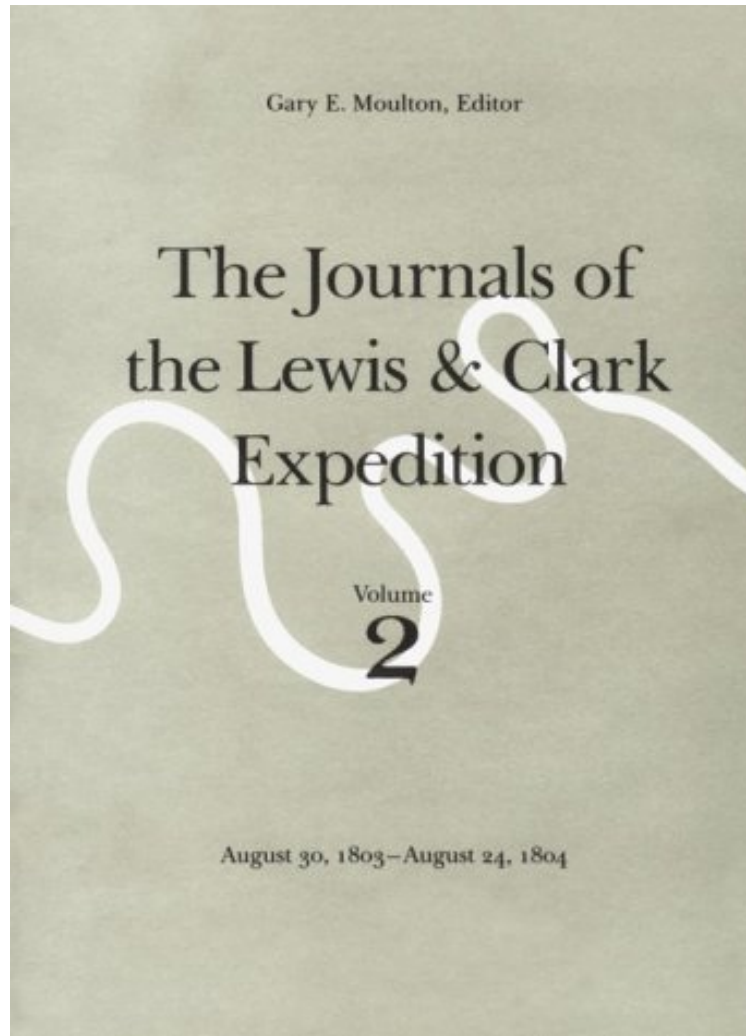


[E-BOOK] The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Volume 2: August 30, 1803-August 24, 1804

The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Volume 2: August 30, 1803-August 24, 1804

Meriwether Lewis, William Clark
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"The journey of the Corps of Discovery, under the command of Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, across the American West to the Pacific Ocean and back in the years 1804-1806 seems to me to have been our first really American adventure, one that also produced our only really American epic, The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, now at last available in a superbly edited, easily read edition in twelve volumes (of an eventual thirteen), almost two centuries after the Corps of Discovery set out. . . . This important text has not been fully appreciated for what it is because of two centuries of incomplete and inadequate editing. All three editions previous to this excellent one from the University of Nebraska . . . were flawed by significant omission. . . . Thus my gratitude to the present editor, Gary Moulton, and his assistant editor, Thomas Dunlay, for bringing what I believe to be a national epic into plain view at last. . . . For almost two hundred years their [Lewis' and Clark's] strong words waited, there but not there, printed but not read: our silent epic. But words can wait: now the captains' writings have at last spilled out, and fully, in this regal edition. When the Atlas of the Lewis and Clark Expedition appeared in 1983, critics hailed it as a publishing landmark. This eagerly awaited second volume of the new Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition begins the actual journals of those explorers whose epic expedition still enthralles Americans. Instructed by President Jefferson to keep meticulous records bearing on the geography, ethnology, and natural history of the trans-Mississippi West, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark and four of their men filled hundreds of notebook pages with observations during their expedition of 1804-6. The result was in is a national treasure: a complete look at the Great Plains, the Rockies, and the Pacific Northwest, reported by men who were intelligent and well-prepared, at a time when almost nothing was known about those regions so newly acquired in the Louisiana Purchase. Volume 2 includes Lewis and Clark's journals for the period from August 1803, when Lewis left Pittsburgh to join Clark farther down the Ohio River, to August 1804, when the Corps of Discovery camped near the Vermillion River in present South Dakota. The general introduction by Gary E. Moulton discusses the history of the expedition, the journal-keeping methods of Lewis and Clark, and the editing and publishing history of the journals from the time of Lewis and Clark's return. Superseding the last edition published early in this century, the current edition brings together new materials discovered since then. It greatly expands and updates the annotation to take account of the most recent scholarship on the many subjects touched on by the journals.

From Library JournalAlthough it is not the first volume in the set (the atlas was published in 1983), this is the first volume of actual journals in a new edition whose aim is "to present users with a reliable, definitive text." The problem with previous editions of the Lewis and Clark expedition journals was that the editors never included all of the material that was available. The present edition, which will number 11 volumes, will include all of the known journals, including Joseph Whitehouse's paraphrased journal, discovered in 1966. Moulton's introduction clearly explains the editorial techniques used, as well as reviewing the history of the expedition and of the publication of the journals. Thoroughly and carefully annotated, this definitive edition is essential for academic libraries and any other libraries interested in the exploration of the West. Stephen H. Peters, Northern Michigan Univ. Lib., MarquetteCopyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc.