

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

### PETER WEISER AND THE WEISER RIVER

Number 905

1988

A great-great-grandson of Conrad Weiser--a noted early eighteenth-century negotiator with eastern Indians--Peter Weiser came west with Lewis and Clark. On May 29, 1806, in company with John Ordway and Robert Frazer, he explored Snake River Canyon some twenty miles above Salmon River, terminating at a point near later Pittsburg Landing. Here he may have learned about Weiser River some forty miles from its nearest drainage. Then he spent several years in upper Missouri fur trade with Manuel Lisa and John Colter, and may have alerted Astorian fur hunters to watch for his river. In any event, Ramsay Stuart and his Pacific Fur Company trappers mentioned it when they came by it in 1812.

William Clark recorded Weiser's River on his 1814 map of his expedition's exploration of South Pass in Wyoming. But Clark's map mislocated Weiser's River as Teton River, or some stream flowing into it. (Weiser may also have had a river over there, but Stuart's crew hardly could have confused them, since they came by both streams which are several hundred miles apart.) After 1814, Clark's map was ignored, and Stuart's identification of Weiser's River became an early landmark for trappers exploring that region.

*Publications--450 N. 4th Street, Boise, ID 83702--208-334-3428*