




AMERICANS MOVE WESTWARD

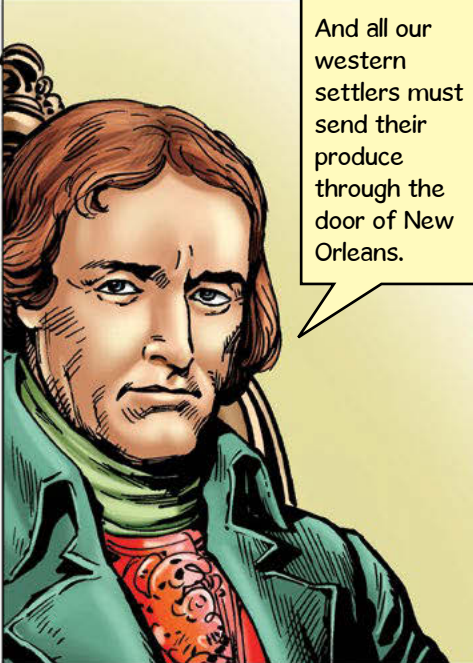


Thomas Jefferson, president of the United States in 1802, received important news.




There is no doubt about it, Mr. President. The rumor has been confirmed.

France has taken over New Orleans and the Louisiana Territory from Spain!

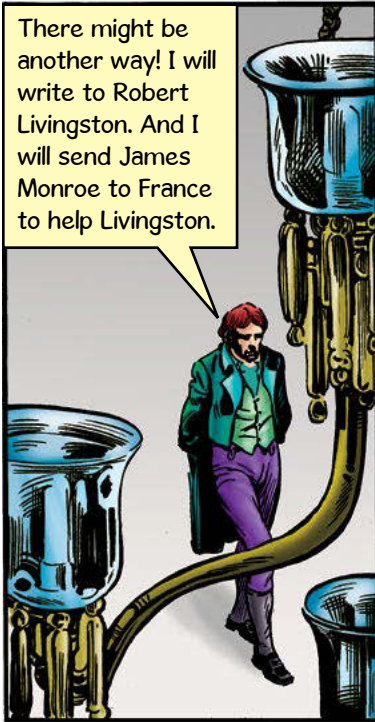


And all our western settlers must send their produce through the door of New Orleans.



Whoever owns that door is our natural enemy.

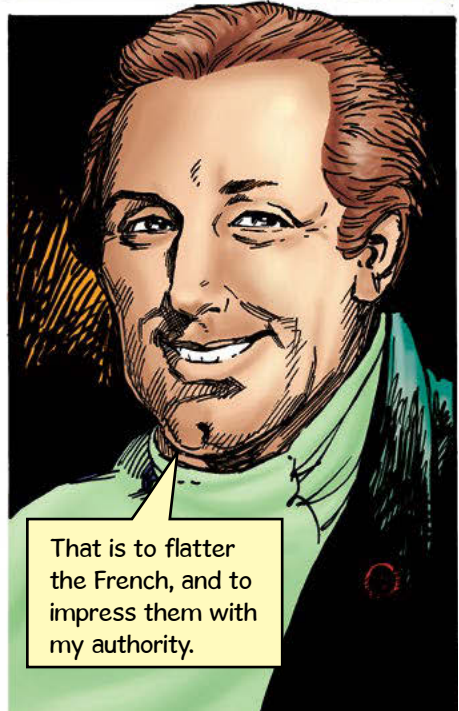
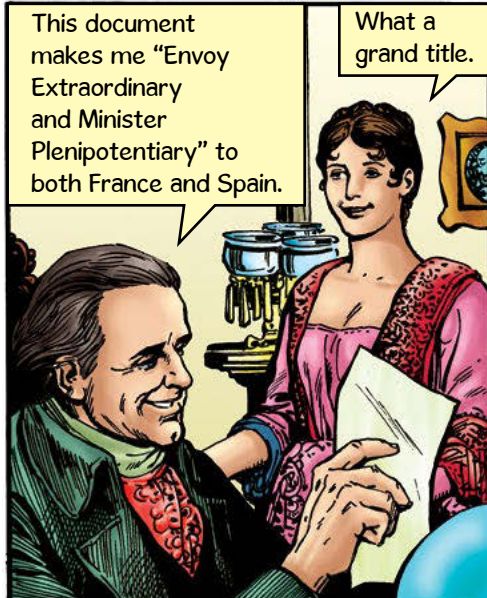
We can hardly fight France if she decides to close that door.



In Paris a few weeks later Robert Livingston, minister to France, received a letter.



A special messenger brought a unique commission to James Monroe.



* Famous French diplomat and foreign minister

After long discussions with Jefferson and Madison, and hours of research, Monroe sailed for Paris.



Meanwhile Livingston, as instructed, opened negotiations with Talleyrand.

I am authorized to make an offer for the island of New Orleans.

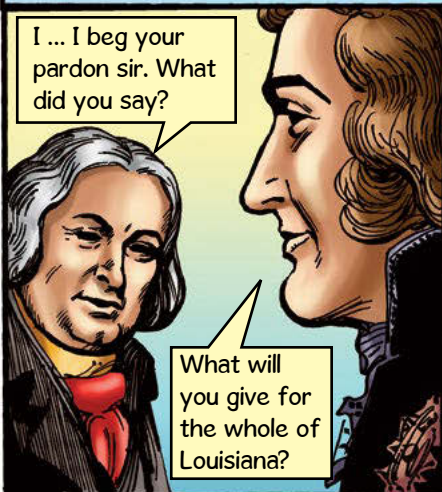
Why not buy the whole of the Louisiana Territory?



Talleyrand usually spoke softly, and Livingston was a little deaf. Had he heard correctly?

I ... I beg your pardon sir. What did you say?

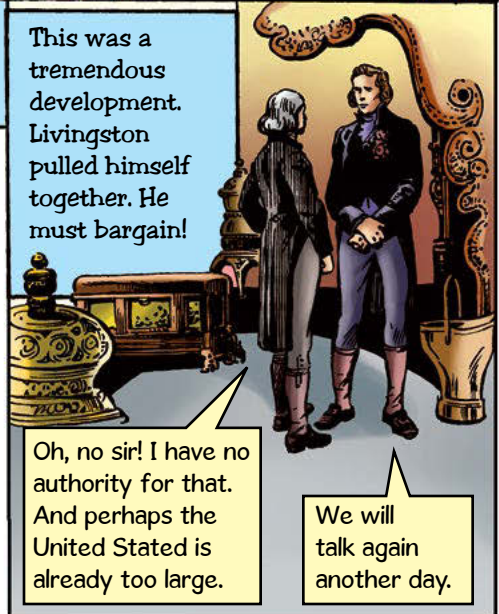
What will you give for the whole of Louisiana?



This was a tremendous development. Livingston pulled himself together. He must bargain!

Oh, no sir! I have no authority for that. And perhaps the United States is already too large.

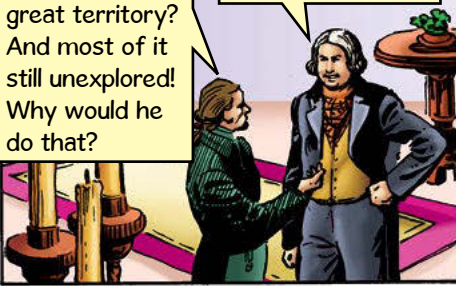
We will talk again another day.



This was the amazing news that greeted Monroe when he arrived in Paris two days later.

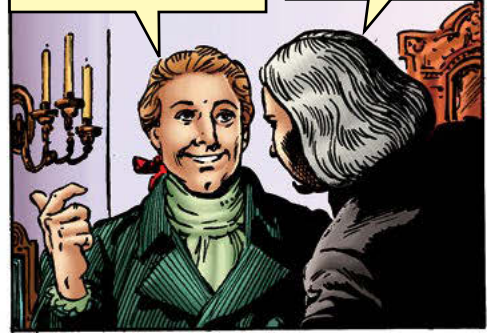
Napoleon offers to sell us the whole of that great territory? And most of it still unexplored! Why would he do that?

He is on the edge of another war with England.



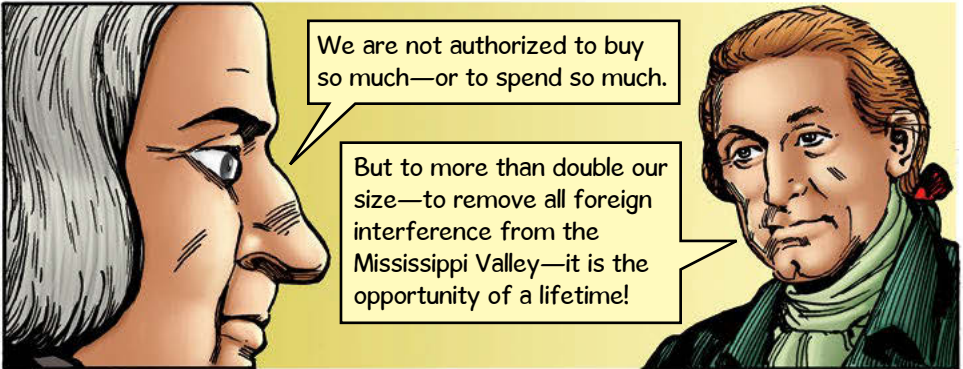
I see, I see! With the strong English navy between France and Louisiana, he stands to lose it any way.

So he might as well sell it and get something out of it! Exactly!



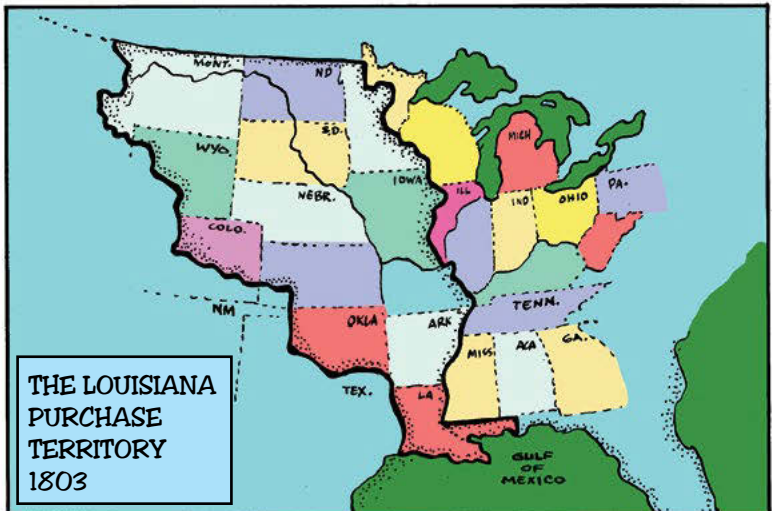
We are not authorized to buy so much—or to spend so much.

But to more than double our size—to remove all foreign interference from the Mississippi Valley—it is the opportunity of a lifetime!



Talks took place with Talleyrand. A price was agreed upon of \$15 million—about four cents an acre. This was the biggest real estate deal in history!

THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE TERRITORY 1803

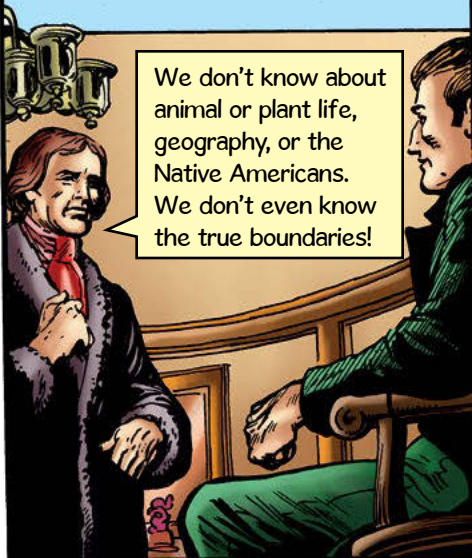


In New Orleans on December 20, 1803, the French flag was lowered, the American flag was raised and the United States took possession of the Louisiana Territory!



Thomas Jefferson had great scientific curiosity. He had always wanted to know more about the western lands. Now they were part of the United States and still almost nothing was known about them.

Jefferson talked to young Meriwether Lewis, army captain.

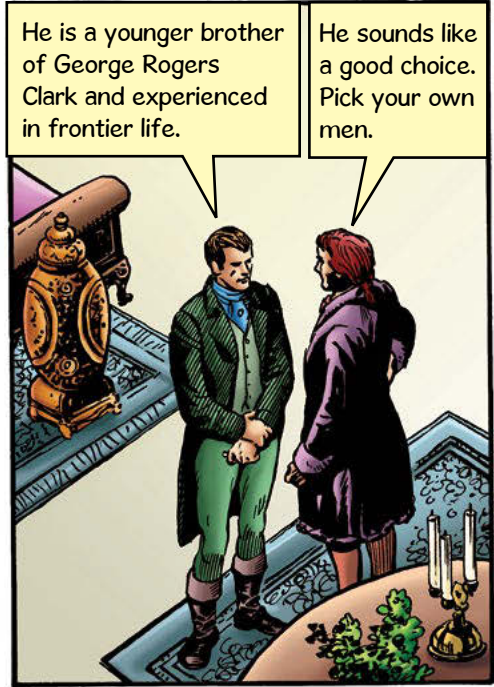
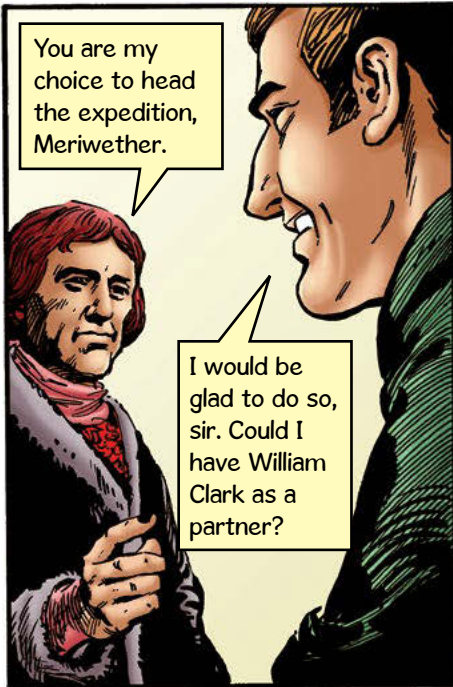


We don't know about animal or plant life, geography, or the Native Americans. We don't even know the true boundaries!

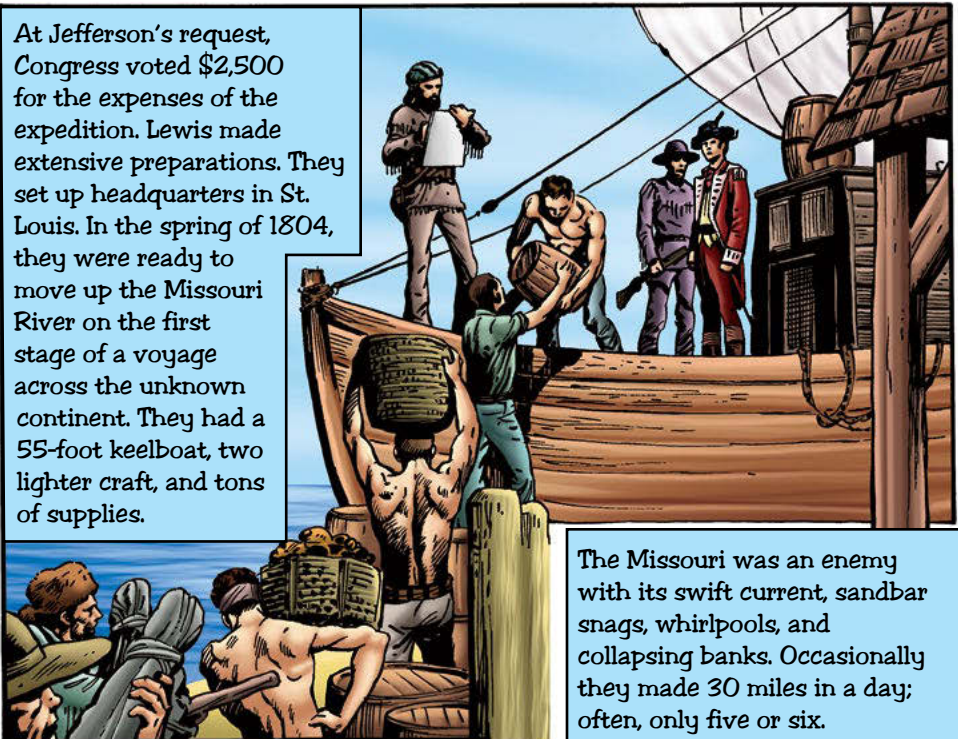
I would like to send a small expedition to explore the territory.

I would like to accompany such an expedition, sir!





At Jefferson's request, Congress voted \$2,500 for the expenses of the expedition. Lewis made extensive preparations. They set up headquarters in St. Louis. In the spring of 1804, they were ready to move up the Missouri River on the first stage of a voyage across the unknown continent. They had a 55-foot keelboat, two lighter craft, and tons of supplies.



The Missouri was an enemy with its swift current, sandbar snags, whirlpools, and collapsing banks. Occasionally they made 30 miles in a day; often, only five or six.

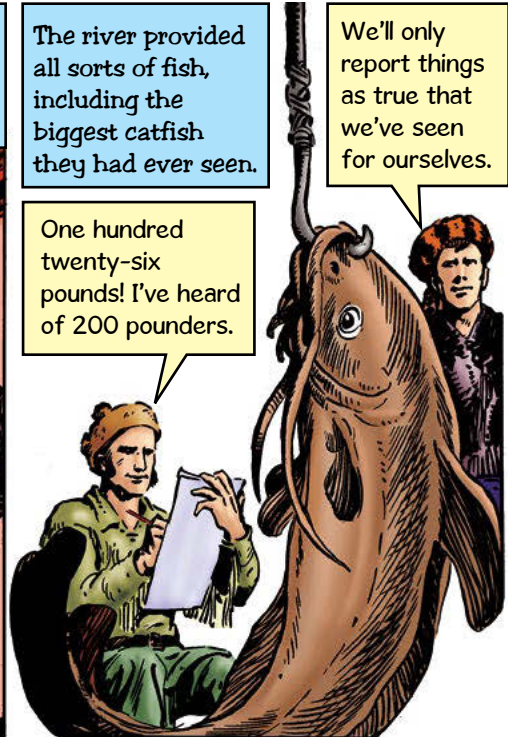
In addition to 28 soldiers and several boatmen, there were Clark's Black servant, York, and Lewis's Newfoundland dog, Scammon.



The river provided all sorts of fish, including the biggest catfish they had ever seen.

One hundred twenty-six pounds! I've heard of 200 pounders.

We'll only report things as true that we've seen for ourselves.



They made notes of everything, this being one of the purposes of the trip.



There are hundreds of whooping cranes.

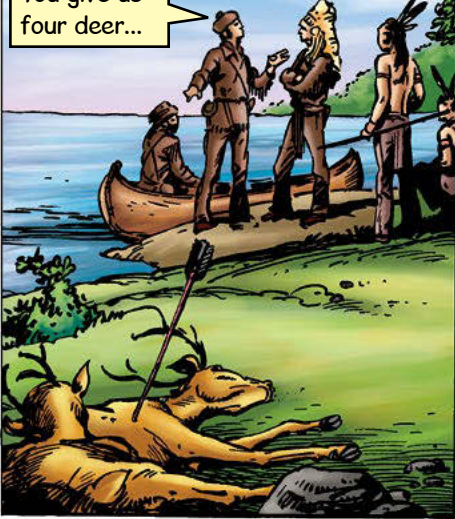
A cormorant!

The pelicans are comical!

Another important task was to observe the various kinds of Native Americans they met, and to make friends with them if possible—for these people were now inhabitants of the United States.

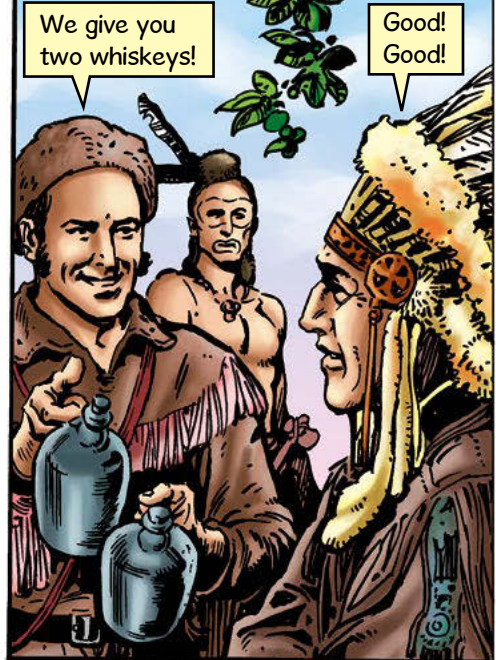
On May 22, they traded for fresh meat with a hunting party of friendly Kickapoos.

You give us four deer...



We give you two whiskeys!

Good! Good!



Later their own hunters began to bring in food.

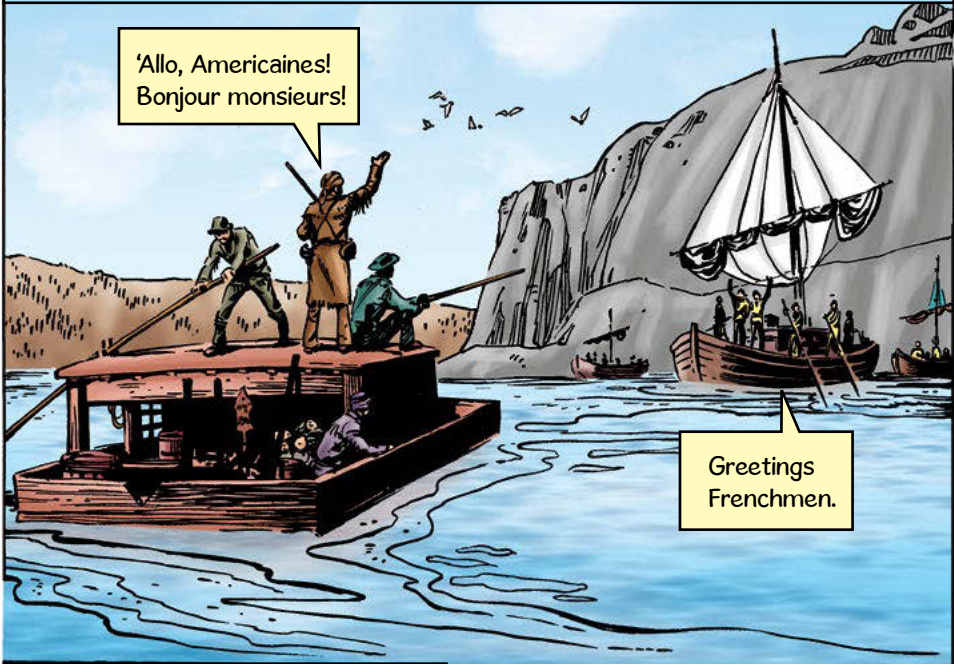


Game's gettin' plentiful. Black bear, deer, elk ...



And off to the west we could see buffalo herds—thousands of buffalo!

On June 12 they met a raft headed south, loaded with furs and Frenchmen.



The two boats tied up for a visit.
The captains wanted to learn
everything possible about the trip
ahead.

What about
the Native
Americans.
upriver?

High up you'll find
the Mandans. They
are good Native
Americans. But before
the Mandans you'll be
in Sioux country!



And the
Sioux?

The Sioux are sly,
troublesome, and
they'll demand gifts.



As the Frenchmen had predicted, upriver the Sioux lined the river banks.

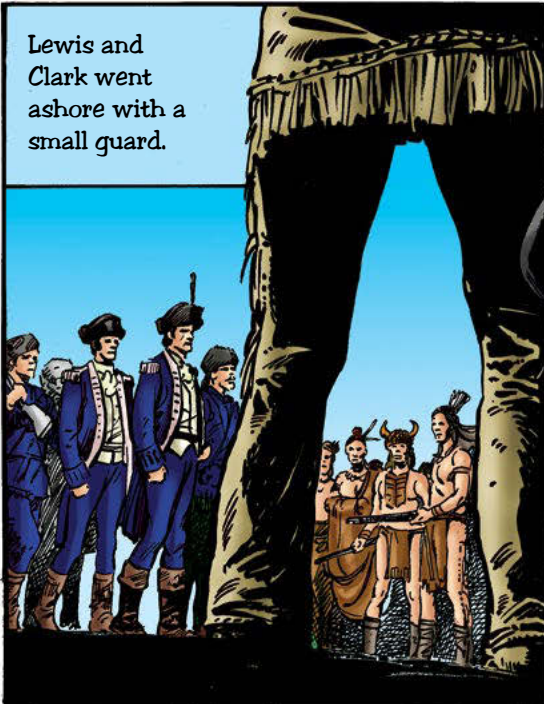


It's true.
There must
be thousands.

We must arrange a powwow* with them.
That's part of our job.



Lewis and Clark went ashore with a small guard.



They were taken to the Sioux encampment, and Lewis made a speech.



We have come from the president in Washington. The French and Spanish have gone.

* A conference



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