway took action in the absence of orders and proved himself a leader not only his men, but his officers as well. He learned from this encounter and several others by keeping records during the voyage. Like a good NCO, he recorded his 'lessons learned' in a journal, and even annotated his AAR when the trip was complete.

Sergeant John Ordway wrote the Creed of the Non-Commissioned Officers through his actions more than 200 years ago on a trip of danger, discovery, and duty, while serving with Lewis and Clark. If alive today, he would tell you that he was 'just doing his job'. It is an assertion you hear many fine NCOs state today when questioned by others who often do not and cannot comprehend the soldier's response. Several other NCOs have re-written the creed and repeated the example Ordway set throughout the US Army's great history. Ordway lived the creed and we now recite those moving words today. When the guns go silent and the smoke clears, we know that the Creed of the Non-Commissioned Officer is ultimately about creating a way for soldiers to contribute to making something extraordinary happen.

Cont. from pg. 2

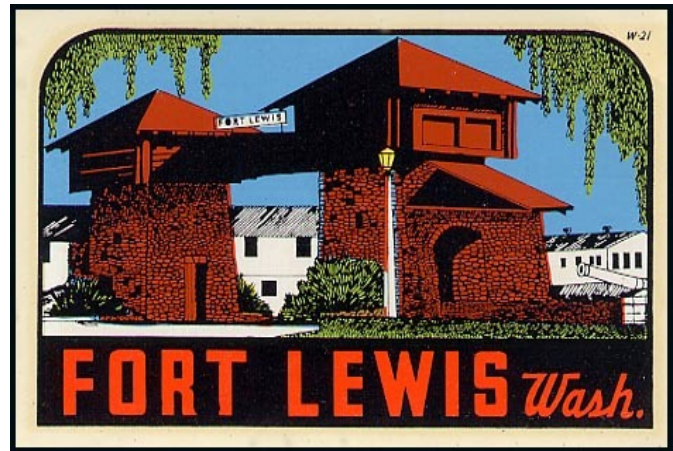


Staff Sergeant Michael Lubovich...

...joined the Army in July of 1997, and served with the 1/75 Ranger Battalion until November of 2000. He joined A Co. 2-135. Infantry (Minnesota National Guard) and was deployed to Kosovo from October of 2003 to September of 2004. He is currently the Active Guard Team Chief, 55th Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction), in St. Paul, MN.

His hometown is Forest Lake, MN. Sgt. Lubovich is 30 years old, married for six years to his wife, Tracy, and has 2 children and one dog. (He did not mention whether the dog resembles Seaman, or not.)

His essay, "*Ordway and The Creed of the Non-Commissioned Officer*" was written as part of his training in The Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course at Fort Lewis, Washington, and is reprinted in *Field Notes* with Sgt. Lubovich's permission.



Noncommissioned Officer Course at Fort Lewis, Washington

The Course

The Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course Common Core (BNCOC CC) provides Sergeants promotable and Staff Sergeants with an opportunity to acquire the leader technical and tactical values, attributes, skills, and actions needed to lead a squad-size unit. Students must satisfactorily complete all phases before granting them course credit for BNCOC.



Seaman & Meriwether Lewis
Guard the Gate at
Fort Lewis, Washington

The BNCOC CC is a two week course taught at the United States Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) Fort Lewis. It employs classroom instruction using the Small Group process technique and Small Group Instruction with practical exercises and testing.

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The Course Manager

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The Course Manager is responsible for ensuring the NCOA presents the training as it was designed. The Course Manager ensures the training environment enhances learning, encourages student initiative, and requires students to attain and sustain high levels of discipline.

The Essay Contest

The NCOA Fort Lewis is known as “Ordway’s Finest” in honor of the highest ranking NCO of the Corps of Discovery. The First Sergeant Ordway Essay Contest was developed by the NCOA’s First Sergeant, 1SG Edward Roderiques. Although not a graduation requirement, the NCOA requires every student to write a 700-1000 word essay concerning the NCO Creed and what it personally means to him/her. Students compare their own experiences and those of other leaders, such as 1SG Ordway, with respect to the NCO Creed. These essays are reviewed by the Course Manager, who picks the best one from each classroom (6) and passes those to the NCOA First Sergeant. The 1SG picks the overall winner. During the Graduation Ceremony, the essay winner is presented with a plaque/certificate of appreciation and a Commandant’s coin. The essay winner then reads aloud his/her essay to the audience.



Left:
President
Roosevelt
at
Fort Lewis



Left:
President
Truman
at
Fort Lewis



This 1850 version of Fort Lewis was built on a slope, which now overlooks a residential neighborhood in the town of Fort Lewis.

Description: The grounds and remaining buildings are a museum. Several white, wooden structures of this old fort are in pretty good shape.

History: The current Fort Lewis, which exists today, several blocks over from this original fort, was built and occupied by military personnel in 1919. This older version of Fort Lewis was built around 1850, with the idea of helping to keep the peace between the existing native American population and the new settlers who had arrived via the Oregon Trail. It was a noble idea, but was a very contentious job. In 1855, the government wanted to end the troubles, and open up more of the land for settlement for people coming West. Indians either signed the treaty and went to live on reservations, or went to war, eventually losing and then signing the treaty in 1858.



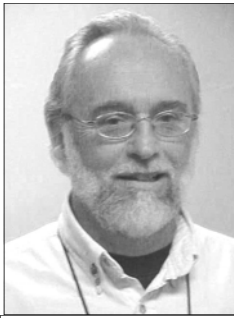
Newsletter articles



Do you have an interesting thought about the Lewis and Clark Expedition, or know someone who shares our interest in “The Journey?” Would you like to share it with others through this newsletter? Then write to either Jim Rosenberger at punkinz@tds.net or Bill Holman at wghmch@chorus.net. If you don’t have e-mail, call Bill at (608) 249-2233. If you include a picture with your article, we will be happy to return it upon request.

President's Message – April '09

As I write these few paragraphs our Chapter membership stands at 77 Members. This number stands as a tribute to the interest and commitment the members of the Badger State Chapter have made towards the legacy of Lewis & Clark. Many Chapters, as well as the Foundation have experienced a decline in membership. Much of that is due to the end of the bicentennial years and people "moving on" to other areas of interest. Thanks to our dedicated membership, over the years, our Chapter has maintained our level of membership and has even experienced growth. Each year we have lost a few members but then have gained a few more. That is a fantastic record, especially for a non-trail state Chapter. My sincere thanks to all of you who make up the Badger State Chapter.



Jim Rosenberger

So what makes Lewis & Clark so important? Those of you who know me recognize my deep interest in Lewis & Clark history. But my so called "addiction" is based on the fact that I do believe Lewis and Clark is the starting point of a lot of additional knowledge. The story provides much more than just a Corps of Discovery traveling from point "a" to point "b" and setting the stage for the opening of the American West. There is the study of the different cultures within the members of the Corps itself as well as with the Native Nations the Corps met. There are leadership lessons to be learned from our revered captains. In fact, there is a new effort to develop a Lewis & Clark leadership course of study. Additionally, a partnership has been formed between the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and the Boy Scouts of America. Starting with the Lewis & Clark Expedition, one can head off in any direction to study other aspects of our Nation's history. Just like mathematics and science, and perhaps even more so, a study of Lewis & Clark history, contributes to the make up of our national character.

So our existence is important. What we do as a Chapter and as a National Foundation is important. And it is important that we continue to exist, continue to expand on the story and the trail and continue to bring our message to others.

To do this we need you all as our members and I thank each of you for staying with us and contributing to our efforts as we continue our Journey into the third century of Lewis and Clark.

Badger State Chapter Meeting Brown Deer Public Library 5600 West Bradley Road Saturday, April 11, 10:15-1:30

If you receive your copy of "Field Notes" by mail, you have already missed it, and have not learned the final conclusion of whether Meriwether Lewis was murdered or committed suicide. If you are reading your "Field Notes" on line, you still have time to attend this interesting event. If we don't solve the question at the meeting, there's always the lunch afterward.

Upcoming Activities of the..

Mark your Calendars



The Badger State Chapter picnic will take place June 20, 2009 at Bay Point Park, Red Wing MN, overlooking the Mississippi River. We will be joining the Minnesota Chapter for a day of "Chaptership" and a presentation by Rob Nurre, "The Surly Surveyor". Details will be sent out in the near future.

=We're On The Web=

"Field Notes" is also available on the Internet.

Some people only receive "Field Notes" as a black and white copy. It is far better to get it on line, where some pages are in color. To get on the list to receive the link, drop an e-mail to Bill Holman at: wghmch@chorus.net...we'll send you a link where you can find it and share it with your friends.

Was Meriwether Lewis Assassinated? The 1850 Grave Exhumation Report

This article is reprinted from Kira Gale's Blog, with her permission, and does not necessarily reflect the views of any members of the Badger Chapter. Kira can be contacted at:

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Meriwether Lewis Monument and Gravesite, Hohenwald Tennessee. In the late 1840's a movement got underway to place a monument at the gravesite of Meriwether Lewis. Until then, his gravesite consisted of a simple marker enclosed by a wooden rail fence. Lewis was buried at Grinder's Stand, a wayside inn near Hohenwald, Tennessee on the Natchez Trace Federal Road, where he met his death on October 11, 1809. Though as Governor of Louisiana Territory he might be considered the third ranking member of the federal government, his death was never investigated, nor was there an effort to rebury him in his hometown of Charlottesville, Virginia. His death was labeled a suicide by second hand accounts and accepted as such by President Thomas Jefferson. It was said in later newspaper accounts that a county coroner's jury investigation was held at the time of his death; but this 1809 report has not been found. Reportedly the local jury members thought Robert Grinder had participated in the killing of Meriwether Lewis, but were afraid to indict him. It has always been stated by the residents of Tennessee that Meriwether Lewis was murdered.



I have been doing extensive research on the death of Meriwether Lewis, tracking down primary documents referred to in two books, *Suicide or Murder? The Strange Death of Governor Meriwether Lewis* by Vardis Fisher, published in 1962; and *By His Own Hand? The Mysterious Death of Meriwether Lewis*, edited by John D. W. Guice, published in 2006. Richard Dillon's biography, *Meriwether Lewis*, with a foreword by Stephen Ambrose, also states he was murdered. John Bakeless is another biographer of Lewis and Clark who believed he was murdered. You may purchase these books and others through my website's Amazon's Associates bookstore.

I am planning to share some of my research on blogs at <http://www.lewisandclarktravel.com> in the months to come. This is one of the most important documents I have found. The document reveals that the Tennessee monument committee actually opened the grave of Meriwether Lewis to confirm that they had the right gravesite, and examined his upper torso. One of the members of the committee, Samuel B. Moore, was a physician. (History and Genealogy-State Records-Acts of Tennessee, 1831-1850). It was not their purpose to investigate the cause of Lewis's death. However, later in their 1850 Monument Committee Report to the General Assembly of Tennessee, they stated:

"The impression has long prevailed that under the influence of disease and body—of hopes based upon long and valuable services—not merely deferred but wholly disappointed—Governor Lewis perished by his own hands. It seems to be more probable that he died by the hands of an assassin."

Here follows the complete text of the Report, found in the Meriwether Lewis Memorial Association Papers, 1880-1931 at the Tennessee State Archives (Microfilm #13-74).

Report of the Lewis Monument Committee:

To the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee: By the 9th section of an act, passed at the last session of the General Assembly of this State, entitled an act to establish the County of Lewis the sum of \$500 was appropriated, or so much thereof as might be necessary, to preserve the place of interment where the remains of GEN. MERIWETHER LEWIS were deposited; and the undersigned were appointed the agents of the General Assembly to carry into execution the provisions of the act, and report to the present General Assembly. Looking upon the object to be accomplished to be one highly honorable to the State, the undersigned entered upon the duties assigned them cheerfully and with as little delay as possible. They consulted with the most eminent artists and practical mechanics as to the kind of monument to be erected, and a plan being agreed upon, they employed Mr. Lemuel W. Kirby, of Columbia, to execute it for the sum of five hundred dollars. The entire monument is twenty and a half feet high. The design is simple but is intended to express the difficulties, successes, and violent termination of a life which was marked by bold enterprise, by manly courage and by devoted patriotism. The base of the monument is of rough, unhewn stone, eight feet high and nine feet square where it rises to the surface of the ground. On this rests a plinth of cut stone, four feet square and eighteen inches in thickness, on which are the inscriptions given below. On this plinth stands a broken column eleven feet high, two and a half feet in diameter for the base, and a few inches smaller at the top. The top is broken to denote the violent and untimely end of a bright and glorious career. The base is composed of a species of sandstone found in the neighborhood of the grave. The plinth and shaft, or column, are made of a fine limestone, commonly known as Tennessee marble. Around the monument is erected a handsome wrought iron rail fence.

Great care was taken to identify the grave. George Nixon, Esq., an old Surveyor, had become very early acquainted with its locality. He pointed out the place; but to make assurance doubly sure the grave was re-opened and the upper portion of the skeleton examined, and such evidence found as to leave no doubt as to the place of internment. Witnesses were called and their certificate, with that of the Surveyor, prove the fact beyond dispute.

The inscription upon the plinth was furnished by Professor Nathaniel Cross of the University of Nashville. It is beautiful and appropriate. It is placed on the different sides of the plinth, and is as follows:

Meriwether Lewis, Born near Charlottesville, Virginia, August 18, 1774 Died October 11, 1809; Aged 35 years; An Officer of the Regular Army – Private Secretary to President Jefferson – Commander of the Expedition To The Oregon in 1803–1806 – Governor of the Territory of Louisiana – His Melancholy Death Occurred Where This Monument Now Stands, And Under Which Rests His Mortal Remains.

In the language of Mr. Jefferson: "His Courage Was Undaunted; His Firmness and Perseverance Yielded To Nothing But Impossibilities; A Rigid Disciplinarian, Yet Tender As A Father To Those Committed To His Charge; Honest, Disinterested, Liberal, With A Sound Understanding, And A Scrupulous Fidelity To Truth.

Immaturus Obi; Sed Tu Felicior Annos Vive Meos, Bona Republica! Vive Tuos. Erected by the Legislature of Tennessee, A.D., 1848.

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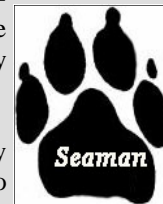
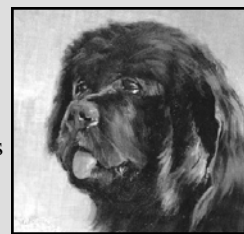
Seaman Says...

May 15, 1805: Obtaining adequate supplies of food for the Corps of Discovery is a constant effort.

Upon our departure from Camp DuBois, we had stored salt pork and corn meal on board our boats but corn meal is less than desirable for a being of my species while salt pork is only tolerable.

Fortunately, much of our food comes from our hunters and with my keen sense of smell and tracking abilities I provide a fair amount of assistance to the hunting expeditions. Buffalo, deer, elk and antelope are much more to my liking. I also walk with my Captain Lewis and as we travel, I eat berries, grapes and grasses to supplement the meat from the hunters. The men of the Corps enjoy these treats also. Sacagawea has taught me how to locate and dig up various roots which add substance to our meals and are quite tasty when properly prepared.

When we are having a meal, the men are generous and make a habit of feeding me from their portions. My Captain Lewis said it takes three deer to feed our Corps for one meal. Had he known of the morsels given to me by the men, he might have said it takes 2 ½ deer to feed the Corps.



In the Latin diatich, many of your honorable body will no doubt recognize as the affecting epitaph on the tomb of a young wife, in which by a propopocia, after alluding to an immature death, she prays that her happier husband may live out her years and his own. *Immaturus pari: sed tu felicior annos. Vive meos, conjux optime! Vive tuos.* Under the same figure, the deceased is represented in the Latin diatich as altered, after alluding to his early death, as uttering as a patriot a similar prayer, that the republic may fulfill her high destiny, and that her years may equal those of time. As the diatich now stands, the figure may be made to apply either to the whole Union, or to Tennessee, that has honored his memory by the erection of a monument.

The impression has long prevailed that under the influence of disease of body and mind – of hopes based upon long and valuable services – not merely deferred, but wholly disappointed – Governor Lewis perished by his own hands. It seems to be more probable that he died by the hands of an assassin. The place at which he was killed is even yet a lovely spot. It was then wild and solitary, and on the borders of the Indian Nation.

Maj. M. L. Clark, a son of Governor Clark of Missouri; in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Cressey of Maury County says: "Have you ever heard of the report that Gov. Lewis did not destroy his own life, but was murdered by his servant, a Frenchman, who stole his money and horses, returned to Natchez, and was never afterwards heard of? This is an important matter in connection with the erection of a monument to his memory, as it clearly removes from my mind at least, the only stigma upon the fair name I have the honor to bear."

The undersigned would suggest to the General Assembly, the propriety of having an acre of ground, or some other reasonable quantity, around the grave secured against the entry of private persons. This can be done, either by reserving the title in the State, or by directing a grant to be issued in the name of the Governor and by his successors. The first mode would perhaps be the best.

All of which is respectfully submitted, EDMUND DILLAHUNTY, BARCLAY MARTIN, ROBERT A. SMITH, SAMUEL B. MOORE.

Posted by Kira Gale on 06/22/2008 at 11:31 AM

Treasurer's Report

The Badger Chapter has \$2938.44 in the Chapter Treasury as of April 4, 2009, and 77 active members.



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