



**PRIMARY SOURCE: AFTER THE STATION CAMP VOTE**

*Excerpts from the Journals of the Corps of Discovery*

**What happened after the votes were cast?**

Captain Clark writes:

*...together with the Solicitations of every individual, except one of our party induced us Conclude to Cross the river and examine the opposit Side, and if a Sufficent quantity of Elk could probably be precured to fix on a Situation as convenient to the Elk & Sea Coast as we Could find.*

- William Clark, November 24th, 1806  
(Clark, from Moulton V.6, 85)

According to the following entries, Captain Lewis and five men set off upriver to “cross and examine” several days later and returned the 5th of December:

*They have found a place about 15 miles from this camp, up a small river which puts into a large bay on the south side of the Columbia, that will answer very well for winter quarters, as game is very plenty, which is the main object with us; and we intend to move there as soon as circumstances will admit. There is more wet weather on this coast, than I ever knew in*

*any other place; during a month, we have had three fair days; and there is no prospect of a change.*

- Patrick Gass, December 5th, 1805  
(Gass, from Moulton V.10, 180)

*...about noon Capt. Lewis and three men returned and informed us that they had found a tollarable good place for our winters quarters about 15 miles down the South Shore, a Short distance up a Small River. they had killed 7 Elk and five Deer.*

- John Ordway, December 5th, 1805  
(Ordway, from Moulton V.9, 258)

**The Captains' Thoughts**

Both of the following excerpts were recorded in William Clark's journal on November 24th, 1805.

Captain Meriwether Lewis

*Proceed on to morrow & examine The other side if good hunting to winter there, as Salt is an objt. if not to proceed on to Sandy it is probable that a vestle will come in this winter, & that by proceeding on at any*

*distance would not enhance our journey in passing the Rocky mountains.*

Captain William Clark

*In favour of proceeding on without delay to the opposite Shore & there examine, and find out both the disposition of the Indians, & probability of procuring Subsistence, and also enquire if the Trading vestles will arrive before the time we should depart in the Spring, and if the Traders, commonly arrive in a Seasonable time, and we Can Subsist without a depends. on our Stores of goods, to Continue as the Climate would be more favourable on the Sea Coast for our naked men than higher up the Countrey where the Climate must be more Severe— The advantage of the arrival of a vestle from whome we Can procure goods will be more than an over ballance, for the bad liveing we Shall have in liveing on Pore deer & Elk we may get in this neighbourhood. If we Cannot subsist on the above terms to proceed on, and make Station Camps, to neighbourhood of the Frendly village near the tong narrows & delay untill we Can proceed up the river. Salt water I view as an evil in as much as it is not helthy— I am also of opinion that one two or three weeks Exemination on the opposide if the propects are any wise favourable, would not be too long...*

- William Clark, November 24th, 1805  
(Clark, from Moulton V.6, 84-5)

### **What did the other members say on this day?**

It is important to note that all three of the other journal keepers on the Expedition recorded the decision in their journals that day.

John Ordway wrote briefly about this decision in his journal entry on November 24th:

*...our officers conclude with the oppinion of the party to cross the River and look out a place for winters quarter Some where as near the ocean as possable on the account of makeing Salt.*

(Ordway, from Moulton V.9, 256)

Patrick Gass' record similarly states:

*At night, the party were consulted by the Commanding Officers, as to the place most proper for winter quarters; and the most of them were of opinion, that it would be best, in the first place, to go over to the south side of the river, and ascertain whether good hunting ground could be found there. Should that be the case, it would be more eligible place than higher up the river, on account of getting salt, as that is a very scarce article with us.*

(Gass, from Moulton, V.10, 177)

Joseph Whitehouse conferred:

*In the Evening our Officers had the whole party assembled in order to consult which place would be the best, for us to take up our Winter Quarters at. The greater part of our Men were of opinion; that it would be best, to cross the River, & if we should find game plenty, that it would be of an advantage to us, for to stay near the Sea shore, on account of making Salt, which we are nearly out of at this time, & in want of it in preserving our Provisions for the Winter, would be an object well worth our attention.*

(Whitehouse, from Moulton, V.11, 398)