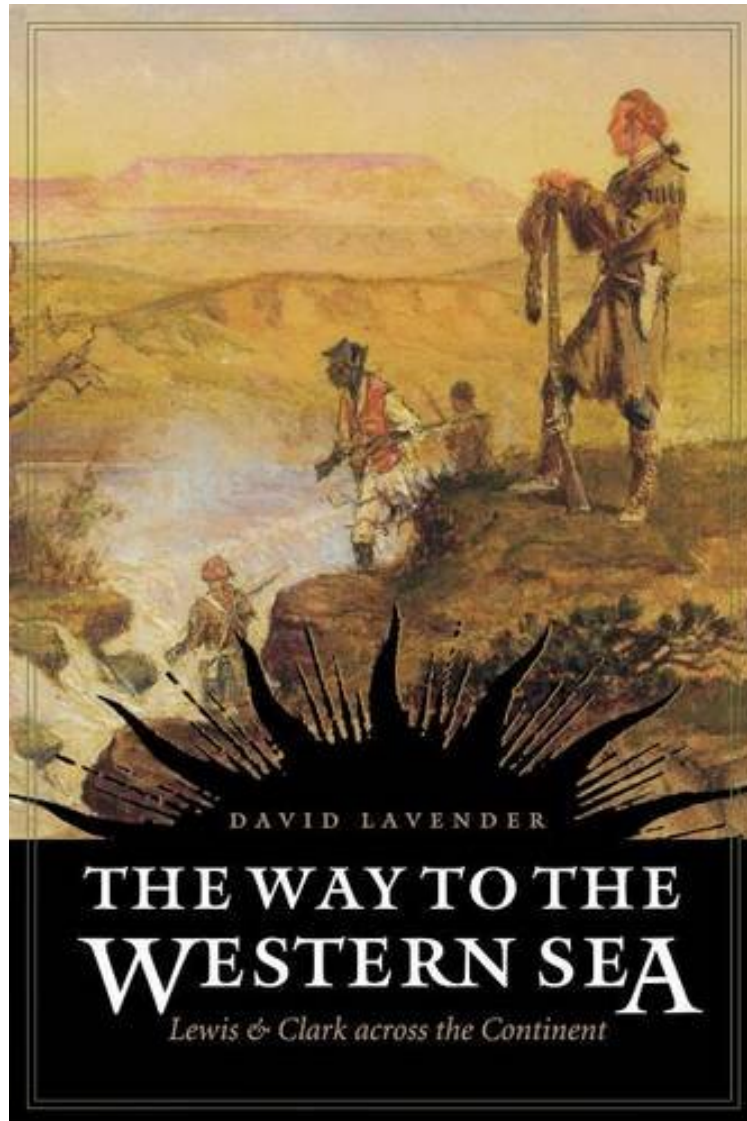


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The Way to the Western Sea: Lewis and Clark across the Continent

David Lavender

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David Lavender : The Way to the Western Sea: Lewis and Clark across the Continent before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Way to the Western Sea: Lewis and Clark across the Continent:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A singularly venerable American storyBy Dave DO of the great 'travels' I have read, I've got to place this journey at the top; above, even, that of Marco Polo, Captain Cook, Shackleton's gripping tale of survival as recounted in 'Endurance' (as told by Lansing), and Burton's 'Pilgrimage.' The

reason for my doing so is that this tale combines the best elements of all the others, and at extremes of hardship and unfamiliarity exceeding those of some of the other travelers. My lone quibble is that while the content in Lavender's rendition of this sublime journey far surpasses that of Twain's 'Life Along the Mississippi,' the writing does not. In terms of phraseology and word choice he often makes the modern historical writer's error of mimicry of Gibbon and good, late-18th century writers, which he should not - and I am sympathetic to the inclination. In the meantime, on the other hand, the material is so strong (and Mr. Lavender has made such good use of it) that I could not put it down, and I am indebted to him for his service. If there is any strong lack in the book, from my personal perspective, it is that same deficiency from which Lewis and Clark themselves suffered: good, detailed maps. 14 of 17 people found the following review helpful. A most excellent adventure

By James Ferguson
David Lavender just may have written the definitive history of the Lewis and Clark expedition. It is a wonderfully wrought narrative, capturing the full width and breadth of this incredible journey. Lavender's sardonic tongue deflates many of the myths surrounding the "voyage of discovery," noting that for the most part this was a well-trodden path. The only actual "discovery" was that of linking the Missouri to the Columbia. However, this makes it no less an adventure. He downplays the significance of Sacagewea. For the most part she was little used on this voyage. Her one major contribution was helping to secure horses for the great fording of the Bitterroot Mountains. Still, Lavender lavishes much attention on her and her son, which it seems that William Clark did as well. Her presence seemed to secure safe passage during their final leg down the Columbia River, as it made the expedition team seem less war-like. Lavender also provides the background for the voyage, detailing President Jefferson's dream to establish an American Northwest Passage, linking one ocean to another. Lavender probes the seemingly paternal relationship between Jefferson and Lewis, and how Jefferson was able to win Congress over to a third attempt to cross the continent, despite questions regarding Lewis' qualifications. Jefferson personally trained Lewis for the expedition and provided added tutelage in the form of the leading lights of American science. Like a devoted son, Lewis made every effort to carry out the mission, which Jefferson sponsored, even when it seemed foolhardy to do so. For those who haven't travelled this route before, you will be in good hands with David Lavender. For those who have, I think you will marvel at how masterful a job Lavender does in recording the events, giving the best rounded version of the "voyage of discovery" that I have read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Unbounded Courage!

By Father Mike
Detailed account of a truly amazing journey into the far reaches of unknown lands. Both readable and informative. History comes alive in this excellent book.

Critics have called David Lavender a "master storyteller" (Library Journal), his prose "virile, disciplined, yet personal" (New York Times), and his book "a balanced, learned, and lively history of an epochal human exploit" (Choice).

From Publishers Weekly "The spellbinding narrative captures the mingled awe, courage, fear and curiosity of two stumblers into the heart of darkness," observed PW. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal The story of the Lewis and Clark expedition is well known, but it has been 30 years since the last general secondary account appeared. Using the skills of a master storyteller, Lavender has provided a reliable record of that epic journey, reassessing the evidence in the light of recent research and relating even the smallest details of the expedition. This reviewer's only regret is that Lavender could not wait for publication of the monumental edition of the expedition's journals by the University of Nebraska Press (The Journals of the Lewis Clark Expedition, LJ 3/1/87) to be completed. Suitable even for young adults, this work replaces older secondary accounts. Essential.

Stephen H. Peters, Northern Michigan Univ. Lib., Marquette
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From the Publisher Brilliantly distilled from diary entries and contemporary accounts and with masterly scholarship and high drama, David Lavender recreates one of the greatest adventure stories in American history--the transit and exploration of the American continent by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.