

HIGH POINT OF THE JOURNEY

"thus far I had accomplished one of those great objects on which my mind has been unalterably fixed for many years," wrote Meriwether Lewis, 456 days after setting out from St. Louis.

Lewis, George Drouillard, Hugh McNeal, and John Shields crossed the Continental Divide here on August 12, 1805, in advance of the main expedition. They left the headwaters of the Missouri and entered the upper Columbia River Basin.

At 7,373 ft. (2,247 m.), Lemhi Pass is the highest elevation on the westward route of Lewis and Clark.

"Portage Hill"

Lewis and Clark hoped to find a practical land route - a *portage* - between the Missouri and Columbia Rivers. Optimistically, they called this place "Portage Hill." Later, after five weeks of arduous travel through the rugged Rocky Mountains, they learned this was not the Northwest Passage they sought.

AT THE EDGE OF AN EMPIRE

THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

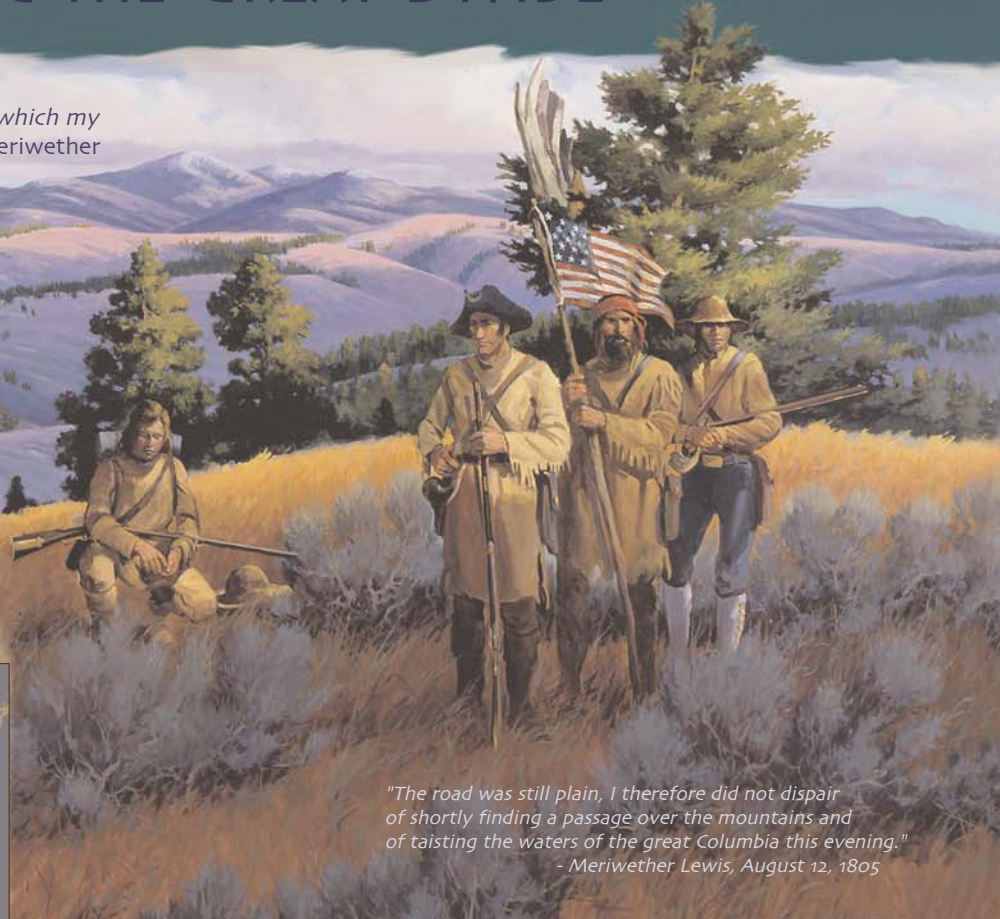
Today you stand at the border of two states. In 1805, it was a boundary between nations.

Purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803 strengthened the United States' drive to span the North American continent.

British and U.S. interests were racing to occupy the Pacific Northwest, wanting control of the valuable trade routes and commerce in the region. Both countries failed to fully acknowledge the sovereignty of resident Indian nations.



POLITICAL BOUNDARIES IN NORTH AMERICA - 1803



"The road was still plain, I therefore did not despair of shortly finding a passage over the mountains and of tasting the waters of the great Columbia this evening."

- Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805

LEMHI PASS

A WELL-WORN TRAVEL WAY

FROM ROUTE...



MOVING OVER THE MOUNTAINS

The Shoshone Indians call this pass "*Wee-yah-vee.*" For thousands of years, the *Aqui-dika*, or Salmoneater people of the Shoshone, and other tribes, crossed the Continental Divide here. Their moccasins and horses' hooves created a plain trail for Lewis and Clark to follow in 1805.

People use this place as a natural doorway through the rugged wall of the Bitterroot Range of the Rocky Mountains. It is a passageway between the valley of the Salmon River to the west, and Horse Prairie Creek to the east. In the years after Lewis and Clark, mountain men and fur traders called it "North Pass."

The name Lemhi Pass dates to 1855, when Mormon pioneers established Fort Limhi in the valley west of here. The name "Limhi" came from a king in the Book of Mormon. Later, the spelling was changed to "Lemhi." The fort was abandoned in 1858, but the name remained with the land and its people, the Lemhi Shoshone.



Mountain men of the fur trade era.
Detail from "The Beavermen" by Robert F. Morgan
- Oil on canvas, 1990 - Courtesy of the Artist



...TO ROAD



The Red Rock-Salmon City Stage Company

This stageline was one of several that covered the 68 miles between the Utah and Northern Railroad at Red Rock, Montana, and Salmon City, Idaho. The company ran eight stagecoaches daily. \$8.00 bought a one-way fare.

They employed 14 Concord coaches, 12 freight wagons, 80 horses, and 35-40 people. In one banner year, the stageline carried 3,000 passengers and 1,200,000 pounds of freight and U.S. mail over Lemhi Pass.

WHEELING TO THE TOP

Idaho's gold rush in the Leesburg district near Salmon City created the need for a road over Lemhi Pass. Freight wagons and stagecoaches traveled this new road by the early 1880s. The route remained busy until 1910, when the Gilmore & Pittsburgh Railroad opened over Bannock Pass.

Since the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps, U.S. Forest Service, and local governments have relocated and improved sections of the old stage road. Today, vegetation and newer roads obscure the Indian trail followed by Lewis and Clark, but portions of the old stage road can still be traced on either side of the pass.



From very near this spot 100 years ago, you could have watched this stagecoach from Montana follow a freight wagon to the summit of Lemhi Pass. Part of the old stage road is still open. Today, it is the road to Sacajawea Memorial Area. The growth of trees and newer roads have changed the view. -Photo courtesy of the Idaho State Historical Society

100 years ago, you could have watched this stagecoach from Montana follow a freight wagon to the summit of Lemhi Pass. This photo shows part of the old stage road that is still open today. It is the road to Sacajawea Memorial Area, just west of Lemhi, Idaho. The growth of trees and newer roads have changed the view from the original route. Photo courtesy of the Idaho State Historical Society.



Climbing to the top of Lemhi Pass from Agency Creek in Idaho. - Photo courtesy of the Vern Chandler family, Salmon, Idaho

Lemhi Fall
1887

SACAJAWEA

There are many stories about the young Indian woman who accompanied the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

As time goes on, Sacajawea continues to inspire our admiration and curiosity. People delight in the stories of Sacajawea. These stories continue to be retold in many ways, generations after her passing.

This special memorial area was created in 1932, honoring Sacajawea as an interpreter, guide and counselor to the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

INTERPRETER

At Camp Fortunate, Sacajawea was a vital link between the Expedition and the Shoshone Indians as they traded for horses and learned about the road ahead.

GUIDE & COUNSELOR

In southwestern Montana, Sacajawea pointed out important landmarks for Lewis and Clark. Throughout the Expedition, she shared her knowledge of native plants as food and medicine.

"We know she was a good woman and a fine mother...To us, she represents all that is good about our people, the Lemhi Shoshoni."

-Rod Ariwite,
Fort Lemhi Indian Community,
January 1997

"Sakakawea"
detail of statue by
Leonard Crundie, 1910,
Bismarck, North Dakota
-courtesy North Dakota
Historical Society

Detail from statue by Robert Scriver,
1962, Fort Benton, Montana
- photo courtesy of the
National Park Service



HONORING A HEROINE

SACAJAWEA MEMORIAL AREA



"There were many heroes in this band of intrepid explorers; there was but one heroine. Denied in life -and after- that recognition which was due her, it is fitting that we meet here today to dedicate this spot in honor of that heroine."

-R.F. Hammat, assistant Regional Forester, 1932

During the Centennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1903-1906), little-known Sacajawea became a national heroine.

Activists for women's rights especially embraced Sacajawea as a symbol of the importance of women in American history. Writers and artists were inspired, celebrating Sacajawea in books, paintings, statues, and pageants.

This Memorial Area is one of many places dedicated in her honor.



On Sunday, August 14, 1932 more than 500 people gathered here to dedicate Sacajawea Memorial Area. -Photo courtesy of Dan Scott



Beaverhead-Deerlodge & Salmon-Challis National Forests

LAURA TOLMAN SCOTT AND THE D. A. R.



Laura Tolman Scott about 1900
- Photo courtesy of Dan Scott

Establishing Sacajawea Memorial Area at Lemhi Pass was the dream of Laura Tolman Scott, of Armstead, Montana.

Mrs. Scott joined the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.) in 1907. A national women's service organization founded in 1897, the D.A.R. seeks to preserve American history.

Mrs. Scott became a D.A.R. leader. Many historic sites locally and in the Pacific Northwest are preserved through her efforts.

Working with the citizens of Beaverhead County, Montana and Lemhi County, Idaho, Mrs. Scott campaigned many years for this special memorial to Sacajawea. It was one of Mrs. Scott's most cherished places.



Laura Tolman Scott, with Roy Henderson (left) and Clair Sage (right) place a D.A.R. marker for Camp Fortunate near Armstead, Montana about 1920.
- Photo courtesy of Dan Scott

"Though the pathfinders die, the paths remain open." Laura Tolman Scott

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE "ENDLESS MISSOURI"



"two miles below McNeal had exultingly stood with a foot on each side of this little rivulet and thanked his god that he had lived to bestride the mighty & heretofore deemed endless Missouri."

-Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805

Hugh McNeal stood over Trail Creek, about two and a half miles downstream from here. This little stream is just one of hundreds of small tributaries that flow into the Missouri River.

After many months laboring to pole, paddle, and drag the heavy boats of the Lewis and Clark Expedition upstream against strong currents of the Missouri, McNeal was finally able to straddle that great river near here.

Have you traveled a long way to reach the beginnings of the Missouri River?

You are invited to "bestride" the Mighty Missouri.

PLEASE STAY ON THE ROCKS!
Protect the plants along the streambanks.

Thank You!



"MOST DISTANT FOUNTAIN" OF THE MIGHTY MISSOURI

"the road took us to the most distant fountain of the waters of the mighty Missouri in surch of which we have spent so many toilsome days and wristless nights."
- Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805



What's in a name?

In 1921, historians named this spring "Most Distant Fountain," identifying it as the source of water Meriwether Lewis referred to in his journal. Lewis described water "*issuing from the base of a low hill*" about 1/2 mile below Lemhi Pass.

Was Lewis writing about this spring?
We may never really know.

Help Preserve the Spring

Trampling can damage the willows and other plants around the spring and affect the flow of water from the aquifer.

Please keep out of the springhead.

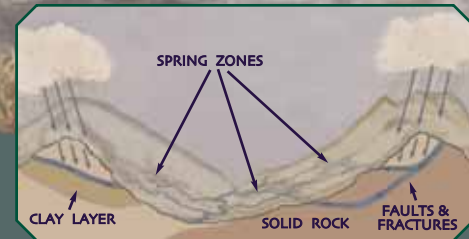


Lewis's red monkey-flower
Mimulus lewisii

Where Does the Water Come From?

Water from rain and snowmelt seeps into the ground until it meets a solid layer of rock or clay. It pools above these impermeable layers, forming an aquifer.

Influenced by gravity, water in an aquifer flows back out to the surface if it can find a path. It often follows fault lines or fractures underground. When water reaches the surface, it appears as a spring.



"IMMENSE RANGES OF HIGH MOUNTAINS STILL TO THE WEST OF US..."



Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805



The Trails of Lewis and Clark

RED - 1805 westward route
BLUE - 1806 eastward route



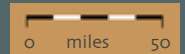
YELLOW - highlights the portage across the Rocky Mountains



Filling in the Blanks

The maps of North America carried by Lewis and Clark showed only a vast, uncharted space between the Mandan villages of the Missouri River and the Pacific Coast. The mountains separating the Missouri and Columbia river drainages were drawn as a single ridge. There was hope of finding a simple land route, or portage, over the Rocky Mountains. Map makers two hundred years ago did not know what the West was like.

The modern map above is just a small slice of the United States along the Lewis and Clark Trail. Imagine trying to find your way across this land without such a map. Lewis and Clark, and many others who followed after them, have filled in the blanks for us.



A COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE CONTINENT BY WATER



"...this I can scarcely hope..."

Two days before reaching the Continental Divide, Meriwether Lewis speculated that the Columbia River would not have the same moderate character as the Missouri.

"I do not believe that the world can furnish an example of a river running to the extent which the Missouri and Jefferson's rivers do through such a mountainous country and at the same time so navigable as they are.

if the Columbia furnishes us such another example, a communication across the continent by water will be practicable and safe. but this I can scarcely hope from a knowledge of its having in it comparatively short course to the ocean the same number of feet to descend which the Missouri and Mississippi have from this point to the Gulf of Mexico."

- Meriwether Lewis, August 10, 1805

Dividing the Waters of North America

North America's Rocky Mountains split the waters of the continent. To the east, the Missouri-Mississippi River system rolls placidly through the plains to the Gulf of Mexico. To the west, the Columbia River system roars to the Pacific through deep, narrow canyons filled with whitewater rapids.



HOW DID HE KNOW?

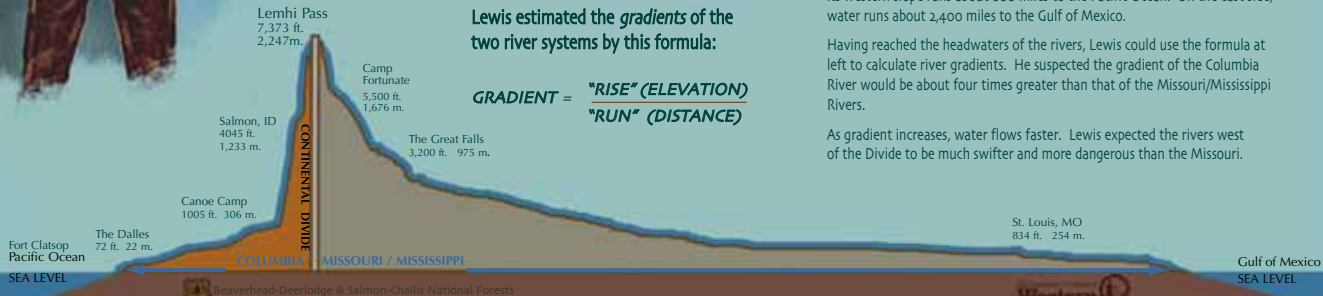
Lewis estimated the *gradients* of the two river systems by this formula:

$$\text{GRADIENT} = \frac{\text{"RISE" (ELEVATION)}}{\text{"RUN" (DISTANCE)}}$$

The Continental Divide at Lemhi Pass is 7,373 ft. above sea level. Water on its western slope runs about 600 miles to the Pacific Ocean. On the east side, water runs about 2,400 miles to the Gulf of Mexico.

Having reached the headwaters of the rivers, Lewis could use the formula at left to calculate river gradients. He suspected the gradient of the Columbia River would be about four times greater than that of the Missouri/Mississippi Rivers.

As gradient increases, water flows faster. Lewis expected the rivers west of the Divide to be much swifter and more dangerous than the Missouri.



Beaverhead-Deerlodge & Salmon-Challis National Forests



LIVING LIFE & "GOING TO BUFFALO"



Birth And Battle At Lemhi Pass

The *Aqui-dika*, or Salmoneater Shoshones, like many other western Indian tribes, made long treks from the mountains to the plains of the Missouri to hunt bison. For months, even years, they lived their lives on the trail. Sacajawea, like most children, learned landmarks hundreds of miles from her homeland.

Some tribes were friendly. Lewis and Clark found Flathead (Salish) Indians living with the Shoshones. Others were fierce enemies. By the 1800s, roaming war parties of the Blackfoot tribe, equipped with guns, dominated the region. Shoshone and Salish people suffered many losses due to the superior weapons of their enemies.

Lewis and Clark, and other white men who lived among the Indians, wrote about their experiences and recorded stories told by their hosts. These accounts come to us from an earlier time, filtered through non-Indian eyes and ears.



ALFRED JACOB MILLER
Shoshone Camp
Fording River - 1837
Joslyn Art Museum,
Omaha, Nebraska



A New Life Arrives Along the Trail

"one of the women who had been assisting in the transportation of the baggage halted at a little run [creek] about a mile behind us, and sent on the two pack horses which she had been conducting by one of her female friends.

I enquired of Cameahwait the cause of her detention, and was informed by him in an unconcerned manner that she had halted to bring fourth a child and would soon overtake us; in about an hour the woman arrived with her newborn babe and passed us on her way to the camp apparently as well as she ever was."

- Meriwether Lewis, August 26, 1805

ALFRED JACOB MILLER Snake Indians Migrating - 1837 Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska

A Deadly Battle on the Pass

"... thirty of his people were massacred last spring, one at a time, by a large party of Black-feet, on the east fork of Salmon river [Lemhi]. The little devoted band had started expressly to retake horses from, or fight the Black-feet, who were, it appears, approaching in considerable number, at the same time, determined to fulfill a threat they had made last fall, that they would exterminate the Flat-heads, root and branch.

The two parties met on the summit of the pass from that fork to Horse prairie, and a most desperate conflict ensued, which resulted in the total defeat of the Flat-heads, who fought to the last, and perished to a man. The only individual of the party who escaped was separated from the rest in the early part of the action, and fled to tell the disastrous tale."

A Flathead (Salish) Chief told this story to Warren Ferris, who was employed by the American Fur Company in this region from 1830 to 1835.

From *Life In The Rocky Mountains* by Warren Angus Ferris. Used with permission of Far West Publishing Co.



LEMHI PASS

LOOKING SOUTH ALONG THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

LEMHI PASS
7,373 ft. (2,247 m.)

EAST AND WEST PEAK
9,924ft. (3,025 m.)

BEAVERHEAD MOUNTAINS

LEMHI RANGE

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE
NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL

AGENCY CREEK



Who passed this way?

In August of 1805 members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and Shoshone Indians crossed Lemhi Pass six times in 15 days.

Monday, the 12th.....	Lewis, McNeal, Drouillard & Shields.....	headed west
Thursday, the 15th.....	Lewis & 3 men with Cameahwait & 60 Shoshones.....	headed east
Monday, the 19th.....	Clark & 11 men, Charbonneau, Sacajawea, Pomp, Cameahwait & Shoshones.....	headed west
Wednesday, the 21st.....	Charbonneau, Sacajawea, Pomp, Cameahwait & Shoshones.....	headed east
Sunday, the 25th.....	Shoshone messengers sent by Cameahwait.....	headed west
Monday, the 26th.....	Lewis and the main Expedition aided by Shoshones.....	headed west



AGENCY CREEK

LOOKING WEST TO THE SALMON RIVER COUNTRY



LEMHI RANGE



SALMON RIVER MOUNTAINS

AGENCY CREEK



First Camp



First Taste of
the Columbia



HORSESHOE BEND CREEK



First Taste of the Columbia

"we proceeded on to the top of the dividing ridge from which I discovered immense ranges of high mountains still to the West of us with their tops partially covered with snow. I now descended the mountain about 3/4 of a mile which I found much steeper than on the opposite side, to a handsome bold running Creek of cold Clear water. here I first tasted the water of the great Columbia river."

First Camp on the Columbia

"after a short halt of a few minutes we continued our march along the Indian road which lead us over steep hills and deep hollows to a spring on the side of a mountain where we found a sufficient quantity of dry willow brush for fuel, here we encamped for the night having traveled about 20 Miles."

- Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805

