

had several children together. Two of their children were Larry's 3rd great-grandfather, Neel Carroll McCullough, who was born on Christmas Day in 1820, and his brother, Thomas Neel McCullough, who was born on June 12, 1818. Samuel died in 1823. Elizabeth passed away in 1852.

Both Neel C. (*portrait on the left in the picture*) and Thomas N. (*right*) started banks in the mid 1800s. Neel C. started the Citizens Bank in Anderson, Indiana. Thomas N. started the Citizens Bank in Oxford, Ohio. Neel C. died in 1888. Thomas N. died in 1901. Thomas N.'s obituary appears on the front page alongside the obituary of McCullough family friend President Benjamin Harrison in the local Butler County Ohio newspaper. Thomas N.'s obituary tells a story about his mother, Elizabeth Neill, riding on horseback from Oxford to Pittsburgh to visit her family. Perhaps one of young Elizabeth's visits back to Pittsburgh was due to the death of her father, Robert Neill in 1804.

Meriwether Lewis and the Neill Log House

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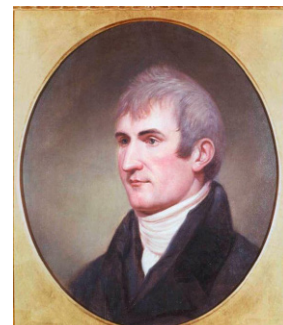
Only a few sentences in the "Neill Log House History" on the SHHS website make mention of Meriwether Lewis: "Current interest in restoring the Neill Log House began when the SHHS was presented with research from the National Park Service suggesting Meriwether Lewis, of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, may have stopped to water his horses at Snyder Spring near the log house on his way to Pittsburgh to begin his westward exploration. The spring is now culverted and covered by the Catahecassa Fountain."

Even though there are only a few references to Meriwether Lewis in the Neill Log House History, he was, of course, a significant national historical figure, traveling all the way to the West Coast and back again in the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1803-1806. You might be wondering why he is associated with the Neill Log House. It turns out that in August 2020, the SHHS was contacted by a National Park Service (NPS) contractor working on a project to connect historical sites connected with the Lewis and Clark expedition to communities along the route to highlight their historic sites and amenities. (See lewisandclark.travel.) The contractor provided FONLH with National Park Service research about Lewis's stop at the spring near the Neill Log House. The spring's proximity to the house suggests it was where Lewis stopped.

It is probable that Lewis was already familiar with this area. He enlisted in a Virginia militia in 1794, whose commanding officer was William Clark, and they became friends. In 1794, the militia was sent to Western Pennsylvania to put down the Whiskey Rebellion. Lewis later joined the Army and for two years was stationed at Fort Fayette, the successor to decaying Fort Pitt (decommissioned in 1797). Fort Fayette was located near the intersection of what is now Penn Avenue and Ninth St. downtown. Lewis was promoted to Captain in 1800, and shortly afterward, newly elected President Thomas Jefferson selected him to be his personal secretary. After the Louisiana Purchase, Jefferson chose him to lead the Corps of Discovery, with the aim of collecting information about the huge territory the United States had acquired from France. Lewis asked Clark to join him as co-leader. Jefferson sent Lewis to Philadelphia to receive scientific instruction from members of the American Philosophical Society and to purchase supplies for the journey. Lewis then made his way to Pittsburgh, possibly following an extension of Nemaquin's Trail, later Braddock's Road, which is believed to have run near the Neill Log House, but no hard evidence exists for this claim.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition is well-known and well-documented, so it won't be addressed here. This article is about Lewis's possible visit to the Neill Log House. He would not have been greeted by Robert Neill, who had sold the house and property to John Reed and moved to Downtown Pittsburgh in 1795 and died there in 1804. Reed sold the property to Brintnal Robins, but the dates of the sales are not known, and it's possible Reed and Robins rented the property to tenant farmers, so it can't be determined who, if anyone, Lewis met when he passed by.

A little more about Meriwether Lewis: After the Corps returned from its expedition, Jefferson appointed Lewis governor of the Louisiana Territory in 1806. When he took on that post nearly two years later, he faced immediate challenges on many sides, including personality conflicts, political differences, and questions about the appropriation of government funds. In 1809, Lewis decided to go to Washington, D.C., to settle the financial questions plaguing him. Throughout his life, he had fought bouts of depression, financial problems, and alcohol abuse, and the pressures he was experiencing affected his mental health. He also suffered from malaria. In late 1809, Lewis died at the age of 36 in his lodgings in Tennessee. The common belief is that he committed suicide, but people who have studied his life believe he could have died from complications of malaria or even that he was murdered.



Meriwether Lewis, by Charles Willson Peale, 1807