

Pike Exploration 150 Years Ago Paralleled Lewis and Clark Trip

Led First American Party to Upper Mississippi Area

Editor's Note: This year marks the 150th anniversary of the first major exploration of the Upper Mississippi area — an expedition that opened up a great region that now includes Missouri, Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and the Dakotas. Here's the story of that eight-month trek and the man who led it, Zebulon Montgomery Pike.

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
One hundred and fifty years ago a young Army lieutenant whose name was later to commemorate a mountain poled his keelboat into St. Louis and thus became the first white man to successfully ascend and come down what is known today as the "upper stretch" of the Mississippi River.

Zebulon Montgomery Pike, just 26 years old, had returned to St. Louis after an eight-month trek into the Upper Mississippi area. Our nation had purchased the Louisiana Territory in 1803, and Pike's upriver exploration was one of two important missions being conducted in the young republic in 1805. The other, of course was the Lewis and Clark expedition which broke trail up another great river, the Missouri.

Pike's Mississippi trip is one that history seems to have overlooked. Perhaps it is because his second great river trek—up the Arkansas in late 1806—brought him to the mountain now named "Pike's Peak." Whatever the explanation, his Mississippi River explorations deserve notice too.

Placate Indians
Pike and his party of 20 men left St. Louis on Aug. 9, 1805. According to orders given him by Gen. James Wilkinson, Pike was to explore and report on the Mississippi River from St. Louis to its source; recommend sites for military posts; consult with Indians along the way; make peace (if possible) between the Sioux and Ojibways, and check on British traders who had remained in the newly acquired American territory.

He did manage to placate some of the Indians he encountered. But he never achieved his goal of finding the actual source of the Mississippi. He thought he located it when, on Jan. 20, 1806, he reached the junction of Leech Lake and the main stream of the river. But there were several other sources of the great stream to the north, and these he did not find.

Well Worth Trip
This understandable shortcoming aside, Pike's accomplishments on the 1,330-mile stretch of upper river were worth the difficult trip.

He managed to secure 100,000 acres of land from the Sioux who were camped at the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers where Ft. Snelling now stands. The price for this tract? Pike reported that he got it after he had presented the Sioux with \$200 worth of gifts and had "cleared the Indians' throats" with some 60 gallons of well-watered whiskey.

Pike also visited the fabulous Julien Dubouche whose lead mines at what is now Dubuque, Iowa, were the richest in the area.

The expedition wintered in what is now Little Falls, Minn. In the fierce winter weather Pike made his way north by canoe, dog-sled and snow-shoes until he reached Leech Lake. He must have been a happy and weary man indeed, when he got back to St. Louis on April 30, 1806.

Military Posts
Pike's report on the Upper Mississippi country, besides providing intelligence for our young nation with a brand new territory on its hands, also led to the establishment of four important military posts in the Upper River country, Forts Madison, Edwards, Armstrong and Crawford.

Pike got no special reward for his upriver accomplishments, and bad luck seemed to follow him from this point on.

Sent out on the exploration of the Arkansas River three months after he returned from his Mississippi trip, he was captured by Mexicans and taken on an enforced tour of their country before he was released in 1807. He finally was killed in the battle of York during the War of 1812.

Pike's military career was short and fascinating. He began as a lieutenant in 1802, and when he was killed in 1813, he was a brigadier general.

Rockies Area
Although Pike's name is known now, for the most part, in association with the mountain Colorado he discovered, in the 19th Century he was a heroic figure. The first

steamboat to reach St. Louis was named after him; President James Madison eulogized him in an address to Congress; and a new warship in Skaketis Harbor was christened the "general Pike" in 1813.

Today, his name marks a Mississippi River dam, a state park, 10 counties, 18 towns and several bays, rivers and lakes in addition to the famous mountain.

Most interesting of all, perhaps, when one thinks of Pike and his expedition into the Upper Mississippi country 150 years ago, is what happened to that country. During the "golden age of the steamboat," hundreds of the stern and paddle wheelers made their way upriver, transporting passengers and cargo destined for the booming upper Midwest country. This was the great period of settlement in the area which encloses the states Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and the Da-

kotas. The steamboat played a vital part in the influx.

Limited Navigation
But after the Civil War the expanding railroads built bridges and rails across the Mississippi. From then until the mid-30s, navigation on the Upper Mississippi was a very limited business.

In the '30s, the U. S. Army Engineers launched their biggest "taming project" on the upper river with the construction of 26 locks and dams. The project transformed the upper river's profile so that now it resembles a flight of steps, with locks and dams constituting the risers, and the pools the treads to a giant stairway 600 miles long.

Today, the river is as busy as a highway. In 1955, another all-time record was set for tonnage shipped on the Mississippi. Stubby, but powerful towboats, equipped with diesel and radar, do the job. Coal, oil, metals, farm-machinery, grain and chemicals are hauled by the millions of tons. But the upper river still has the beauty and grandeur that Pike witnessed. The bluffs, wooded islands and countless inlets that Pike saw, are still there.

And though the river itself has seen great changes in people, commerce, industry and navigation, it is the same great stream the Indians called "The Father of Waters." The Upper Mississippi has remained legendary, even as in Pike's time, though it is now fully explored and harnessed.

Paralyzed Vet Pleads Against Vandal Attack

PASSAIC, N.J. (AP)—A paraplegic veteran Saturday pleaded with vandals to stop wrecking his special house being constructed on city-donated land.

Richard J. O'Brien Jr., who was paralyzed from the waist down in the Korean War, asked police for special guards for his house. O'Brien noted that the city's gift of some unused park property for his house was resented by some people who said "There will be no park property left soon." The house is being equipped with special devices to aid the paralyzed veteran. In recent weeks, O'Brien said, vandals ripped down every piece of insulation installed by the contractor, broke windows, ripped valuable electrical equipment, and stole building materials.

SPECIAL MEETING
All Members Cannery Local 670
Tues., July 10, 1:00 p. m.,
8:00 p. m.
Hall 1, Labor Temple
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By CLAY R. POLLAN
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To develop message for Sunday, read words corresponding to numbers of your Zodiac birth sign.

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