

## Statue to honor slave who helped Lewis and Clark

### The Associated Press

**LOUISVILLE** — An 8-foot-tall bronze statue will honor the slave who helped Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on their famous trek to the West nearly two centuries ago.

The slave, known as York, lived in Louisville. There are no pictures or drawings of him, but brief descriptions of him and his actions appear in the journals of Lewis and Clark.

That's all sculptor Ed Hamilton has to go on as he tries to decide how to depict York's identity, expression and posture.

"How do I portray him as a human being who, although put under the shackles of slavery, had to have a feeling of triumphantness of being part of that expedition?" Mr. Hamilton said. "I'm letting my mind deal with him in terms of freedom versus slavery. I've got a face on him — it's a face of strength with pain."

The finished product will be erected in Louisville in 2003 before the nationwide bicentennial celebrations of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

The city has agreed to spend \$150,000 on the statue. Mr. Hamilton, who created the Spirit of Freedom Civil War monument in Washington, D.C., is studying York's history.

The story begins some time in the 1770s, when York was born into slavery to Clark's family.

In 1803, Thomas Jefferson ordered Lewis, his personal secretary, to conduct the expedition. Lewis wrote to his friend Clark, who lived in Louisville.

Clark recruited nine Kentuckians and began training in October 1803. The group, called the Corps of Discovery, included York. It left a few weeks later.

Historians say York soon earned Clark's respect as a scout and hunter, even carrying a gun.

Clark eventually freed York sometime after 1815 and gave him a wagon and horses for a freight-hauling enterprise. But the business failed, and York eventually died of cholera, probably between 1822 and 1832.

"It's appropriate for his hometown to honor him," said Louisville Mayor Dave Armstrong, who said the statue will be in a "prominent position."

