



0. GROWING PAINS - Story Preface

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In this image we see a close-up detail of Jacques-Louis David's 1802 portrait of "Napoleon Crossing the Alps" (also known as "Bonaparte at the St Bernard Pass"). The original painting is maintained at the Palace of Versailles. (The overlying words, of course, are not part of the original painting.)

In a secret message to Congress, Thomas Jefferson asked for money to explore lands west of the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean. It was January 18, 1803. The sum the President requested? A mere \$2,500.

The President had not yet made a deal with Napoleon Bonaparte for the "Louisiana Purchase." Although he had originally asked only for the town of New Orleans, so the United States could control the Mississippi as it emptied into the Gulf of Mexico, Jefferson approached Napoleon at the right time. (The January 10, 1803 letter from Jefferson is to James Monroe, newly appointed American minister to France.)

Perhaps the ambitious leader of France would sell more of his American land?

The future French emperor needed money. He told Jefferson not only would he sell New Orleans, he'd sell all of the territory later known as the "Louisiana Purchase".

The President - personally never venturing much farther west than Virginia's Natural Bridge - was delighted with the proposal.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/GROWING-PAINS-Sacajawea>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/GROWING-PAINS-Sacajawea>

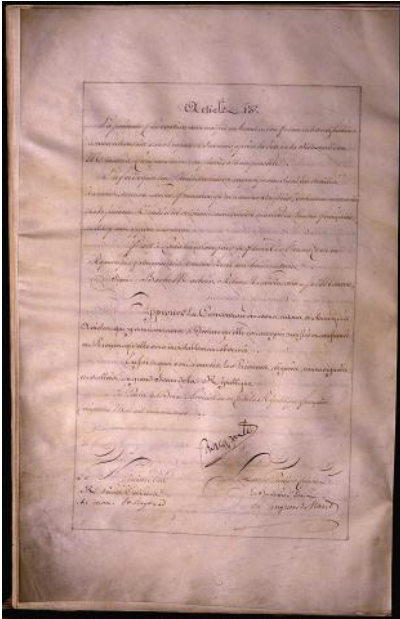
Media Stream



James Monroe

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Napoleon's Response to Jefferson

Image online, courtesy U.S. National Archives. PD

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Virginia's Natural Bridge

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