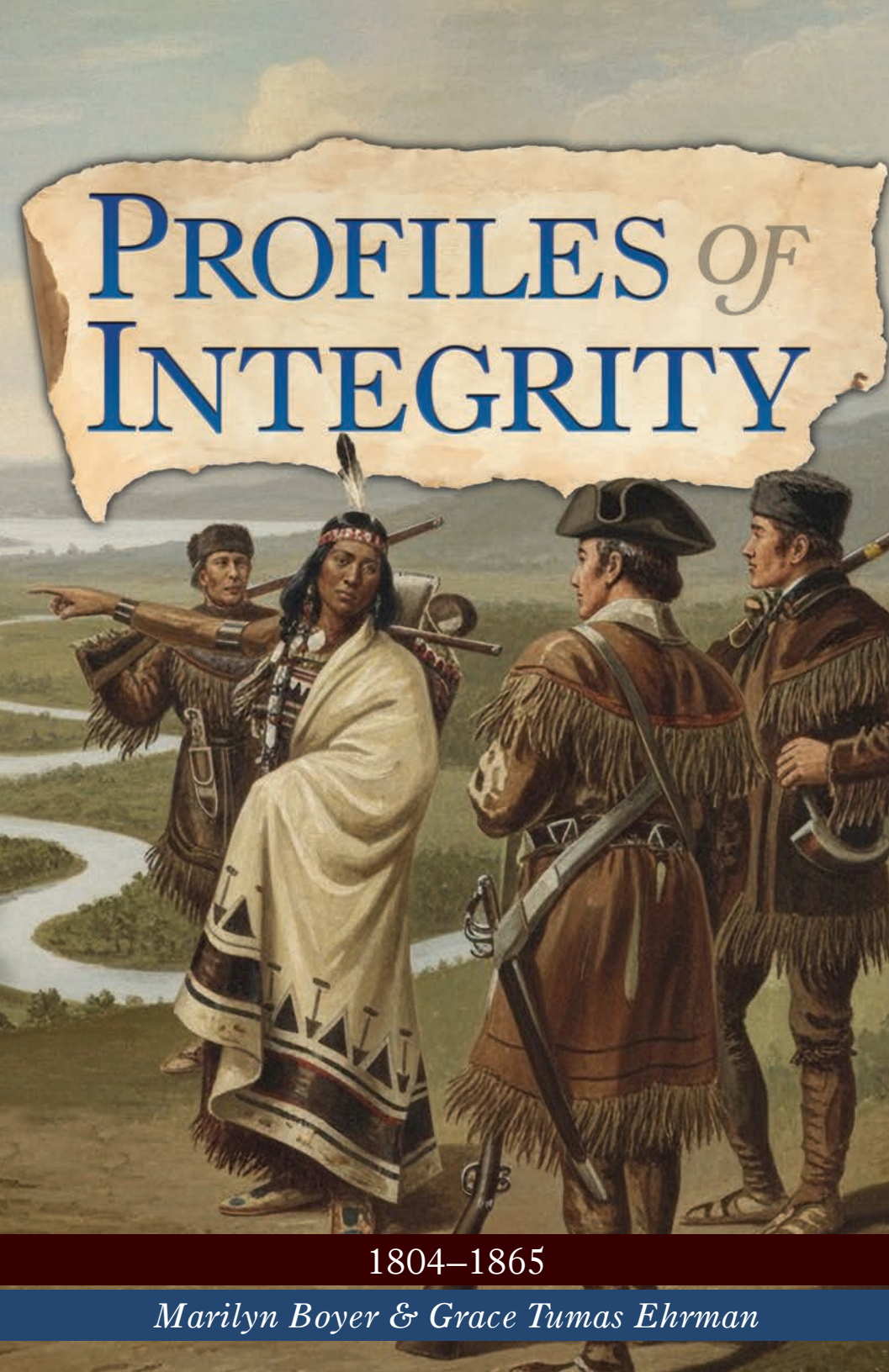
Profiles of Integrity



1804–1865

Marilyn Boyer & Grace Tumas Ehrman

PROFILES OF INTEGRITY

2

Real People
Who Demonstrated
Godly Character

Marilyn Boyer &
Grace Tumas Ehrman

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Credits

Thanks to the following people for their indispensable help in writing Portraits of Integrity: Grace Tumas Ehrman, for her sensitive and colorful portrayal of these heroes in writing their stories.

Mary Ann Edman who, with help from her husband Ed, produced the layout and design, along with other beautiful graphic effects. Thanks, Mary Ann, for your commitment to excellence!

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Introduction

Who doesn't love a good story? The Portraits of Integrity series was written to engage students (and their parents) with gripping true stories from the pages of history. Many brave and courageous men and women sacrificed to deliver freedom to future generations. May we never forget the cost they paid or take it lightly.

Reading about events in the lives of real people will teach a lot about history as a byproduct. History does not have to be boring and dry. The stories are delivered in a compelling personal way so that the readers will not be quick to forget.

As you read about the lives of these amazing people, you will be inspired to implement character qualities they demonstrated as you respond to life's many circumstances. For instance, read about the gentleness President Lincoln showed a wounded Confederate soldier and the sensitivity and genuine concern General Robert E. Lee offered to a young Union soldier who taunted him as he passed by.

I hope you will be challenged as I was by those who came before us, leaving a legacy of character as an example to follow.

Marilyn Boyer

The expedition of Messrs. Lewis and Clarke, for exploring the river Missouri, and the best communication from that to the Pacific Ocean, has had all the success which could have been expected. They have traced the Missouri nearly to its Source, descended the Columbia to the Pacific Ocean, ascertained with accuracy the geography of that interesting communication across our continent, learned the Character of the Country, of its commerce, and Inhabitants; and it is but justice to say that Messrs. Lewis and Clarke, and their brave Companions, have by this arduous service deserved well of their country.

—Thomas Jefferson, December 2, 1806
message drafted to Congress

Truthfulness

DEFINITION

Trustworthiness by accurately stating the facts

MEMORY VERSE

Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

Proverbs 8:6-7

Bird Woman

Sacagawea

Northwest Passage

November 1804

November 1804. The two strangers came to the lodge of the French trapper, Toussaint Charbonneau, at the Hidatsa village, on a cold winter day. Fires were burning in the rounded Mandan huts covered with turf and heavy buffalo skins. Seventeen-year-old Sacagawea, light and brown and quick as a bird, listened as the men spoke to her husband. Called the Corps of Discovery, the two men, who were bundled into warm jackets, needed a skilled interpreter to lead them through Dakota Territory

and over the mountains to the east. They talked of discovering a Northwest Passage that would allow an overland trading route to the Pacific.

She spoke their strange names: Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

She felt the child move within her as she listened. Growing up in the sweeping grasslands of Idaho as a Shoshone girl, kidnapped and held as a slave by the Minitaree Sioux at age 12, she had never seen the sea. Charbonneau began bargaining craftily with the two strangers. He would go, but only if Sacagawea went with them. The two men nodded. A woman gave an expedition a friendly tone. As a Native American, Sacagawea could also speak the Snake (Shoshone) language of the nations they passed through when they reached the headwaters of the Missouri River. She could barter for food and obtain horses.

A week later, Sacagawea and Charbonneau moved to Fort Mandan, which had been built by Lewis and Clark as a home base. Sacagawea spoke no English. Captain Clark carefully penned Bird Woman's name in his journal: "Sah-cah' gah-we-ah." At first, they thought little of her. But as they grew to respect the young Shoshone woman, Clark nicknamed her Janey.

The expedition set up a three-way translation system. Sacagawea and Charbonneau made a husband-and-wife team, translating from Shoshone to French, and ultimately to English.

Sacagawea guiding the Corps of Discovery

At 5 p.m. on the evening of February 11, 1805, Sacagawea gave birth to a baby boy. Charbonneau named him Jean Baptiste, but Clark called him "Pomp" or "Pompey." Still weak from the birth ordeal but uncomplaining, Sacagawea left Fort Mandan with the expedition, carrying Jean Baptiste in a cradleboard on her back.

The Corps of Discovery headed upriver from the Missouri as the April sun strengthened. Sacagawea, with her baby, was the only woman to accompany the 33 members of the party who headed to the Pacific Ocean. During the day, she dug up edible roots, foraged for plants, and gathered wild berries as they ripened. She made medicine from herbal tinctures. Jean Baptiste, the "little dancing boy," frolicked and laughed as he sat beside his mother in the boats or bounced between her shoulders when they switched to horseback. She helped pole up the Missouri River

in expeditionary boats called *pirogues.*

On May 14th, the water, swollen with spring currents, was high and foaming. A wave crashed against the boat, tipping instruments, books, and papers into the raging yellow Missouri. While the men struggled to right the boat, Sacagawea swiftly rescued Lewis' and Clark's precious records, journals, and supplies from the water before they sank. But the medicine was lost.

William Clark

When Sacagawea fell ill near the headwaters of the Missouri, the explorers, until now indifferent to the Shoshone woman, realized how much they needed her. Without her, they could not know if the information they received was correct. They could not locate Native American guides or horses.

Meriwether Lewis

On August 12th, the expedition reached the Continental Divide at today's Lemhi Pass. It was the gateway to Shoshone country, the land Sacagawea had not seen for five years. No explorers or settlers had ever entered the Shoshone lands. Making groundbreaking history, Lewis and three other men scouted ahead for 75 miles, chopping brush and branches out of the way.

Her face showed no emotion, not even when she pointed out the place at the Fork of the Three Rivers

where the Sioux captured her and killed the rest of her family. Her words related the facts truthfully and accurately without concealing anything. As the only Native American on the expedition, the only teenager, the only woman, the only mother in camp, she was an oasis: a world in herself.

On August 13th, they stumbled across a group of Shoshones. Sacagawea went ahead to meet them. As she came closer, she recognized the blankets and feathered headgear of the Lemhi-Shoshones. Sacagawea began to dance in her moccasins, waving back to Lewis and Clark. "These are my people!"

The two groups converged. Suddenly, a familiar face swam into sight. Broken images flashed through her mind.

The Minitaree swept down on the Shoshone camp like leaves swirling before a summer storm. Tipis tilted and cooking pots rolled along the ground, spilling craggy knuckles of meat. Women and children scrabbled on their knees, digging their fingers into the hot ashes as enemy horses trampled them down. Lances decorated with Sioux war feathers, flew through the air. She felt her hands jerked behind her back, tied with rawhide. Her brother Cameahwait running . . .

Now, her brother's face smiled at her between the soft black braids of a Shoshone chief. Her brother and her sister's boy were all that survived the disastrous raid of 1799–1800.

All at once, a woman rushed into Sacagawea's

arms. Lewis and Clark, standing off to one side, watched as the two women hugged and crooned. Her friend Otterwoman, captured at the same time by the Sioux, had escaped from the enemy camp and found her way home. For five years, Sacagawea did not know if she was alive or dead. In the end, Sacagawea chose not to stay with her birth-tribe. Raided by the Minitaree and Blackfeet tribes, the Shoshone found themselves forced back on poorer, barren land. She decided to continue the expedition to the sea.

While Sacagawea translated back and forth, the Shoshone braves led out strings of horses. Without horses, Lewis and Clark could not hope to locate the Northwest Passage. Because of her presence with the group, the Shoshone also sent along a couple of guides to steer them across the mountains. It would take months of trekking before they reached the west coast.

Early autumn had come. Snow fell in the upper Montana and Idaho mountains as early as July. Now, the wind whistled over the cliff faces and canyons, forcing the party to creep back to shelter. Carrying her six-month-old baby in a wooden cradleboard with a high, hooped yoke on her back, Sacagawea scrambled up the rocks beside the men. No food grew here. Slope after slope of the Rocky Mountains rose before them, never-ending, menacing. The skies turned grey and leaden with early snow flurries. Finally, the food ran out. Sacagawea and the

men gnawed frozen tallow candles to survive. At last, they came down the other side of the mountains into a mild valley where Sacagawea dug and cooked camus roots for them.

November closed in on them. The expedition neared the Columbia River on the Pacific Coast. Trading with the Chinookan people there proved profitable. Lewis and Clark found the present they wanted to take back to President Thomas Jefferson as a trophy: a thick soft robe sewn from the pelts of two sea otters. The explorers wanted to trade for it, however the Native Americans refused their goods. Finally, after fruitless bartering, Sacagawea gave up her precious blue beaded belt to seal the trade.

Four days later, they reached the Pacific Ocean. When the men came back from the headland overlooking the shimmering waters, the entire expedition, including Sacagawea and Clark's Black and enslaved manservant, York, cast their votes on where to build their winter quarters: Fort Clatsop.

January 1806 brought harsh storms that washed up a whale's carcass on the beach. The men gathered tools together to scavenge the whale blubber needed for cooking fat and oil lamps. Sacagawea, who had not yet seen the ocean, demanded to see this "monstrous fish" for herself.

On the return journey, Sacagawea proved valuable as a guide. Reaching the great plain at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, Sacagawea told Clark that she

recognized this place from her childhood. Clark had no idea which path to take. Remembering Shoshone hunting trails, she led the party through a road in a gap (Bozeman Pass) that wound down to the Yellowstone River without the danger and difficulty of the earlier crossing. Delighted, Clark called her his "pilot."

Crossing the Yellowstone, Sacagawea nearly drowned. The infant's clothes and mosquito netting swept away right from under her feet. She barely had time to grab her baby. Wet, cold, and shivering, Sacagawea huddled with little Jean Baptiste, who now had no blankets. Clark, fearing lest her illness come back, hurried to camp to find warm clothes for her and the small child. After more than a year on the trail, Sacagawea and Charbonneau returned to live at Fort Mandan.

Details of Sacajawea's life beyond the Lewis and Clark expedition are somewhat hazy over time. When she died remains a mystery. A fur dealer's journal entry places Sacagawea at Fort Manuel Lisa Trading Post at the mouth of the Bighorn River in 1811. Her own tribe, the Lemhi-Shoshone, maintain that she lived to be a very old woman and died among them in 1884. Historical documents suggest, however, that Sacagawea may have died prior to a Sioux Nation raid on Fort Manuel in 1812. A clerk at the fort recorded that Sacagawea died of a "putrid fever" that same year. She was twenty-five years old and left a

baby girl. Records show that Charbonneau and their daughter Lizette survived the Sioux Nation's attack on Fort Manuel a few months later, but any other details of Sacagawea did not. Charbonneau handed over the guardianship of their son, John Baptiste, to William Clark while Sacagawea was alive.

Sacagawea (right) with Lewis and Clark at the Three Forks

Legend has depicted the "Bird Woman" Sacagawea as Lewis and Clark's guide. While it is not certain how large a role she played in leading the party to find the Northwest Passage, she did translate and report facts that helped insure the success of the mission. It is certain that she navigated more than 30 members of the expedition through the Rocky Mountains on the return journey. As a wife and mother, she worked to help her fellow explorers survive, served as a kind of ambassador to the Native American nations, and walked across half a continent with a baby on her back.

Sacagawea demonstrated truthfulness by translating carefully between members of the expedition and the numerous Native American groups she spoke to and guiding the expedition accurately across the Rocky Mountains.

... [Sacagawea] ...has been of great Service to me as a pilot through this Country ... recommends a gap in the mountain more South which I shall cross.

—Journal entry of William Clark, July 13, 1806

Questions

1. What incident in Sacagewea's childhood changed her life dramatically?
2. Why was Sacagewea so valuable on this expedition?
3. Why was her function of communicating with the Indigenous people groups so dependent upon her truthfulness?
4. List some ways she protected the men from potential disaster.
5. Tell of her being reunited with her brother.
6. What special hardships did Sacagewea face on this journey?
7. How was the mission of the expedition benefited by meeting up with Sacagewea's brother and friend?
8. Just how important is truthfulness in our dealings with others? Do you make a point to speak with truthfulness in your everyday life? How does your truthfulness affect those around you?
9. Think of some instances where you may not have been accurate in speaking with truth and make specific plans to correct this in your life.