

I, with the greater part of the men, crossed in the canoes to the opposite side above the falls and hauled them across the portage of 457 yards, which is on the larboard side and certainly the best side to pass the canoes. At this place we were obliged to let the canoes down by strong ropes of elk skin which we had for the purpose. One canoe, in passing this place, got loose by the cords breaking and was caught by the Indians below. I accomplished this necessary business and landed sage with all the canoes at our camp below the falls by 3 o'clock p.m.

We were nearly covered with fleas. They were so thick amongst the straw and fish skins at the upper part of the portage, at which place the natives had been camped not long since, that every man of the party was obliged to strip naked during the time of taking over the canoes so that they might have an opportunity of brushing the fleas off their legs and bodies.

Great numbers of sea otters were in the river below the falls. Great numbers of Indians visit us from above and below. One of the old chiefs who had accompanied us from the head of the river informed us that he heard the Indians say that the nation below intended to kill us. We examined all the arms and completed the ammunition to 100 rounds. The natives left us earlier this evening than usual, which gives a shadow of confirmation to the information of our old chief.

I observed on the beach near the Indian lodges two beautiful canoes of different shape and size to what we had seen above. They are wide in the middle, and tapering to each end. On the bow, curious figures were cut into the wood. Captain Lewis went up to the lodges to see those canoes and exchanged our smallest canoe for one of them by giving a hatchet and a few trinkets to the owner, who informed us he purchased it of a white man below for a horse. These canoes are neater made than any I have ever seen. They are calculated to ride the waves and carry immense burthens.

*Clark, October 22, 1805*

To put the size of this barge into perspective, compare it to the two people in the rowboat behind the barge. To the right of the rowboat, gravel is fed through a tunnel underneath the railroad tracks.



Gravel is loaded from this quarry near Wishram, Washington directly into barges. The sea otters that Clark saw here were harbor seals —sea otters stay in salt water. Clark corrected this mistake later in his journals. In today's Columbia River seals do not normally live above the Bonneville Dam, the lowest dam in the river, more than 50 miles downstream from here.



October 24, 1805, mile 3744

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