

Bicentennial of the Lewis & Clark Expedition

1803



Meriwether Lewis



William Clark

2003

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www.crescentcitycoinclub.org

What was the Lewis & Clark Expedition?



When Thomas Jefferson became President in 1801, the western boundary of the United States was the Mississippi River and two-thirds of the population lived within 50 miles of the Atlantic Ocean.

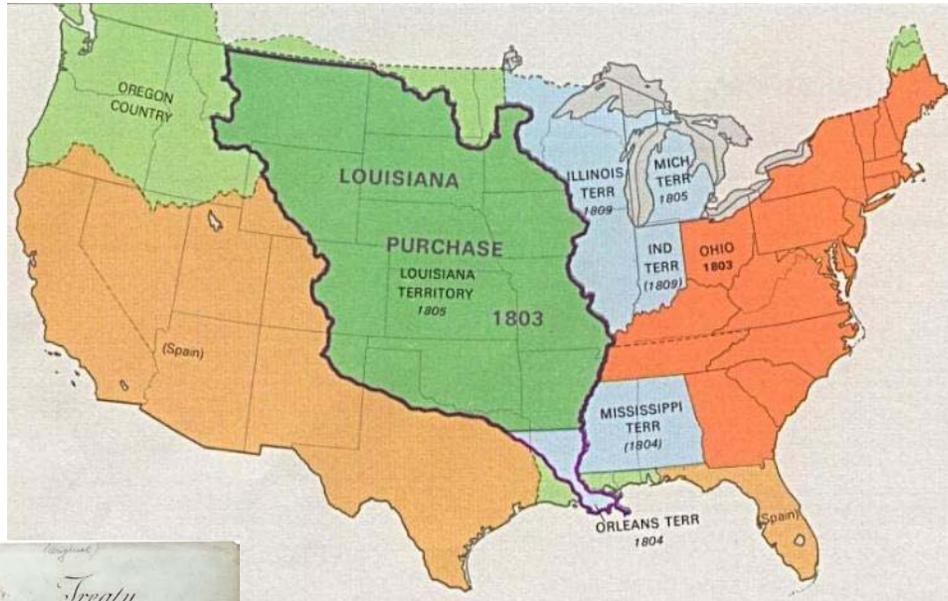
Jefferson wanted a passage to the Pacific Ocean! He was excited by the possibility of a river or system of rivers that could connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans through the continent of North America.

There was even speculation that Woolly Mammoths roamed the frozen mountains beyond the source of the Missouri River.

On February 28, 1803, Thomas Jefferson won Congressional approval to send an expedition to explore the uncharted West!



The Louisiana Purchase



The Louisiana Purchase was a major factor in sending Lewis and Clark to explore the West.

On April 30, 1803, the United States, then just 27 years old, purchased from France all the lands drained by the Mississippi River, about 827,987 square miles, for \$15,000,000.

Thomas Jefferson was now able to send an expedition as far as Oregon Country without it leaving United States soil. Much of the West was in dispute between Spain, Britain, and Russia.

Congress authorized the formation of the expedition formally known as the “Corps of Discovery” and appropriated \$2,500 (ultimate cost was \$38,000).



Louisiana Quarter features the Louisiana Purchase



Louisiana Quarter Launch

Old U.S. Mint, New Orleans

May 30, 2002

Henrietta Fore, Mint Director



Leaders of the Corps of Discovery: Lewis & Clark



Meriwether Lewis

Thomas Jefferson selected Meriwether Lewis, his personal secretary, to lead the expedition. Lewis was 28 years old and had served in the Army for 6 years, rising to the rank of Captain. Jefferson trusted Lewis and had known him since he was a child, having grown-up just 10 miles from Monticello. Lewis had a keen interest in horticulture, which was encouraged by his mother, a noted herb doctor. Lewis was lean, about 6 feet tall, and well educated.



William Clark

Meriwether Lewis asked his former Army commander William Clark to be his co-captain. Clark was 4 years older than Lewis, taller and more muscular, with red hair. He was a practical man who was trained in the military to draw maps, build forts, lead pack trains, and “fight Indians on their ground.” Clark was not as well educated as Lewis, but they shared a lasting friendship and there is not a single recording of them disagreeing on an important decision.

More about Lewis & Clark



Meriwether Lewis

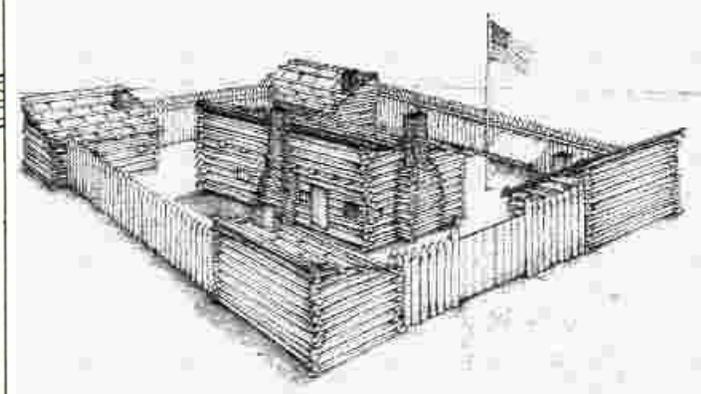
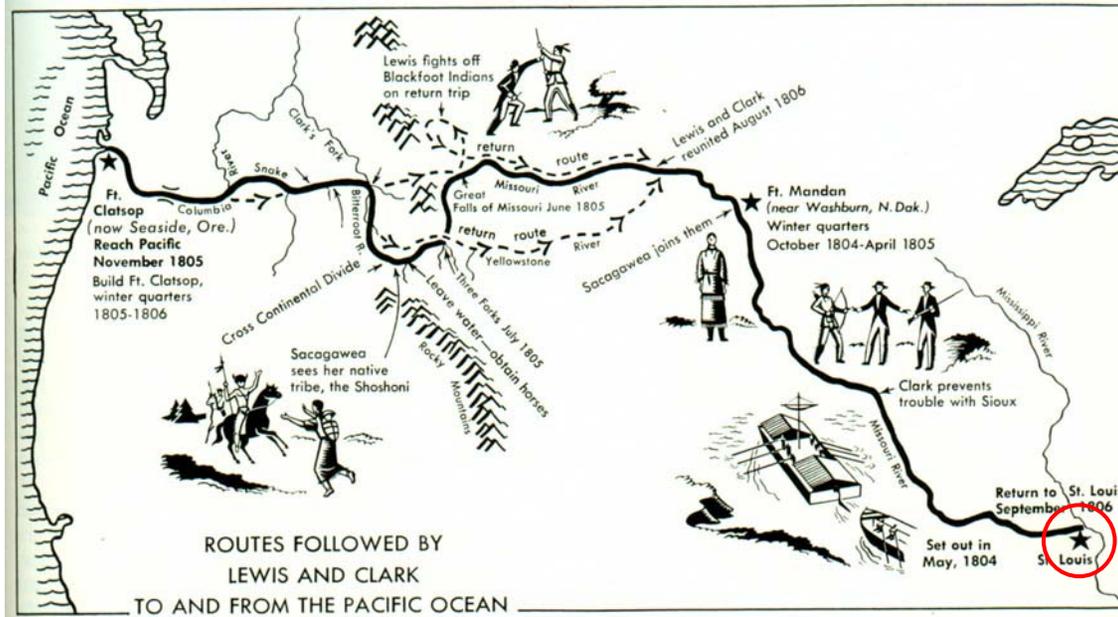
- Born in Virginia on August 18, 1774
- 2nd of 3 children – father was killed when Lewis was 5
- Raised by Army officer stepfather and herb doctor mother
- Grew-up on 1,000 acre plantation
- Joined army in 1794 and rose to rank of captain
- Documented 178 plants and 122 animals on the expedition
- After the expedition, appointed Governor of the Louisiana Territory, but developed problems with depression and alcohol
- Died on October 11, 1809 at age 35 – suicide



William Clark

- Born in Virginia on August 1, 1770
- 9th of 10 children – brothers were in the Revolutionary War
- After the war, family relocated to Louisville, Kentucky
- Joined the Kentucky Militia in 1789 and later the regular army
- Rose to the rank of lieutenant – promoted to captain for expedition
- Accomplished at map making and an able leader
- After the expedition, appointed Governor of the Missouri Territory
- Died on September 1, 1838 at age 68 in the home of the oldest of his 10 children, Meriwether Lewis Clark

May 14, 1804 – the Expedition Begins



Camp Dubois

The expedition began at Camp Dubois on the Missouri River near St. Louis with 47 men, about 30 of which were permanent members. They set-out by keel boat and 2 smaller vessels called “pirogues” which could be rowed, sailed, pushed with poles, or pulled with a tow rope.

The keel boat was 55 feet long, 8 feet wide, with a cargo capacity of about 10 tons. Traveling upstream, 14 miles a day was considered good progress.



“Children, we have been sent by the Great Chief...”

On August 3, 1804, Meriwether Lewis delivered a speech to a delegation of Oto and Missouri Indians. It was the first of many times that he would deliver the speech in accordance with the instructions of Thomas Jefferson “to make peace with all tribes they encounter and assert American authority.”

Children, we have been sent by the Great Chief of the Seventeen Great Nations of America. The President is now your only Great Father. He will serve you and not deceive you. But disobey him and he could consume you as the fire consumes the grass of the plains.

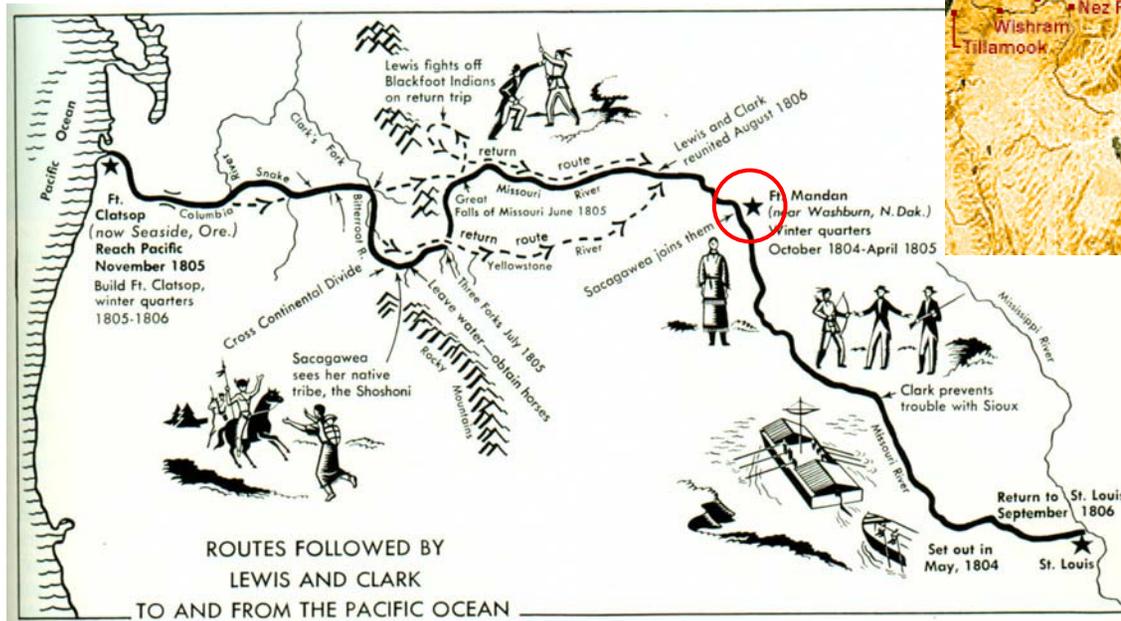


Peace medals made of silver were given to Indian chiefs as gifts and symbols of American authority.

Fort Mandan – October 24, 1804

On October 24, 1804, the Corps reached a great trade center and the last mapped landmark for nearly 1,000 miles. The earth-lodge villages of the Mandan and Hidatsa tribes housed nearly 4,500 people (more than were living in St. Louis or Washington, D.C. at the time).

The Corps wintered at Fort Mandan until April 7, 1805.



It was at Fort Mandan that Sacagawea joined the expedition.

Sacagawea – Bird Woman

On November 4, 1804, Lewis and Clark hired a French-Canadian fur trader named Toussaint Charbonneau as an interpreter. He was 45 years old and had been living among the Indians for the past 8 years. He had 2 young Shoshone wives. One of his wives is named Sacagawea, which means Bird Woman.

Sacagawea is about 16 years old and 6 months pregnant.

Together, Charbonneau and Sacagawea were valuable to Lewis and Clark. She spoke Shoshone and Hidatsa; he spoke Hidatsa and French. To complete the link, Private Francois Labiche of the Corps spoke French and English.

This interpreter chain would allow Lewis and Clark to speak to Indians that were essential to the survival of the expedition, especially the Shoshone who had horses that they would need to cross the Rocky Mountains.

Sacagawea's son, Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, was born on February 11, 1805. He was later raised by William Clark, traveled to Europe, and died in Oregon in 1866 at age 61.

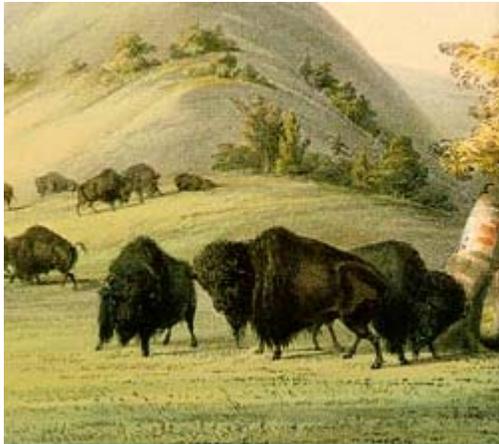


Immense herds in every direction – April 25, 1805

Regarding the buffalo, Lewis wrote in his journal, “Immense herds in every direction. So gentle that we could pass near them without appearing to excite any alarm.”

- Then about 60 million Bison roaming free on the plains
- By 1900, less than 300
- Today, about 250,000

To the Plains Indians, the Bison were a way of life – the source of food, shelter, tools, ornaments, and clothing.

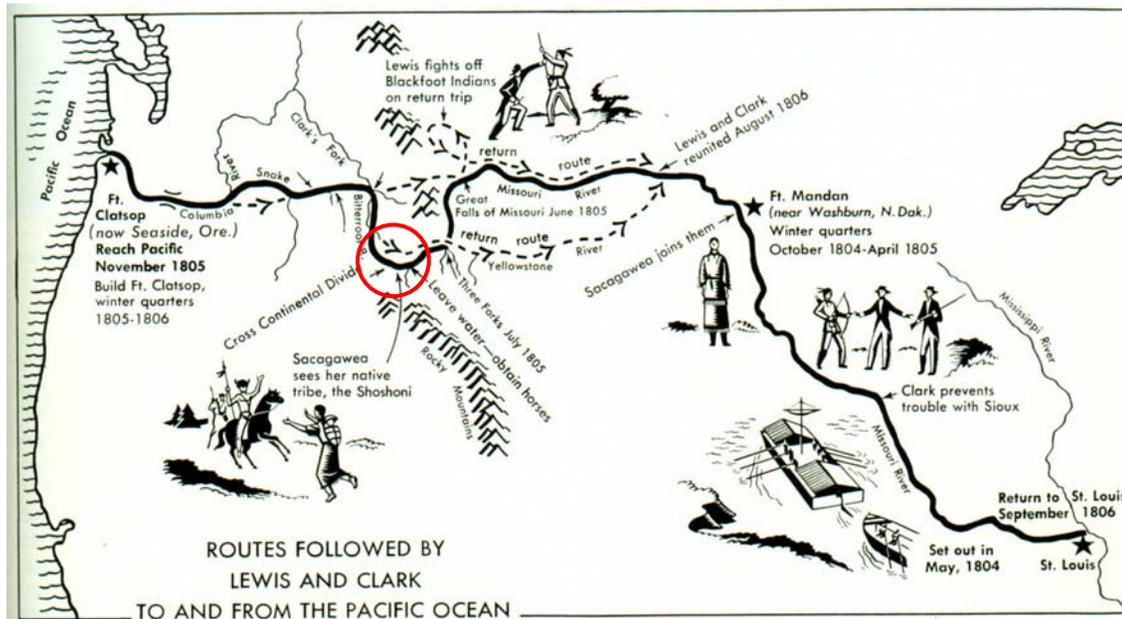


Continental Divide – August 12, 1805

On August 12, 1805, Lewis located the source of the Missouri River – an ice cold, spring-fed stream. The Corps had reached the Continental Divide.

Surveying the horizon beyond the Continental Divide, Lewis expected to see plains and westward flowing rivers leading to the Pacific Ocean. Instead, he saw more snow-capped mountains.

The Corps would be near starvation 6 weeks later when they found their way out of the mountains.



Lewis ponders the hardships ahead in the snow covered mountains.

Ocean in view! – November 7, 1805

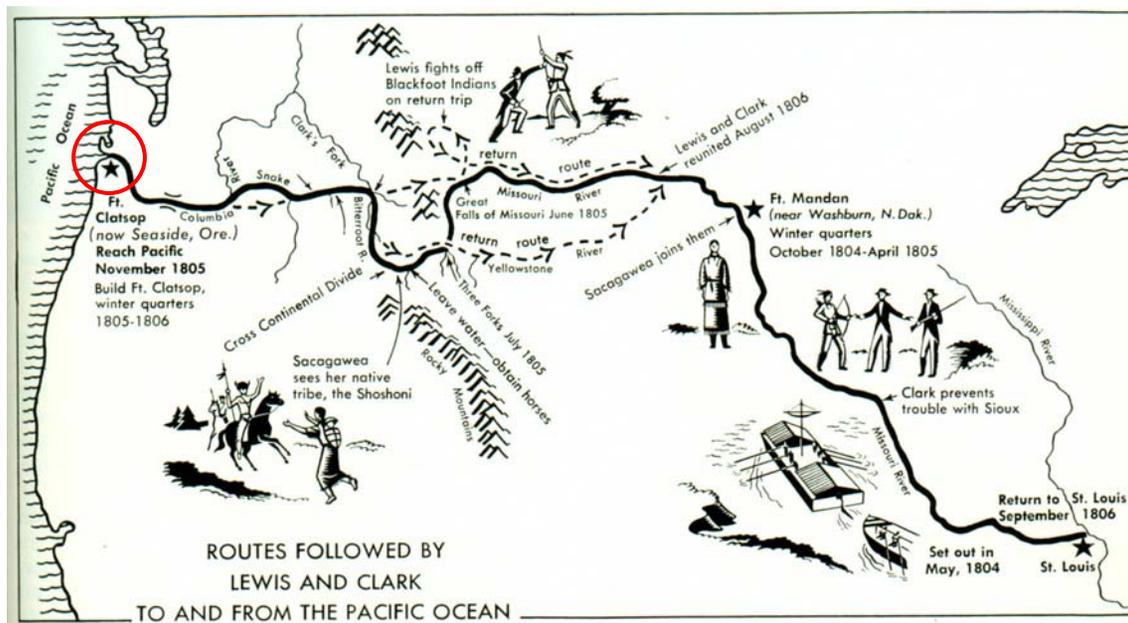
The Nez Perce Indians took pity on the starving members of the Corps who had barely survived crossing the section of the Rocky Mountains known as the Bitterroots. Along the way, the Corps had to butcher horses since there was nothing else to eat. The Nez Perce fed the Corps salmon and camas roots.

Having regained their strength and been taught how to make dugout canoes, the Corps descended the Columbia River toward the Pacific Ocean.

The Corps reached the Pacific on November 7, 1805, and voted to winter on the south bank of the Columbia River (1st vote which included a woman and a black man... Sacagawea and York, Clark's slave).

Fort Clatsop was established as their winter quarters (near modern day Astoria, Oregon).

Began return trip on March 23, 1806.



September 23, 1806 – the Expedition Ends

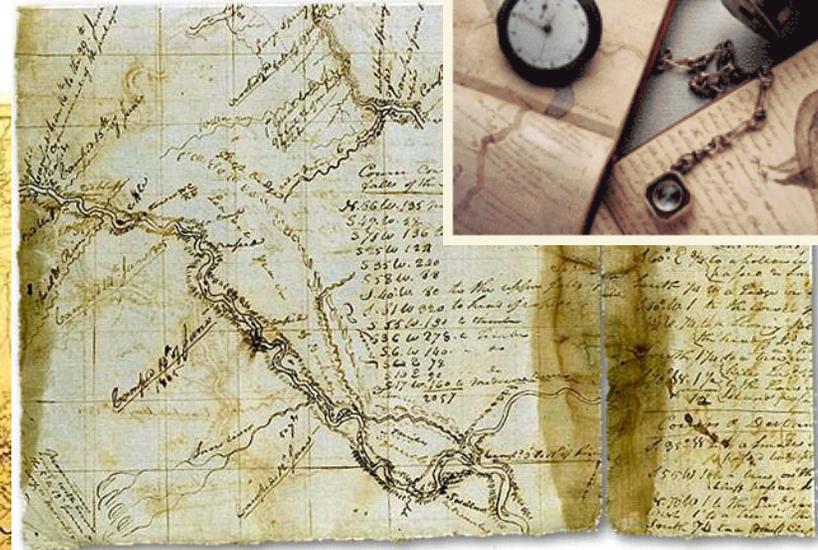
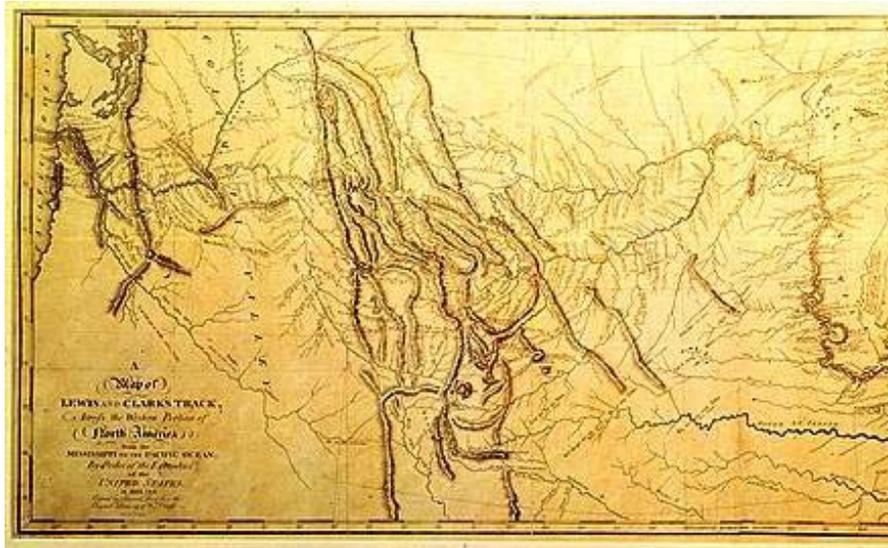
Lewis and Clark were hailed as national heroes.

During the expedition, the Corps passed about 50 tribes of Native Americans.

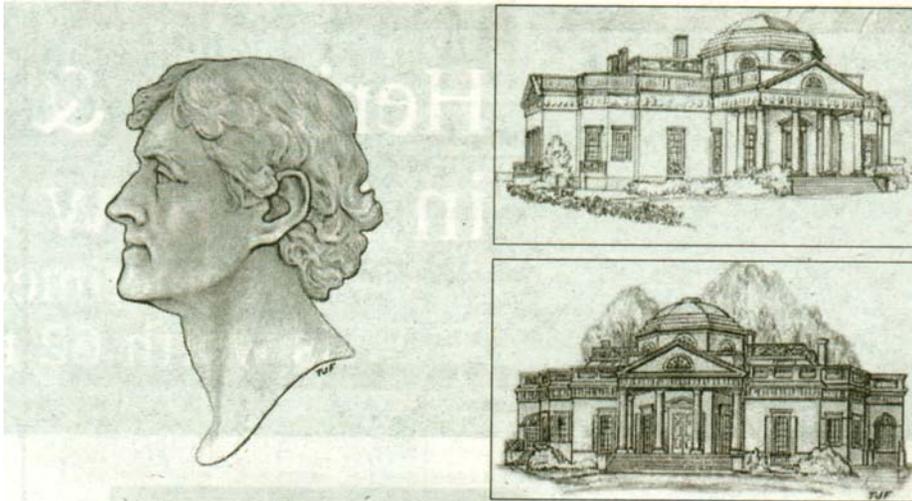
Only 1 member of the Corps died during the expedition (Sergeant Charles Floyd of an apparent ruptured appendix) and 2 Blackfoot Indians (during a skirmish on the return trip – the only bloodshot of the expedition).

Lewis documented 178 plants and 122 animals.

Clark produced new and accurate maps.



Jefferson 5-Cent Coin Design to Change



IF MINT OFFICIALS move forward with the redesign of the Jefferson 5-cent coins, new renditions of the current themes (a portrait of Thomas Jefferson on the obverse and a view of Jefferson's home at Monticello) could appear beginning in 2006. Shown are design candidates for 2006.

Mint considers five options for redesign of 5-cent coin



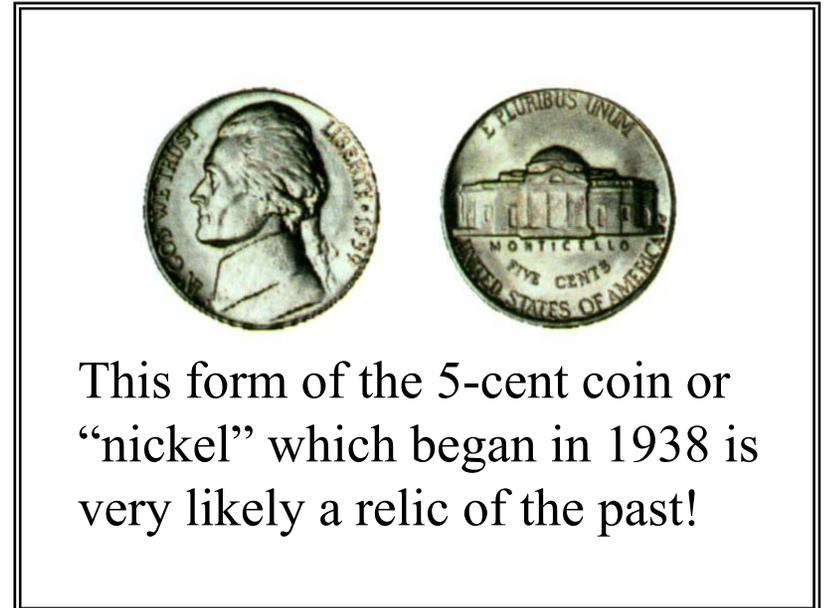
On April 23, 2003 (260 years and 10 days after the birth of Thomas Jefferson, the 3rd President), George Bush, the 43rd President, signed legislation authorizing design changes for 5-cent coins issued in 2003-2006.

The 2003 design (made public on November 6, 2003) honors the Louisiana Purchase.

The 2004 and 2005 designs will honor the Lewis & Clark Expedition.

The 2006 design will very likely feature new depictions of Jefferson on the obverse and Monticello on the reverse.

Jefferson 5-Cent Coin Designs – November 6, 2003



This form of the 5-cent coin or “nickel” which began in 1938 is very likely a relic of the past!

Missouri Quarter Commemorates Lewis & Clark (but not without controversy)



Initial design submitted to the Mint by artist Paul Jackson



Final design produced by the Mint without consulting the artist!

Other Coins & Currency which remind us of Lewis & Clark



1993 Jefferson commemorative



1904 Lewis & Clark gold commemoratives



2004 Lewis & Clark commemorative



Bicentennial of the Lewis & Clark Expedition

Thank you for your participation!

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