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A Celebration of The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

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February 28, 2003

A Celebration of The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

To recognize:

- Completion of the 13-volume edition
- Publication of the 1-volume edition
- 7-volume paperback set
- 10-volume paperback set
- Online pilot project and website

<http://lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu>

Our thanks to Lee Booksellers for their participation here tonight.

Jim Stubbendieck of the Center for Great Plains Studies will recognize and thank: Donald Jackson, Ernst A. Stadler, Stephen Cox, Paul Olson, then acting director of the Center for Great Plains Studies, the American Philosophical Society, the National Historical Records and Publications Commission, John Logan Allen and W. Raymond Wood, and the original proposers and contractors: 1979, Gary Moulton and Thomas Dunlay; April 9, 1982, by Brian

Blouet for the Center for Great Plains Studies, David Gilbert for the University of Nebraska Press and John Goebel on behalf of the Board of Regents.]

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Remarks by Paul Royster

In all my research through old papers and files, I was half expecting to find the original book proposal, submitted by Meriweather Lewis and William Clark, for a short , breezy, easy-reading book of travel essays and reminiscences, of no more than 200 pages, containing a couple of maps and a handful of illustrations, to be completed and ready for publication “in the spring.” If there was a publisher among the party, I’m sure that’s what he had in mind, almost 200 years ago. Somehow, life never comes out quite like you plan.

But seriously, I’m delighted to have an opportunity to help honor Gary Moulton. Gary was the first author I met when I came on board last December, and it was a thrill for me; he’s such a gentleman and a scholar.

A Brief Publication History

The first volume, the mammoth Atlas (14" x 20"—a true monument to the art of bookmaking), appeared in **1983**., and I've seen the clippings of a young, dark-haired Gary Moulton, peeping out from behind a copy of this great tome—sort of like when you have your wife get in the picture you're taking of the Great Pyramid or Eiffel Tower—to show its massiveness of scale in relation to the human figure.

Volume 2 followed in **1986**; featuring the expedition's first year and taking our party from Pittsburgh, PA, to the site of present-day Vermillion, SD. Volumes 3 and 4 came in **1987**; covering most of the second year, and carry the party as far as Three Forks, Montana.

It takes the next four volumes to cover the expedition's third and final year; and these volumes appeared between **1988** and **1993**, and they trace the expedition from Three Forks across the Rockies to the Pacific and back to St. Louis.

The next two volumes (#'s 9 and 10) contain the journals of John Ordway, Charles Floyd, and Patrick Gass; these appeared in **1996**. Volume 11, the journal of Joseph Whitehouse, came out in **1997**.

Volume 12, the Herbarium, was done in **1999**; and 13, the Comprehensive Index, finished the set in **2001**.

Tonight we celebrate the publication of the single-volume compilation or distillation, "An American Epic of Discovery," a wonderful achievement by its editor, Gary Moulton, and a delightful gift to fans and scholars and readers of all stripes.

Looking ahead, I can note that the party's not over; there's another volume to be done—the Chronology of the Lewis and Clark expedition—or "Lewis and Clark Day by Day." We look forward to this, as publishers, and we only wish there were four or five more volumes—that maybe they could have got lost for a bit and wandered another 40 months in the wilderness.

Let me say a few words about the importance of this edition for the University of Nebraska Press: it is one

of the jewels in our crown, a project that helped put our star on the map, and helps keep us at the top of the heap. For our preeminence in the fields of Western history, American literature, native American studies, geography, and the literature of discovery and exploration—this is a core text. To our reputation for developing a successful scholarly edition, for bringing it in right and on a reasonably reliable schedule, and for seeing it through to the end—this project sets a standard that we and others will always aspire to, but may seldom achieve.

To illustrate the size of the publishing endeavor, let me resort to statistics:

- over 6,000 pages have been designed and typeset, containing about 3 million words.
- over 60,000 volumes have been shipped to scholars, readers, and libraries,
- almost \$2.7 million in sales have been recorded, to go with over \$900,000 in grants—and all of this and more has been plowed back into the state and local economy.

More fancifully, if you took all the pages of all the copies currently in print, and laid them out, side by side, they would cover 248 acres of ground. If you

counted both sides of the paper, the area involved would be about three quarter sections. If you took the lines of type, now currently in print, and laid them end to end, they would stretch around the equator almost seven times.

I tote out these numbers as a way of impressing us all with the power of scholarly publishing: to bring together the latest, best, and most accurate historical research with a broad audience from many backgrounds, identified mainly by their abiding curiosity about our nation's past and their ongoing interest in exploring and re-exploring the landscape we inhabit today. To achieve this broader impact, scholarship must be first made available, and then second, and in exceptional cases such as this, made so widely available that it permeates and percolates into every nook, cranny, and crevice of the imaginative landscape.

Thanks to Gary, we have been able to do this.

The edition has been called “one of the great accomplishments of American scholarship and scholarly publishing alike.” (Wash Post Book World)

“A triumph of scholarly publishing” (by the Atlantic Monthly)

For editing the series, Gary Moulton won the J. Franklin Jameson Prize from the American Historical Association. The edition won the Western Heritage Award, from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame; and has won awards for book design and manufacturing from the American Association of University Presses and the Chicago Book Clinic.

One of my tasks here tonight is to see that no one escapes recognition; so I would like to commend and thank the following institutions—for the use of materials: the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the Missouri Historical Society, the Boston Atheneum, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, and the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha. For funding and subvention of publication costs, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, and various individuals over the years who have preferred to remain anonymous..

Persons at the University of Nebraska Press who deserve special mention, in addition to Stephen Cox,

include production manager Deb Turner, designer Richard Eckersley, and production controller Allison Rold—all of whom have seen this project through from start to finish, a remarkable record. Also, former directors Dave Gilbert, Bill Regier, Dan Ross, and Steve Hilliard, and editors Clark Whitehorn and Gary Dunham. And I cannot stop without mentioning the entire staff of the University of Nebraska Press for their commitment, perseverance, expertise, and enthusiasm.

Outside companies that have helped make the edition’s reputation for quality bookmaking include G & S Typesetters, the Meriden Gravure Company, the Stinehour Press, Edwards Brothers, Sheridan Book Company, and the Mohawk Paper Company.

Finally and most of all, to the Great Plains Center and the University of Nebraska—Lincoln, for providing a home and institutional, intellectual, and financial support over three decades, we owe an enduring debt of gratitude. Their loyalty and commitment have made possible our modern expedition of exploration and discovery. If we emerge twenty years after the start with our reputations not just intact but enhanced by the good

Remarks on the Lewis & Clark edition

works published along the way, it is because of the overall dedication and service of many here and many who could not be here. The community of scholars, and readers, and publishers is richer for their labors, but no one has labored harder than our special honoree tonight—Gary Moulton.

Thank you.

[Remarks by Chancellor Harvey Perlman followed.]