

## Fifty Documents Related to the Assassination of Meriwether Lewis



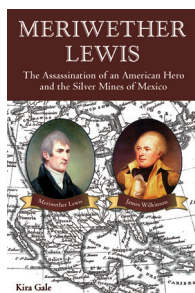
*A Companion to Meriwether Lewis: The Assassination of an American Hero and the Silver Mines of Mexico*

Kira Gale

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### PRAISE FOR MERIWETHER LEWIS

*“Curious, fascinating, creative and bold . . . boring it is not. Gale does not exaggerate when she describes the rascality of Burr, Wilkinson and their associates . . . If I were a priest I would give Kira Gale a tip of the biretta for this formidable undertaking.”*

John Guice, Ph.d., *We Proceeded On*,  
Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

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## Murder or Suicide? *Fifty Documents* Reveals the Truth about Meriwether Lewis's Death

Kira Gale has devoted ten years to researching and writing about the mysterious death of Meriwether Lewis in 1809. Her first book, co-authored with James E. Starrs, *The Death of Meriwether Lewis: A Historic Crime Scene Investigation*, led to her appearances on C-SPAN Book TV and *Brad Meltzer's History Decoded* series on the History Channel in 2009–10.

Lewis family descendants are continuing to seek an exhumation of Lewis's remains to determine the cause of his death. Permission for an exhumation was granted by the Department of Interior in 2008, but was withdrawn in 2009. Gale's documents show that the 1850 report of Tennessee State Monument Commission (which erected the monument over Lewis's gravesite on the Natchez Trace) stated that he was killed although it was commonly believed he committed suicide. In 1924, the State of Tennessee's application for National Monument status said that he was murdered.

This collection of fifty documents provides proof of a conspiracy to assassinate Lewis. The forgeries and lies are exposed. The evidence points to General James Wilkinson and a wealthy lead mine operator, John Smith T, as the organizers of his assassination. Their motive was to prevent Lewis from bringing documents to Washington which would have exposed their corrupt land dealings and interfered with their planned filibuster expedition into Spanish Texas.

Lewis served as Governor of Upper Louisiana Territory after he returned from his expedition to the Pacific Coast in 1807. Wilkinson, the commanding general of the U. S. Army, had

served as the first governor of the territory. Historian Frederick Jackson Turner called General Wilkinson “the most consummate artist in treason the nation has ever possessed.” Gale calls him a “patriotic sociopath and a serial assassin.”

Both Wilkinson and Smith T had participated in Aaron Burr's filibuster expedition to invade Spanish territory in 1806–07. They planned their own filibuster in 1809–10. Aaron Burr was planning a new filibuster. The silver mines of Mexico, the source of the world's hard currency, were an irresistible lure. The first revolution for Mexican Independence occurred in 1810. It was one of many revolutions occurring in the Spanish colonial empire after Napoleon put his brother on the throne of Spain.

Gale provides the documents for these 1809–10 filibuster attempts. She compares the false documents concerning Lewis's death, written in the name of Captain Gilbert C. Russell, with the real letters written by Captain Russell to President Jefferson. New evidence has thoroughly discredited the primary account of Lewis's death by suicide, the so-called Neelly letter. She analyzes the documents to speculate how the assassination was planned, carried out, and covered up.

This fascinating collection of documents reveals the true story of Meriwether Lewis and the difficulties he faced after he returned from the expedition. He was not depressed, and he was not suicidal. He was just as his friend Thomas Jefferson described him—“Of courage undaunted, possessing a firmness & perserverance of purpose which nothing but impossibilities could divert from its direction.”



Kira Gale's series of audio and video podcasts on the assassination of Meriwether Lewis will start in April or May, 2018.

#### My Background:

I was born in Washington DC, grew up on the south side of Chicago, and moved to Omaha, Nebraska when my husband became a professor of physiology at Creighton University Medical School.

In the 1990's, I began studying the early history of Omaha, Nebraska and the city across the Missouri River, Council Bluffs, Iowa. I was fascinated by their connection to the early history of the American West. River Junction Press was established in 1996 when I began publishing newsletters and booklets on local history.

In 2001 I co-founded and became the president of the Mouth of the Platte chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and a Lewis and Clark Study Group. Our chapter and study group continue to meet with monthly dinner programs and weekly study group sessions.

I began writing *Lewis and Clark Road Trips: Exploring the Trail Across America* in 2001. The book was published in 2006. The *Library Journal* called it "outstanding . . . for all travel collections." It features over 800 travel destinations coast to coast and gave me a broad introduction to the history of our country. I received the Meritorious Achievement Award of the Foundation in 2007. A second edition is planned for 2019.

When used bookstores became available on the internet, I began building a very large library of history books. This is the Golden Age of history research due to our ability to access many sources of material through the internet.

In 2007 I got interested in publishing the transcript of the 1996 Coroner's Inquest concerning the death of Meriwether Lewis, which was held in Lewis County, Tennessee, site of the National Monument and Gravesite of Meriwether Lewis. The inquest was organized by Professor James E. Starrs of George Washington University. It featured the testimony of well known forensic science experts and historians. The jury called for an exhumation of Lewis's remains, a request which was denied by the Department of Interior which oversees the National Park Service site.

*The Death of Meriwether Lewis: A Historic Crime Scene Investigation* was published in 2009, the 200th anniversary of Lewis's death. It was co-authored by Professor Starrs and myself. I appeared on *C-Span Book TV* in 2009 and the *Brad Meltzer's History Decoded* series on the History Channel in 2010, as the leading proponent of the theory that Lewis was assassinated. At the request of Lewis family descendants, the Department of Interior briefly allowed the permits process for an exhumation to go forward, but revoked its permission in 2009. In 2012, I published a second "New Evidence" edition of the book, based on the evidence discovered by Tony Turnbow, the Tennessee lawyer who organized the bicentennial commemoration of Lewis's death.

I finally felt ready to devote myself to the study of General James Wilkinson, one of the most complicated figures in American history. Because I accuse him of organizing the assassination of Lewis, I needed to understand the multiple conspiracies he was involved in over a period of almost fifty years and to carefully consider the accusations of assassinations that his contemporaries charged him with. I also wanted to correct the historic record regarding the accomplishments of Meriwether Lewis. Because of the false claim that he committed suicide, his achievements have been neglected and disparaged. *Meriwether Lewis: The Assassination of an American Hero and the Silver Mines of Mexico* was published in 2015.

It is a complicated book, although it is written simply. In following the deceitful trail of General Wilkinson, I discovered many new facts about famous episodes in American history. To aid the reader (and myself) I created Chapter Summaries in the old-fashioned manner. The summaries list the topics covered in each chapter. The Chapter Summaries are posted on the Lewis Assassination website.

The *Fifty Documents* book was written to show my sources and my reasoning. I will begin podcasting after it is published.

As a publisher, I have published books by other authors. I invite you to visit [www.riverjunctionpress.com](http://www.riverjunctionpress.com) to learn about our books.

Kira Gale  
December, 2017