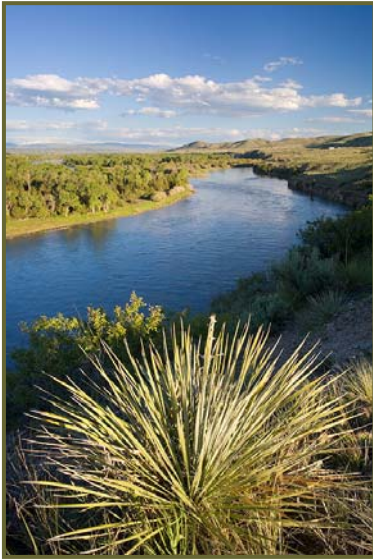


# *Straddling the Missouri*

Just over 200 years ago, in 1803, Thomas Jefferson commissioned Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to find the source of the Missouri River, and from there to discover a relatively easy water route west to the Pacific. Such a waterway, they discovered, doesn't exist.



But they did succeed in mapping the Northwest. And 15 months after pushing themselves upstream, they found the headwaters of the mighty Missouri River near the Montana-Idaho border. It was a tiny rivulet, which a member of the expedition, Pvt. Hugh McNeal, straddled, thanking God that he had lived to put one foot on either side of the mighty and heretofore deemed endless Missouri.

At its source, the Missouri looks a lot different from the powerful current that flows into the Mississippi River near St. Louis.

It is so in life as well. Many great things start out small:

- A long journey begins with a single step.
- A book, a building or a sports team develops from an idea.
- An oak tree rises heavenward from a tiny acorn.
- A lifelong career blossoms from recognition of a gift implanted by God.
- A nationwide company, Life Care, begins with the opening of a single nursing center in 1970.
- A relationship starts with a kind word or a warm smile.
- Faith responds to a still small voice from within, and can change the lives of millions of people around the world, as it did with Billy Graham.

What lies before you today? Whatever action you may take could lead to amazing results down the road.

– Beecher Hunter