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Book Review: Lewis and Clark, Tailor Made, Trail Worn: Army Life, Clothing, and Weapons of the Corps of Discovery

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by *Lewis and Clark, Tailor Made, Trail Worn: Army Life, Clothing, and Weapons of the Corps of Discovery*. National Park historian Robert J. Moore Jr. and artist Michael Haynes have combined their formidable talents to produce the definitive visual account of the expedition, focusing not only on Lewis and Clark, but also on the soldiers they led, the French-Canadian contract boatmen who accompanied the Corps as far as Mandan, North Dakota, and the expedition's other (and arguably more famous) members such as Sacagawea, Clark's slave York, and Lewis's Newfoundland dog, Seaman.

Tailor Made, Trail Worn paints a little-known portrait of the famous military expedition of exploration, whose members began their travels wearing either full-dress uniforms of red, white, and blue for the regulars, and gray and blue for new recruits, or simple fatigue uniforms of plain, loose-fitting white trousers and shirts while on the river or attending to daily chores. As the story unfolds, readers learn that despite the efforts of skilled tailors such as Private Joseph Whitehouse, the expedition's uniforms gradually wore out and were ultimately replaced with deerskin garments of Indian design.

The prints included in Sergeant Patrick Gass's journal (first published in 1807) make it clear that the expedition's soldiers wore military clothing for as long as it remained feasible. Readers who absorb the import of this may well ask why so many accounts have portrayed the corps that crossed the Great Plains as mountain men wearing coonskin caps. While Moore and Haynes do not offer substantive clues, their exhaustive research will quickly convey which image is more reliable.

The many paintings and sketches accompanying the text offer a unique glimpse into an army that was struggling, along with a fledgling nation, for a means by which to establish a distinct identity. While few images, patterns, or drawings of Jeffersonian army uniforms have survived the ravages of time, the authors succeeded in piecing together a comprehensive account through unstinting research. Although the volume is probably a bit too large

Lewis and Clark, Tailor Made, Trail Worn: Army Life, Clothing, and Weapons of the Corps of Discovery. By Robert J. Moore Jr. and Michael Haynes. Helena, MT: Farcountry Press, 2003. 288 pp. Color plates, illustrations, notes, sources, index. \$39.95.

For readers seeking historically accurate images of the members of the Lewis and Clark expedition, look no further. Every possible curiosity you could have regarding their clothing, equipment, and weapons will be satisfied

to use as a pocket reference when hiking in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark, it is certainly a “must read” if you really wish to understand what the expedition experienced as it made its way to the Pacific Northwest.

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