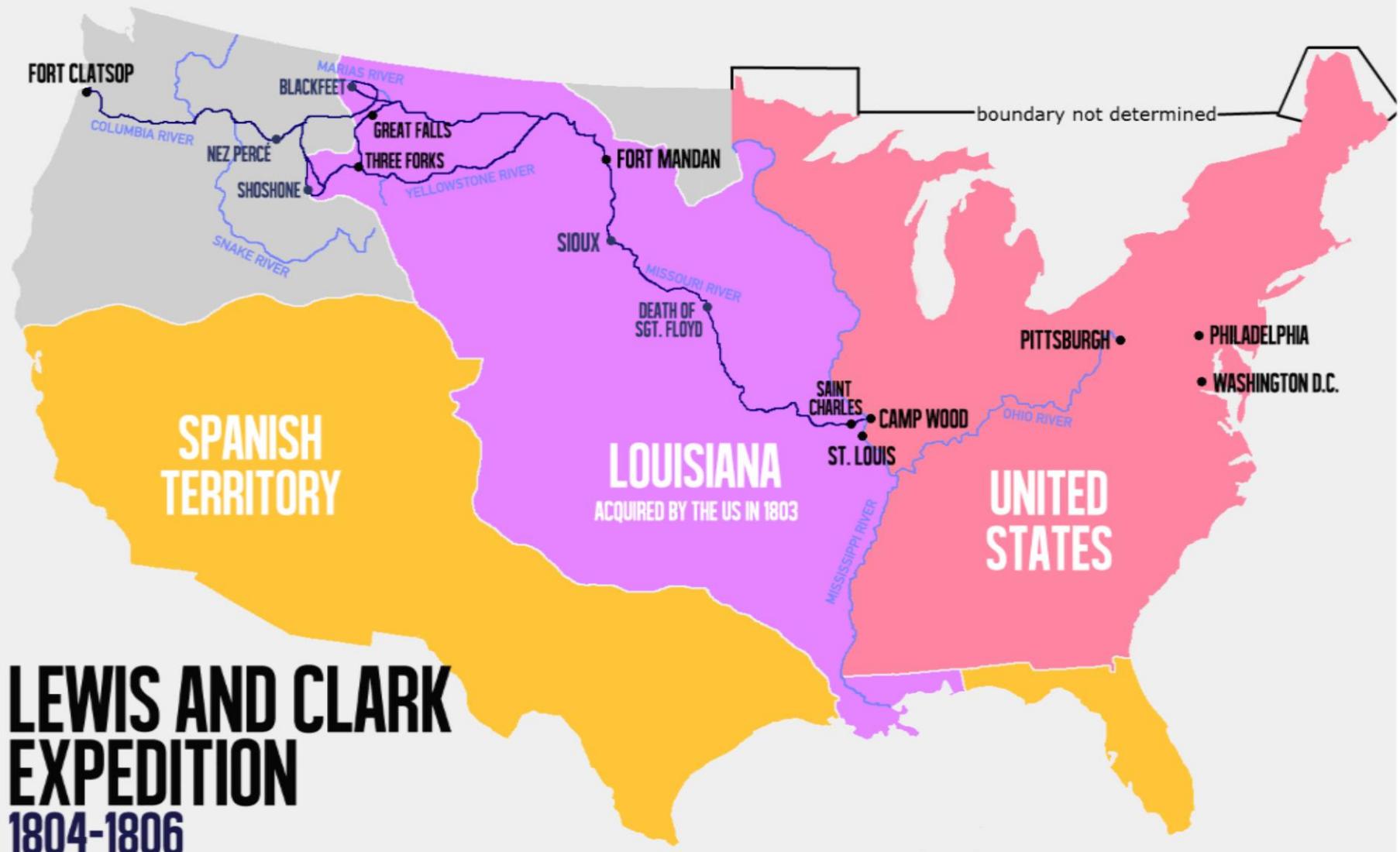


# **Lewis and Clark Expedition**

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**1804-1806**



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- At the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the United States consisted of the original thirteen colonies plus most of the former British land claims east of the Mississippi River.
  - France claimed a large area of land in the middle of the continent, which included The Mississippi and Missouri Rivers as well as the Port of New Orleans.
  - The U.S. bought the Louisiana Territory in 1803

# The Lewis and Clark Expedition

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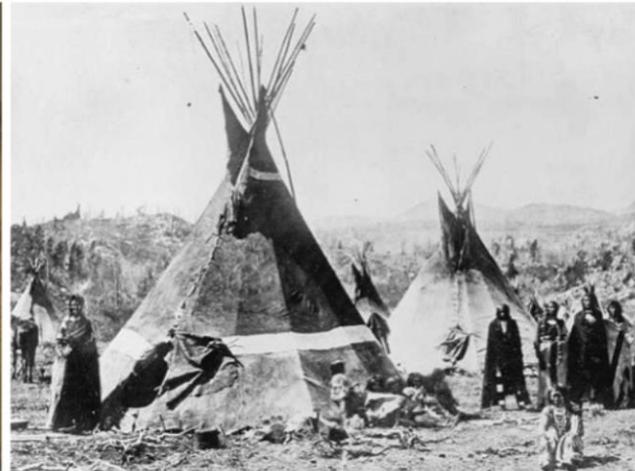
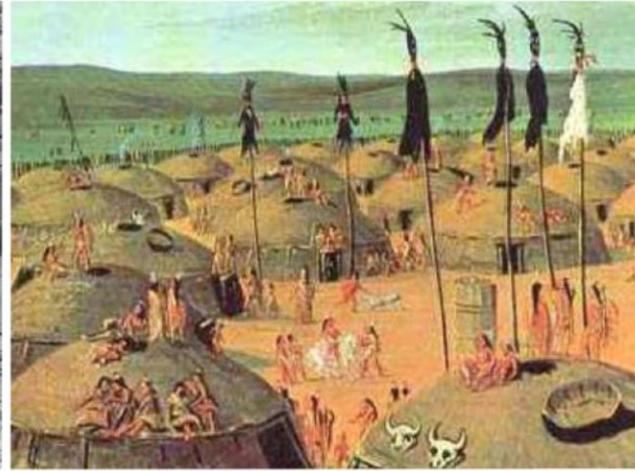


*Detail of the mural "Lewis & Clark at Three Forks" created in the 1910s*

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- Americans had little knowledge of the purchased lands.
  - President Jefferson ordered an expedition led by his aide Meriwether Lewis and William Clark a soldier it consisted of thirty volunteers
  - The expedition lasted from May 1804 to September 1806, leaving from St. Louis and reaching the Pacific coast.

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- The objectives of the expedition included:
    - i. Exploring resources and mapping territory.
    - ii. Finding a route across the continent for trade.
    - iii. Establish an American presence to preempt European Powers from making claims.
    - iv. Establish trade with the Native Americans.
    - v. Emphasize the U.S. power to the Native Americans.

# Native Americans in the West



*Clockwise from top left: Wishrams in a canoe on the Columbia River in 1910| Painting of a Mandan village from 1833| 1858 painting of Blackfoot chiefs| A Shoshone camp in 1870*

# Native Americans in the West

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- Lewis and Clark may have been the first Americans to see the western half of the continent.
- Dozens of Native American Tribes had lived in the area for millennia.
- By 1800 the population had been decimated by diseases brought by Europeans.

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- Lewis and Clark's team came into contact with nearly fifty Native tribes. Many diverse societies and cultures.
  - Some of these tribes had been in contact with English and French traders for decades. Others may not have seen white or black people before the Corps of Discovery.
  - But had indirect contact through trade, introduction of horses and disease.

# Central Historical Question

*Were Lewis and Clark respectful to the Native Americans they met on their journey?*