

# The Louisiana

## Building the



Sacagawea, a Shoshone Indian, guided Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, and the Corps of Discovery as the group made its way to the Pacific Ocean.

On January 18, 1803, the third U.S. President, Thomas Jefferson, sent a letter to Congress. He asked the members of Congress to give him \$2,500. He wanted to send a party of adventurers to explore the western areas of the United States. The money was used to pay Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to map a route to the Pacific Ocean.

On January 18, 2003, we will begin to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Lewis and Clark's amazing adventure across the United States. The celebration will begin at *Monticello*. Monticello was Jefferson's home in Virginia.

### The Louisiana Purchase

Lewis and Clark and more than 40 teammates, called the Corps of Discovery, set out on their mission to explore the West on May 14, 1804. They knew that they were **charting unexplored** areas that

Lewis used this rifle for protection and hunting.

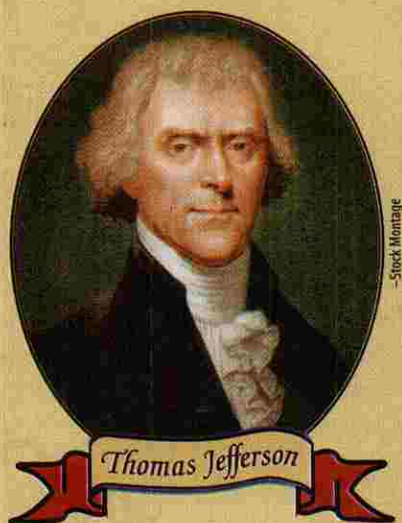
would one day become U.S. states.

The United States had recently purchased from France part of the area Lewis and Clark were to explore. That area,

in the middle of what is our country today, was called the Louisiana Territory. It doubled the size of the United States. People looking for better lives would soon **flock** there.



# na Purchase nited States



—Stock Montage



brought many samples of the rocks, plants, and animals they had **encountered** back with them. Those samples were used to start the collections of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Today the Smithsonian is the national museum of the United States.

The first thing many of the explorers wanted to do was to see their loved ones. “Now we intend to return to our native homes to see our parents once more, as we have been so long from them,” wrote John Ordway, a member of the expedition.

**William Clark used this compass as he and the Corps of Discovery traveled through the wilderness.**

—The Smithsonian Institution



## The End of the Journey

The explorers traveled about 8,000 miles. They saw many previously unstudied plants and animals, such as grizzly bears and prairie dogs. They met about

50 different Native American tribes.

After exploring and mapping the West for 28 months, Lewis and Clark returned to St. Louis on September 23, 1806. They

## Word Power

- charting**—mapping
- encountered**—came across
- flock**—to come together
- unexplored**—unknown

