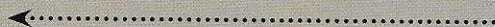


Meriwether Lewis and William Clark

In 1803 the American President, Thomas Jefferson, bought some land in Louisiana (southern USA) from the French and sent his secretary, Meriwether Lewis to explore it. Lewis was joined by his friend William Clark, and a number of others. Together they travelled by river and land to cover around 14 400 km (9000 miles) in just under two years.



Lewis and Clarke found that the easiest way to travel along the rivers was in a dugout canoe made from a hollowed out tree trunk.



York

Joining William Clark on the expedition was his African-American slave, York. Clark thought very highly of York and, once they had returned from their trip, he freed him from being a slave.



.....→
The explorers came across the grizzly bear for the first time on their travels.

Meriwether Lewis
looks out to the
Rocky Mountains.



Sacagawea

Sacagawea and her family were Native Americans who travelled with Lewis and Clarke's group. Sacagawea helped the explorers to find safe food to eat, and made medicines from plants, while her husband acted as a guide. She also translated for them when they met other Native American peoples. Having a woman and baby in the group made them seem less threatening.

The heroes return


The two men had to face many challenges while travelling, including fighting off wild animals, sailing down raging rivers, and crossing the high, snowy Rocky Mountains. When they returned, the two men were seen as heroes in America and were held in great honour by the US President.

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▼ A golden Sacagawea
dollar coin was used in
America in 2000.



Daniel Boone

Daniel Boone was an American wilderness explorer and hunter who found a way to take the first settlers across part of America from Pennsylvania to Kentucky. After the route opened in 1775, thousands of Americans used the so-called Wilderness Road, travelling on foot or horseback to find new places to settle.



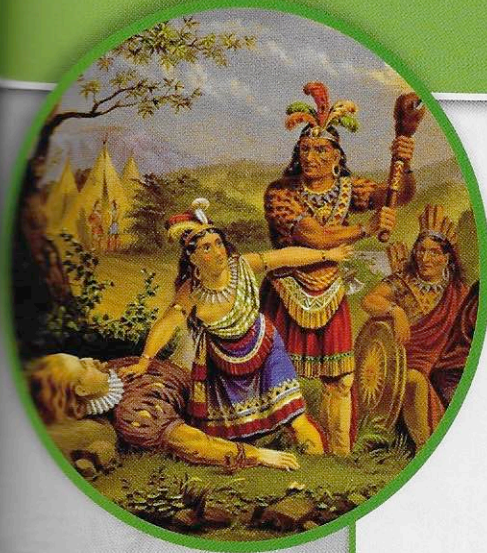
The Wilderness Road crossed through the Appalachian Mountains.

Jedediah Smith

The first European American to cross the Rocky Mountains was the explorer and hunter Jedediah Smith in around 1812. During his travels, Smith was involved in fights with Native Americans, and was, in fact, killed during one of these fights at the age of 32.

John Smith

In 1606 John Smith, an Englishman, sailed for America as one of around 100 settlers. He became one of the leaders of a new settlement, which was called Jamestown. The first few years there were very difficult and many of the settlers died from starvation and disease. John Smith ordered them to work to survive.



Pocahontas

John Smith carried out several expeditions from Jamestown. On one of them he was captured by the Powhatan people, and the story is that his life was saved by 'Pocahontas', the chief's daughter. She was later captured and then married to another English settler, John Rolfe. She became one of the first Native Americans to visit Britain, in 1616.

John Charles Fremont

John Charles Fremont was another American explorer who became known by some as 'The Great Pathfinder' thanks to his exploration of the western United States. On one trip, he led American troops to fight for and win large parts of California from Mexico.

John Charles Fremont ran for President of the USA in 1856. He wanted to stop slavery. He didn't win, but in 1865, slavery was abolished under President Abraham Lincoln (left).