Faces of Westward Expansion



Sacagawea was a Shoshone Native American woman who helped Lewis and Clark on their expedition west. Born around 1788 in the Lemhi River Valley, Sacagawea was just a young girl when she was kidnapped by the Hidatsa tribe. At 13 she was sold to a French-Canadian trapper, Toussaint Charbonneau, who married her. She was only 15 or 16 when she and her husband joined the expedition. Lewis and Clark hired her husband to serve as their interpreter, but Sacagawea's knowledge of the land and Shoshone language turned out to be more helpful. Sacagawea gave birth to her son during their journey. She was respected by the expedition members, and Lewis and Clark named a river after her.