**Document A: Jefferson’s Letter to Meriwether Lewis**

To Meriwether Lewis esq. Capt. of the 1st regimt. of infantry of the U. S. of A.: . . .

The commerce which may be carried on with the people inhabiting the line you will pursue, renders a knolege of those people important. You will therefore endeavor to make yourself acquainted, as far as a diligent pursuit of your journey shall admit, with the names of the nations & their numbers; the extent & limits of their possessions; their relations with other tribes of nations; their language, traditions, monuments their ordinary occupations in agriculture, fishing, hunting, war, arts, & the implements for these; their food, clothing, & domestic accommodations; the diseases prevalent among them, & the remedies they use; moral & physical circumstances which distinguish them from the tribes we know; peculiarities in their laws, customs & dispositions; and articles of commerce they may need or furnish, & to what extent.

And, considering the interest which every nation has in extending & strengthening the authority of reason & justice among the people around them, it will be useful to acquire what knolege you can of the state of morality, religion, & information among them; as it may better enable those who endeavor to civilize & instruct them, to adapt their measure to the existing notions & practices of those on whom they are to operate. . . .

In all your intercourse with the natives, treat them in the most friendly & conciliatory manner which their own conduct will admit; allay all jealousies as to the object of your journey, satisfy them of its innocence, make them acquainted with the position, extent, character, peaceable & commercial dispositions of the U.S. of our wish to be neighborly, friendly & useful to them, & of our dispositions to a commercial intercourse with them; confer with them on the points most convenient as mutual emporiums, and the articles of most desireable interchange for them & us. If a few of their influential chiefs, within practicable distance, wish to visit us, arrange such a visit with them, and furnish them with authority to call on our officers, on their entering the U.S to have them conveyed to this place at the public expense. If any of them should wish to have some of their young people brought up with us, & taught such arts as may be useful to them, we will receive, instruct & take care of them. Such a mission, whether of influential chiefs or of young people, would give some security to your own party. Carry with you some matter of the kinepox; inform those of them with whom you may be, of it'[s] efficacy as a preservative from the small-pox; & instruct & incourage them in the use of it. This may be especially done wherever you winter.

As it is impossible for us to foresee in what manner you will be recieved by those people, whether with hospitality or hostility, so is it impossible to prescribe the exact degree of perseverance with which you are to pursue your journey. We value too much the lives of citizens to offer them to probable destruction. Your numbers will be sufficient to secure you against the unauthorised opposition of individuals or of small parties: but if a superior force, authorised, or not authorised, by a nation, should be arrayed against your further passage, and inflexibly determined to arrest it, you must decline its further pursuit, and return. In the loss of yourselves, we should lose also the information you will have acquired. By returning safely with that, you may enable us to renew the essay with better calculated means. To your own discretion therefore must be left the degree of danger you may risk, and the point at which you should decline, only saying we wish you to err on the side of your safety, and to bring back your party safe even it if be with less information.

As far up the Missouri as the white settlements extend, an intercourse will probably be found to exist between them & the Spanish post of St. Louis opposite Cahokia, or Ste. Genevieve opposite Kaskaskia. From still further up the river, the traders may furnish a conveyance for letters. Beyond that, you may perhaps be able to engage Indian to bring letters for the government to Cahokia or Kaskaskia, on promising that they shall there receive such special compensation as you shall have stipulated with them. Avail yourself of these means to communicate to us, at seasonable intervals, a copy of your journal, notes & observations, of every kind, putting into cypher whatever might do injury if betrayed. . . .

Th. Jefferson  
Pr. U.S. of America

***Source:*** *Thomas Jefferson to Meriwether Lewis, June 20, 1803.*

**Document B: Meriwether Lewis Journal**

This morning at day light the indians got up and crouded around the fire, J. Fields who was on post had carelessly laid his gun down behid him near where his brother was sleeping, one of the indians the fellow to whom I had given the medal last evening sliped 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, J. Fields seing this turned about to look for his gun and saw the fellow just runing 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; 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 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 hollowed 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 drying 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, 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 peice 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 untill I reached camp; I therefore returned leasurely 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 Fieldes to pursue the indians, I desired him to haisten to the camp with me and assist in catching as many of the indian 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 geting 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 Fieldses returned with four of our horses; we left one of our horses and took four of the best of those of the indian's; while the men were preparing the horses I put four sheilds 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 eyedaggs. 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 buffaloe meat and set out ascending the bluffs by the same rout we had decended last evening leaving the ballance of nine of their horses which we did not want. the Feildses 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 beatiful 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 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 inteligence 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. at 3 P.M. we arrived at rose river about 5 miles above where we h ad passed it as we went out, having traveled by my estimate compared with our former distances and couses about 63 ms. here we halted an hour and a half took some refreshment and suffered our horses to graize; the day proved warm but the late rains had supplyed the little reservors 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 leasurely, heavy thunderclouds lowered arround us on every quarter but that from which the moon gave us light. we continued to pass immence herds of buffaloe all night as we had done in the latter part of the day. we traveled untill 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 fatiegued as may be readily conceived. my indian 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 robery.

***Source:*** *Diary of Meriwether Lewis, July 27, 1806.*

**Document C: *Time Magazine* Article**

Prairie grass ripples along the shores of North Dakota's Lake Sakakawea, and a fat rainbow shimmers overhead. Here, if Amy Mossett has her way, an $11 million interactive museum will soon welcome visitors to the Lewis and Clark trail. Mossett, tourism director for the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara tribes, is building replica earth lodges and planning overnight sleep-in-a-teepee packages with Indian food, ethno-botany hikes, buffalo-hide painting and lectures on tribal trade networks — insect repellent included. Her message: "Come and meet the descendants of the people who provided shelter to Lewis and Clark."

If the Mandan are as friendly today as they were 200 years ago, their neighbors the Teton Sioux, who were ornery in their encounters with Lewis and Clark, remain almost as testy. A South Dakota "scenic byway" designation drew initial opposition on the Standing Rock reservation. Traditionalists fear that tourists will loot sacred grave sites. And while the tribe is seeking grants for roadside panels and interpretive centers, the message will be mixed. "Our people have for too long put on beads and feathers and danced for the white man," says Ronald McNeil, a great-great-great grandson of Chief Sitting Bull and president of the local community college. "Yes, we'll show how our ancestors lived when Lewis and Clark came up the trail. But then we must say what happened to them since. I'm tired of playing Indian and not getting to be an Indian."

With conflicting emotions running deep among the tribes, Lewis and Clark boosters hope to bridge the divide by touting the expedition as "a journey of mutual discovery." Their fear: that Indian protests will mar the festivities, as happened during the 1992 Columbus voyage anniversary. "We're not going to repeat the Columbus debacle," says Michelle Bussard, executive director of the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. The nonprofit group has assembled a 30-member Circle of Tribal Advisers to promote Indian participation, and the National Park Service has chosen a Mandan-Hidatsa, Gerard Baker, to be superintendent of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. His traveling exhibit, "Corps of Discovery II," will be "a tent of many voices," he says, focusing on native cultures and their "hope for the future."

It's all very inclusive, but these aren't Disney Indians. "We're not celebrating Lewis and Clark," says Tex Hall, president of the American Congress of Indians, who is scheduled to speak at the January launch of the commemoration at Monticello, in Charlottesville, Va. "Still, people are making money on this, so don't leave out the Indians. It's an opportunity for us to tell our story." And to revive cultures that are slipping away. In Oregon, the Umatilla tribe, whose members told Clark they thought the explorers were "supernatural and came down from the clouds," wants funds for a language-immersion program, as only a handful of tribe members still speak their native language fluently. And the tribe wants to publish an atlas of its Columbia River homeland with more than 1,000 native place names, long extinct.

For more than a century, the history of Lewis and Clark's encounters with the 58 tribes along the trail has been defined by the white men's journals. The Mandan, who fed them, danced with them and offered them sexual favors over the bitterly cold winter of 1804-05, were described as good neighbors. The Lemhi Shoshone, Lewis wrote, were "not only cheerful but even gay, fond of gaudy dress ... generous with the little they possess, extreemly honest ... " He admired the Chinook for their canoes, "remarkably neat, light and well adapted for riding high waves" but disparaged their "well-known treachery."

Today Indians are looking to their own oral histories, as well as reading between the lines of the journals, to re-interpret what happened. Says Ben Sherman, president of the Western American Indian Chamber in Denver: "The upcoming events portray Clark as the benevolent protector of Indians — that's propagandist baloney." The tragic aftermath: as Governor of the Missouri Territory and Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Clark presided over President Thomas Jefferson's land-grab policy, which some historians characterize as a direct cause of "cultural genocide" and "ethnic cleansing."

In his journal, Lewis called the Blackfeet "a vicious lawless and reather an abandoned set of wretches." But today's Blackfeet want no one to forget that two of their warriors were killed in a skirmish sparked by Lewis' talk of selling arms to rival tribes. "We knew, 'There goes the neighborhood,'" says tribe member James Craven, a professor at Clark University in Vancouver, Wash. Diplomatic blunders also fueled a confrontation with the Teton Sioux, gatekeepers of the Missouri, whom Clark later called "the vilest miscreants of the savage race." LaDonna Bravebull, a Standing Rock tour guide, touts her ancestors' viewpoint as, "We're not taking your trinkets and your great white father. I don't think so!"

Looking back, the Sioux had it right. Jefferson had told Lewis to inform "those through whose country you will pass" that "henceforth we become their fathers and friends, and that we shall endeavor that they shall have no cause to lament the change." But whites brought diseases that killed as many as 90% of some tribes' members. Most of the tribes Lewis and Clark encountered were forced off the rivers that sustained their commerce and culture and herded onto reservations with poor soil. Today a third of Native Americans live below the poverty line, and half are unemployed.

The challenge for tribes is to share this history without inducing compassion fatigue in the tourists they hope to attract. One thing that unites Lewis and Clark enthusiasts and naysayers is the burgeoning revival of Native American traditions. For visitors, tribal culture offers a glimpse of the American past. For Indians, it is key to their survival as distinct peoples. At the Boys and Girls Club on Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota, the posters read tradition, not addiction. At an Indian Health Service clinic in Mobridge, S.D., teenage methamphetamine users are introduced to the sweat lodge. The Cheyenne River Sioux run a herd of more than 2,000 buffalo and distribute meat to tribe members, while the Lower Brule Sioux are planning a buffalo museum.

At Standing Rock, the combative past survives in surnames. On radio station KLND — that's Lakota, Nakota, Dakota — the news is from Mike Kills Pretty Enemy, the music from Virgil Taken Alive. Last month tribe members gathered near the grave site of Sitting Bull, General George Custer's conqueror, to pray at the graves of long-ago chiefs — Thunderhawk, Rain-in-the-Face, Running Antelope. A package event for tourists? Hardly. The Indians got there on horseback and camped in the cold. In fact, they were not dressed for tourist camcorders. They wore jeans, permanent press and wrap-around shades. When they set fire to a wad of sage, in a purification ritual, it was in a Folger's coffee can. And the graveside speeches touched on the plague of alcoholism and suicide among reservation youth. "We want our children to be proud they are descendants of chiefs," says Sitting Bull kinsman McNeil. "So when they play cowboys and Indians, they'll all want to be Indians."

Indian pride and Indian politics could complicate the Lewis and Clark commemoration. In April when 130 tribal delegates gathered in Lewiston, Idaho, under the auspices of the Lewis and Clark council, the tone veered sharply off the official "reconciliation" trail. The group called on the Federal Government to extend legal recognition to the Chinook, Clatsop and Monacan tribes, noting "their pivotal role in the success of the expedition." Recognition brings federal aid as well as sovereignty — and the right to build casinos. Another resolution decried vandalism of sacred sites and plundering of Indian graves as "acts of terrorism," adding that the increase in Lewis and Clark visitors could result in "cultural resource desecration [of] catastrophic proportions."

In recent years, Standing Rock's former historic-preservation officer, Tim Mentz, reburied remains from 438 Indian graves that had been disturbed. As federal officials have tinkered with the water levels of the Missouri River, long-submerged Indian villages have resurfaced, luring robbers seeking to profit from a black market in bones and artifacts. "We are not archaeological specimens," says Mentz indignantly. Unfortunately his zeal went too far for some tribal officials. Mentz was fired last May. His offense: refusing to disinter hillside graves to make way for a road to the reservation casino.

Many of those graves are Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara, village tribes that lived along the Missouri in what is now Standing Rock, when the Sioux were nomadic warriors. But with smallpox decimating their ranks, the Indian farmers were herded north to Fort Berthold reservation. There they rebuilt their villages, only to be displaced again in 1953 when Garrison Dam flooded their rich bottomlands. If they see an opportunity in the Lewis and Clark commemoration, it is because culture and economics are intertwined. The image of Amy Mossett dressed up as Sacagawea graces North Dakota tourist posters, but she says she isn't "playing Indian." And her teepee sleepovers and earth-lodge exhibits are part of something more significant than attracting tourist dollars. Like more and more Native Americans, Mossett is reviving traditional culture in her daily life. Three years ago she began cultivating a garden with a tribal elder to replicate the ancient crops that Lewis and Clark once enjoyed. "You can't buy Mandan blue corn flour in the grocery store," she says. She is taking a course in porcupine-quill embroidery. And her teenage daughters are studying the Hidatsa language in school. "Our tribes have survived catastrophic events in the past 200 years," she says. "But if we grieve forever, we will never move forward."

***Source:*** *Margot Roosevelt, “Tribal Culture Clash,”*Time Magazine*, July 8, 2002.*

**Document D: William Clark’s Diary Entries**

**May 11, 1806**

Sunday 11th May 1806 Some little rain last night. we were Crouded in the Lodge with Indians who continued all night and this morning Great numbers were around us. The One Eyed Chief Yoom-park-kar-tim arived and we gave him a medal of the Small Size and Spoke to the Indians through a Snake boy Shabono and his wife. we informed them who we were, where we Came from & our intentions towards them, which pleased them very much. a young man Son to the great Chief who was killed not long Sence by the Indians from the N. E. brought an elegant mare and Coalt and Gave us. and Said he had opend. his ears to what we had Said and his heart was glad and requested us to take this mare and Coalt as a token of his deturmination to pursue our Councels &c. The twisted hair brough Six of our horses all in fine order. Great numbers of Indians apply to us for medical aide which we gave them Cherfully So far as our Skill and Store of Medicine would enable us. Schrofla, ulsers, rhumitism, Sore eyes, and the loss of the use of their Limbs are the most common cases among them. the latter Case is not very common but We have Seen 3 instances of it among the Chopunnish. a very extroadinery complnt. about 3 P.M. Geo. drewyer arived with 2 deer which he had killed. he informed us that the Snow Still Continued to cover the plains. We are now pretty well informed that Tunnachemootoolt, Hohastillpilp, Neshneparkkeeook, and Yoomparkkartim were the principal Chiefs of the Chopunnish Nation and ranked in the order here mentioned; as all those chiefs were present in our lodge we thought it a favourable time to repeet what had been said and to enter more minutely into the views of our government with respect to the inhabitents of this Western part of the Continent, their intention of establishing tradeing houses for their relief, their wish to restore peace and harmony among the nativs, the Strength welth and powers of our Nation &c. to this end we drew a map of the Country with a coal on a mat in their way, and by the assistance of the Snake boy and our intrepeters were enabled to make ourselves under stood by them altho it had to pass through French, Minnetare, Shoshone and Chopunnish languages. the interpretation being tegious it occupied the greater part of the day, before we had communicated to them what we wished. they appeared highly pleased. after this Council was over we amused ourselves with Shewing them the power of Magnetism, the Spye glass, compass, watch, air gun and Sundery other articles equally novel and incomprehensible to them. they informed us that after we left the Menetares last Spring that 3 of their people had visited that nation, and that they had informed them of us, and had told them that we had Such things in our possession but that they Could not place Confidence in the information untill they had now witnessed it themselves

In the evening a man was brought in a robe by four Indians and laid down near me. they informed me that this man was a Chief of Considerable note who has been in the Situation I see him for 5 years. this man is incapable of moveing a single limb but lies like a corps in whatever position he is placed, yet he eats hartily, dejests his food perfectly, enjoys his under standing, his pulse are good, and has retained his flesh almost perfectly; in Short were it not that he appears a little pale from having been So long in the Shade, he might well be taken for a man in good health. I Suspect that their Confinement to a deet of roots may give rise to all the disordes of the Nativs of this quarter except the Rhumitism & Sore eyes, and to the latter of those, the State of debility incident to a vegitable diet may measureably contribute.-. The Chopunnish not withstanding they live in the Crouded manner before mentioned are much more clenly in their persons and habitations than any nation we have Seen Sence we left the Illinois. These nativs take their fish in the following manner to wit. a Stand Small Stage or warf consisting of Sticks and projecting about 10 feet into the river and about 3 feet above the water on the extremity of this the fisherman stands with his guilt or a Skooping Net which differ but little in their form those Commonly used in our Country it is formed thus with those nets they take the Suckers and also the Salmon trout and I am told the Salmon also.

**August 17, 1806**

Saturday 17th of August 1806 a Cool morning gave some powder & Ball to Big White Chief Settled with Touisant Chabono for his Services as an enterpreter the pric of a horse and Lodge purchased of him for public Service in all amounting to 500$ 33 1/3 cents. derected two of the largest of the Canoes be fastened together with poles tied across them So as to make them Study for the purpose of Conveying the Indians and enterpreter and their families

we were visited by all the principal Chiefs of the Menetarras to take their leave of us at 2 oClock we left our encampment after takeing leave of Colter who also Set out up the river in Company with Messrs. Dickson & Handcock. we also took our leave of T. Chabono, his Snake Indian wife and their Son Child who had accompanied us on our rout to the pacific Ocean in the Capacity of interpreter and interpretes. T. Chabono wished much to accompany us in the Said Capacity if we could have provailed the Menetarre Chiefs to dcend the river with us to the U. States, but as none of those chiefs of whoes language he was Conversent would accompany us, his Services were no longer of use to the U States and he was therefore discharged and paid up. we offered to convey him down to the Illinois if he Chose to go, he declined proceeding on at present, observing that he had no acquaintance or prospects of makeing a liveing below, and must continue to live in the way that he had done. I offered to take his little Son a butifull promising Child who is 19 months old to which they both himself & wife wer willing provided the Child had been weened. they observed that in one year the boy would be Sufficiently old to leave his mother & he would then take him to me if I would be so freindly as to raise the Child for him in Such a manner as I thought proper, to which I agreeed &c.—we droped down to the Big white Cheifs Mandan Village 1/2 a mile below on the South Side, all the Indians proceeded on down by land. and I walked to the lodge of the Chief whome I found Sorounded by his friends the men were Setting in a circle Smokeing and the womin Crying. he Sent his bagage with his wife & Son, with the Interpreter Jessomme & his wife and 2 children to the Canoes provided for them. after Smoking one pipe, and distributing Some powder & lead which we had given him, he informed me that he was ready and we were accompd to the Canoes by all the Village Maney of them Cried out aloud. as I was about to Shake with the Grand Cheifs of all the Villages there assembled they requested me to Set one minit longer with them which I readily agreed to and directed a pipe to be lit. the Cheifs informed that when we first came to their Country they did not beleive all we Said we then told them. but they were now Convinced that every thing we had told them were true, that they Should keep in memory every thing which we had Said to them, and Strictly attend to our advice, that their young men Should Stay at home and Should no go again to war against any nation, that if any atacted them they Should defend themselves, that we might depend on what they Said, and requested us to inform their great father. the also requested me to tell the Ricaras to Come and See them, not to be afraid that no harm Should be done them, that they were anxious to be in peace with them.

The Seeoux they Said they had no dependance in and Should kill them whenever they Came into their Country to do them harm &c. I told them that we had always told them to defend themselves, but not to Strike those nations we had taken by the hand, the Sieoux with whome they were at war we had never Seen on our return we Should inform their great fathe of their conduct towards his faithfull red Children and he would take Such Steps as will bring about a lasting peace between them and his faithfull red children. I informed them that we should inform the ricaras what they had requested &c. The Grand Chief of the Mineterres Said that the Great Cheif who was going down with to see their great father was a well as if he went also, and on his return he would be fully informed of the words of his great father, and requested us to take care of this Gt. Chief. we then Saluted them with a gun and Set out and proceeded on to Fort Mandan where I landed and went to view the old works the houses except one in the rear bastion was burnt by accident, Some pickets were Standing in front next to the river. we proceeded on to the old Ricara village the S E wind was so hard and the waves So high that we were obliged to Come too, & Camp on the S W Side near the old Village. (18 mils)

***Source:*** *Diary of William Clark, 1806.*

**Document E: Meriwether Lewis’s Speech to the Otoe**

To the Petit Voleur, or Wear-ruge-nor, the great Chief of the Ottoes, to the Chiefs and Warriors of the Ottoes, and the Chiefs and Warriors of the Missouri nation residing with the Ottoes—

*Children.* Convene from among you the old men of experience; the men, on the wisdom of whose judgment you are willing to risk the future happiness of your nations; and the warriors, to the strength of whose arms you have been taught to look for protection in the days of danger. When in Council tranquilly assembled, reflect on the time past, and that to come; do not deceive yourselves, nor suffer others to deceive you; but like men and warriors devoted to the real interests of their nation, seek those truths; which can alone perpetuate its happiness.

*Children.* Commissioned and sent by the great Chief of the Seventeen great nations of America, we have come to inform you, as we go also to inform all the nations of red men who inhabit the borders of the Missouri, that a great council was lately held between this great chief of the Seventeen great nations of America, and your old fathers the French and Spaniards; and that in this great council it was agreed that all the white men of Louisiana, inhabiting the waters of the Missouri and Mississippi should obey the commands of this great chief; he has accordingly adopted them as his children and they now form one common family with us: your old traders are of this description; they are no longer the subjects of France or Spain, but have become the Citizens of the Seventeen great nations of America, and are bound to obey the commands of their great Chief the President who is now your only great father.

*Children.* This council being concluded between your old fathers and the French and Spaniards, and your great father the Chief of the Seventeen great nations of America, your old fathers the French and Spaniards in compliance with their engagements made in that council, have withdrawn all their troops from all their military posts on the waters of the Mississippi and Missouri, and have surrendered to our grief chief all their fortifications and lands in this country, together with the mouths of all the rivers through which the traders bring goods to the red men on the troubled waters. These arrangements being made, your old fathers the French and Spaniards have gone beyond the great lake towards the rising sun, from whence they never intend returning to visit their former red-children in this quarter; nor will they, or any other nation of white men, ever again display their flag on the troubled waters; because the mouths of all those rivers are in the possession of the great chief of the Seventeen great nations of America, who will command his war chiefs to suffer no vessel to pass—but those which sail under the protection of his flag, and who acknowledge his supreme authority.

*Children.* From what has been said, you will readily perceive, that the great chief of the seventeen great nations of America, has become your only father; he is the only father; he is the only friend to whom you can now look for protection, or from whom you can ask favors, or receive good councils, and he will take care that you shall have no just cause to regret this change; he will serve you, and not deceive you.

*Children.* The great chief of the seventeen great nations of America, impelled by his parental regard for his newly adopted children on the troubled waters, has sent us out to clear the road, remove every obstruction, and to make it the road of peace between himself and his red children residing there; to enquire into the Nature of their wants, and on our return to inform Him of them, in order that he may make the necessary arrangements for their relief, he has sent by us, one of his flags, a medal and some clothes, such as he dresses his war chiefs with, which he directed should be given to the great chief of the Ottoe nation, to be kept by him, as a pledge of the sincerity with which he now offers you the hand of friendship.

*Children.* Know that the great chief who has thus offered you the hand of unalterable friendship, is the great chief of the seventeen great nations of America, whose cities are as numerous as the stars of the heavens, and whose people like the grass of your plains, cover with their cultivated fields and wigwams, the wide extended country, reaching from the western borders of the Mississippi, to the great lakes of the East, where the land ends and the sun rises from the face of the great waters.

*Children.* Know that this great chief, as powerful as he is just, and as beneficient as he is wise, always entertaining a sincere and friendly disposition towards the red people of America, has commanded us his war chiefs to undertake this long journey, which we have so far accomplished with great labor and much expence, in order to council with yourselves and his other red children on the troubled waters, to give you his good advice; to point out to you the road in which you must walk to obtain happiness. He has further commanded us to tell you that when you accept his flag and medal, you accept therewith his hand of friendship, which will never be withdrawn from your nation as long as you continue to follow the councils which he may command his chiefs to give you, and shut your ears to the councils of bad birds.

*Children.* The road in which your great father and friend, has commanded us to tell you and your nation that you must walk in order to enjoy the benefit of his friendship, is, that you are to live in peace with all the *white men*, for they are his children; neither wage war against the *red men* your neighbors, for they are equally his children and he is bound to protect them. Injure not the persons of any traders who may come among you, neither destroy nor take their property from them by force; more particularly those traders who visit you under the protection of your great fathers flag. Do not obstruct the passage of any boat, pirogue, or other vessel, which may be ascending or descending the Missouri River, more especially such as may be under cover of your great fathers flag neither injure any red or white man on board such vessels as may possess the flag, for by that signal you may know them to be good men, and that they do not intend to injure you; they are therefore to be treated as friends, and as the common children of one great father, (the great chief of the seventeen great nations of America

*Children.* Do these things which your great father advises and be happy. Avoid the councils of bad birds; turn on your heel from them as you would from the precipice of a high rock, whose summit reached the clouds, and whose base was washed by the gulph of human woes; lest by one false step you shuld bring upon your nation the displeasure of your great father, the great chief of the seventeen great nations of America, who could consume you as the fire consumes the grass of the plains. The mouths of all the rivers through which the traders bring goods to you are in his possession, and if you displease him he could at pleasure shut them up and prevent his traders from coming among you; but it is not the wish of your great father to injure you, on the contrary he is now pursuing the measures best calculated to insure your happiness.

*Children.* If you open your ears to the councils of your great father, the great chief of the seventeen great nations of America, and strictly pursue the advice which he has now given you through us, he will as soon as possible after our return, send a store of goods to the mouth of the river Platte to trade with you for pelteries and furs; these goods will be furnished you annually in a regular manner, and in such quantities as will be equal to all your necessities. You will then obtain goods on much better terms than you have ever received them heretofore.

*Children*. As it will necessarily take some time before we can return, and your great father send and establish this store of goods; he will permit your old traders who reside among you, or who annually visit you, to continue to trade with you, provided they give you good council.

*Children.* We are now on a long journey to the head of the Missouri; the length of this journey compelled us to load our boat and perogues with provisions, we have therefore brought very few goods as presents for yourselves or any other nations which we may meet on our way. We are no traders, but have come to consult you on the subject of your trade; to open the road and prepare the way, in order that your nation may hereafter receive a regular and plentiful supply of goods.

*Children.* We are sorry that your absence from your town prevented our seeing your great chief and yourselves; it would have given us much pleasure to have spoken to you personally; but as the cold season is fast advancing, and we have a long distance to travel, we could not wait for your return.

*Children.* If your great chief wishes to see your great father and speak with him, he can readily do so. Let your chief engage some trader who may reside with you the ensuing winter, to take him and four of his principal chiefs or warriors with him to St. Louis when e returns thither on the ensuing spring; your great chief may take with him also an interpreter of his choice, who shall be well paid for his services by your great father’s chiefs; the trader will also be well paid for his services by the commandant at St. Louis. The commandant at St. Louis will furnish you with the necessary number of horses, and all other means to make your journey from thence to your great father’s town comfortable and safe.

*Children.* In order that the commandant in St. Louis, as well as your great father, and all his chiefs may know you, you must take with you, the flag, the medal and this parole which we now send you. When your great father and his chiefs see those things, they will know that you have opened your ears to your great father’s voice, and have come to hear his good councils. Is such that you cannot with propriety leave them, you may send some of your principal men not exceeding five, to see your great father and hear his words. You must give them authority to act for you and your nation. Your great father will receive them as his children, give them good councils, and send them back loaded with presents for their nation; your nation would then see that all we have told you is true, and that the great chief of the seventeen great nations of America never sends his red children from him to return with empty hands to their village. Whomever you send to your great father must carry the flag and this parole, in order that your great father and his chiefs may know that they have come to see them by our invitation. Send by them also all the flags and medals which you may have received from your old fathers the French and Spaniards, or from any other nation whatever, your faterh will give you new flags and new medals of his own in exchange for those which you send him. It is not proper since you have become the children of the great chief of the seventeen great nations of America, that you should war or keep those emblems of attachment to any other great father but himself, nor will it be pleasing to him if you continue to do so.

*Children.* We hope that the great spirit will open your ears to our councils, and dispose your minds to their observance. Follow these councils and you will have nothing to fear, because the great spirit will smile upon your nation, and in future ages will make you outnumber the trees of the forest.

Signed and sealed this 4th day of August 1804 at the council Bluff, by us, the friends of all the red-men, and the war chiefs of the great chief of the seventeen great nations of America.

MERIWETHER LEWIS CAPTN.

1ST U.S. Regt. Infantry.

WILLIAM CLARK

Capt. On the Missouri Expedition

***Source:*** *Lewis and Clark to the Otoe Indians, August 4, 1804.*