

# Louisiana purchase and lewis and clark expedition assignment

[History](#)



During Jefferson first term as President, he encountered problems with his Vice President, Aaron Burr, but continued to address problems arising in order to make sure the United States was recognized as an emerging power in the world. In 1762, France gave up Louisiana to Spain, but the secret Treaty of San Oldness, allowed the French to reclaim the area for themselves. By 1800, after a confusing Revolutionary period, France once again emerged as a great world power under the leadership of Napoleon Bonaparte.

He envisioned a great French empire in the New World, and he hoped to use the Mississippi Valley as a food and trade center to supply the sugar-rich island of Santa Domingo, which was to be the heart of this empire. First, however, he had to restore French control of the island, where slaves under Toussaint Louverture had seized power in a rebellion. Napoleon's attempts to colonize were failed when his troops were ravaged by tropical diseases like as yellow fever, carried by mosquito.

Also, France was in conflict with Britain and Napoleon believed withholding this land from the US would drive the US into Britain's arms. Because of these two problems, Napoleon decided to sell the Louisiana land to United States, cutting his loses, and abandoning his hopes of a New World empire for France. Napoleon also believed if the United States had control over the new land, they would be able to create a military and naval force that could challenge that of Britain. In 1803 Thomas Jefferson decided to send two envoys, James Monroe and Robert R.

Livingston, to Paris to negotiate the purchase of the land. The Louisiana Purchase was accomplished by a treaty on April 30, 1803, After a week of negotiating with the French Government the men were surprised to find that the French were willing to sell Louisiana for \$15 million, an opportunity they realized was too good to ignore (828,000 square miles at about 3 cents an acre. When the news reached Jefferson he was startled, he did not want the men to spend more than \$10 million, but this turned out to be a great deal for the United States.

Jefferson was unsure if the United States could even legally purchase the area because of the Constitution, which doesn't mention buying land.

Senators, on the other hand, were less concerned about the legal woes of the purchase, and registered prompt approval of the deal. By removing the single remaining European power from North America the United States was able to completely separate itself from the Old World. With this massive amount of land becoming part of the United States, someone had to explore the uncharted territory.

At this time the west was unknown; neither France nor Spain had mapped its mountains or rivers. In 1804, Jefferson sent Meriwether Lewis, his secretary, and an army officer, William Clark, to explore the territory. With help from a Shoshone woman, Sacagawea, they traveled west to the Pacific Coast. After their two and half year expedition, they had acquired a collection of maps, scientific notations, and stories of native cultures. The Lewis and Clark Expedition provided a better perception of the geography of the Northwest and the production of the first accurate maps of the area.

How did Aaron Burr and The Supreme Court interfere with Jefferson otherwise successful first term? Thomas Jefferson Vice President during his first term was Aaron Burr, a man who came to conspire against him. Burr betrayed him by joining a group of Federalist extremists to plot the secession of New England and New York. Another American politician, Alexander Hamilton, defeated his plans by using his political influence to convince the Representatives to vote for Jefferson in the Presidential election of 1800. Furious, Burr challenges Hamilton to a duel in an attempt to defend his honor.

Hamilton accepted, but refused to shoot the gun and was killed in one shot by Burr. This duel cost Burr his political career, and he then journeyed to the west and met General James Wilkinson, the Military Governor of the Louisiana Territory. The two apparently schemed to separate the western part of US from the East, and then continue to expand by invading Spanish controlled Florida and Mexico. In the Fall of 1806, Burr planned to meet Wilkinson and his army at Natchez, but when Wilkinson learned that Jefferson had learned of the plot, he betrayed Burr and fled to New Orleans.