

DAILY DILEMMA #8



LEWIS & CLARK

Autumn, 1805–Winter, 1806

You and your Corps begin the journey over the Bitterroot Mountains with Old Toby, a trusted Shoshone, as your guide. You pass the largely barren territory and the north fork of the Salmon River. Soon you meet the Salish (Flathead) tribe. Allies of the Shoshone, the Salish trade you for more horses, and share their berries and roots with you. However, you must continue on over the now-snow-covered Bitterroots.

Rain, snow, and hail all make your passage through these mountains the worst traveling your expedition has experienced to date. Trails are narrow and rocky, food is scarce, and your Corps is starving!

Luckily you meet up with the Nez Perce before anyone succumbs to the starvation. You all are too hungry to eat sensibly, and you gorge yourselves on roots and dried salmon, becoming very sick.

After a week of recovery, you are ready to continue your journey. You begin making canoes the Indian way—by burning out the center. On October 6, 1805, you resume your water-bound journey towards the Pacific, starting on the Clearwater River with the current at your back for the first time since St. Louis! You make great time down the Clearwater, then to the Snake River, dropping in to the Columbia, averaging more than 30 miles a day! It is not long before you see the Mount Hood, proof that the ocean is near!

November 7, Clark thought he saw the end of land, but alas, it was only a bay; the ocean was still 20 miles away. The final 20 miles, the Corps was plagued by fierce storms and high winds. Finally, on November 24, the crew had to make an important decision on where along the vast Pacific coast they would spend the winter.

In a historically significant move, each Corps member casts a vote, and the Corps of Discovery sets up winter quarters near modern-day Astoria, Oregon; Fort Clatsop, they call it, named for the neighboring tribe of Native Americans.

The Clatsop Indians have not been as honest and trustworthy as the other Native American tribes you have encountered on your journey. Several times through the winter, you catch them stealing from you.

As spring approaches, you begin thinking about the return journey. Your entire Corps is filled with anticipation! However, you know you will need another canoe and you try to bargain with the Clatsop. They have plenty to spare, but they will not sell you a canoe at a price you want to pay.

What should you do? Steal the canoe or pay the Clatsops the high price they are demanding?