

A Meriwether Lewis Last Days Timeline

July 1807	home at Locust Hill
August 1807	with Jefferson at Monticello
September 1807	Richmond, VA—observing Aaron Burr treason trial for Jefferson
March 8, 1808	Lewis arrives in St. Louis
July 2, 1808	Henry Dearborn instructs Lewis not to dispatch troops without prior approval of War Department
July 17, 1808	Jefferson rebukes ML: "Since I parted with you in Albemarle in Sept. last I have never had a line from you."
July 22, 1808	<i>Missouri Gazette</i> (funded in part by ML) publishes first issue
August 1808	TJ to Dearborn: "It is astonishing we get not one word from him."
August 20, 1808	Lewis writes to Dearborn pledging he will not dispatch troops without prior permission
November 19, 1808	Osage sign treaty with the U.S. Government
December 1, 1808	Lewis writes to his mother Lucy with his plan to move her to St. Louis
February 24, 1809	Lewis signs contract with St. Louis Missouri Fur Company to return Sheheke to the Mandan.
March 7, 1809	ML signs draft payable to Pierre Chouteau for additional presents to accompany Sheheke up the Missouri River
May 13, 1809	ML signed another draft for \$500 for additional supplies and presents
May 15, 1809	ML signs another draft for \$450 for 500 pounds of powder and 1,250 pounds of lead
July-August 1809	Lewis has open confrontation with Frederick Bates—Clark averts an "affair of honor"
Early August	Lewis receives letter from R.S. Smith of Dept. of State declining to pay \$18.50 for Lewis-authorized translation of laws of Upper Louisiana into French
August 16, 1809	Jefferson writes, "I am very often applied to know when your work will begin to appear [in print]; and I have so long promised copies to my literary correspondents in France, that I am almost bankrupt in their eyes."
August 18, 1809	Lewis receives William Eustis letter of July 19—blistering rebuke of Lewis for unauthorized drafts, overages in the Sheheke return project, and conflict of interest between his duties as Governor and the private enterprise of the Sheheke return fur party.
August 18, 1809	Lewis writes Eustis: "Be assured Sir, that my Country can never make 'A Burr' of me—She may reduce me to Poverty; but she can never sever my Attachment from her."

Late August	Clark works with Lewis to try to put his vouchers and drafts into order for his "defense" against Eustis' charges.
September 4, 1809	Lewis leaves St. Louis for the last time
September 5, 1809	Clark to Jonathan "...his Crediters all flocking in near the time of his Setting out distressed him much, which he expressed to me in Such terms as to Cause a Cempothy which is not yet off. . . . I have not Spent Such a day as yesterday for maney years. . . ."
September 11, 1809	New Madrid: Lewis writes his last will and testament
September 15, 1809	Lewis arrives at Fort Pickering—Captain Gilbert Russell "arrests Lewis," detains him until he recovers his senses, cuts off Lewis's alcohol supply
September 16, 1809	ML writes to President Madison explaining his travel plans and declaring that he expects that his explanations will entirely vindicate him.
September 22, 1809	ML letter to Amos Stoddard
September 29, 1809	Lewis, Pernia, Major James Neely, Neely's servant start out overland for Nashville.
Early October	rest at Chickasaw Agency. Neely: "His resolution left him." [i.e. Lewis started drinking again]
October 6, 1809	Lewis-Neely party leaves Chickasaw Agency for Nashville
October 9, 1809	Lewis-Neely party crosses Tennessee River
October 10, 1809	Lewis arrives alone at Grinder's Stand
October 11, 1809	dawn: Meriwether Lewis dies of gunshot wounds, aetat. 35
October 18, 1809	James Neely writes Jefferson: "It is with extreme pain that I have to inform you of the death of His Excellency, Meriwether Lewis, Governor of Upper Louisiana, who died on the morning of the 11 th instant and, I am sorry to say, by suicide."
October 28, 1809	Clark learns of death of Lewis from public papers: "I fear O' I fear the weight of his mind has overcome him; what will be the Consequence?"
January 4, 31, 1810	Gilbert Russell letters to Jefferson: "[Lewis's] untimely death may be attributed Solely to the free use he made of liquor which he acknowledged very candidly to me. . . ."
Spring 1810	Alexander Wilson visits gravesite, interviews Priscilla and Robert Grinder—pays forward for upkeep of the grave
November 26, 1811	Statement by Gilbert Russell: "... and learning from the Crew that he had made two attempts to Kill himself, in one of which he had nearly succeeded, [I] resolved to take possession of him and his papers. . . ."
August 18, 1813	Jefferson writes biographical sketch of Lewis—the "courage undaunted" letter.