

S&D

REFLECTOR

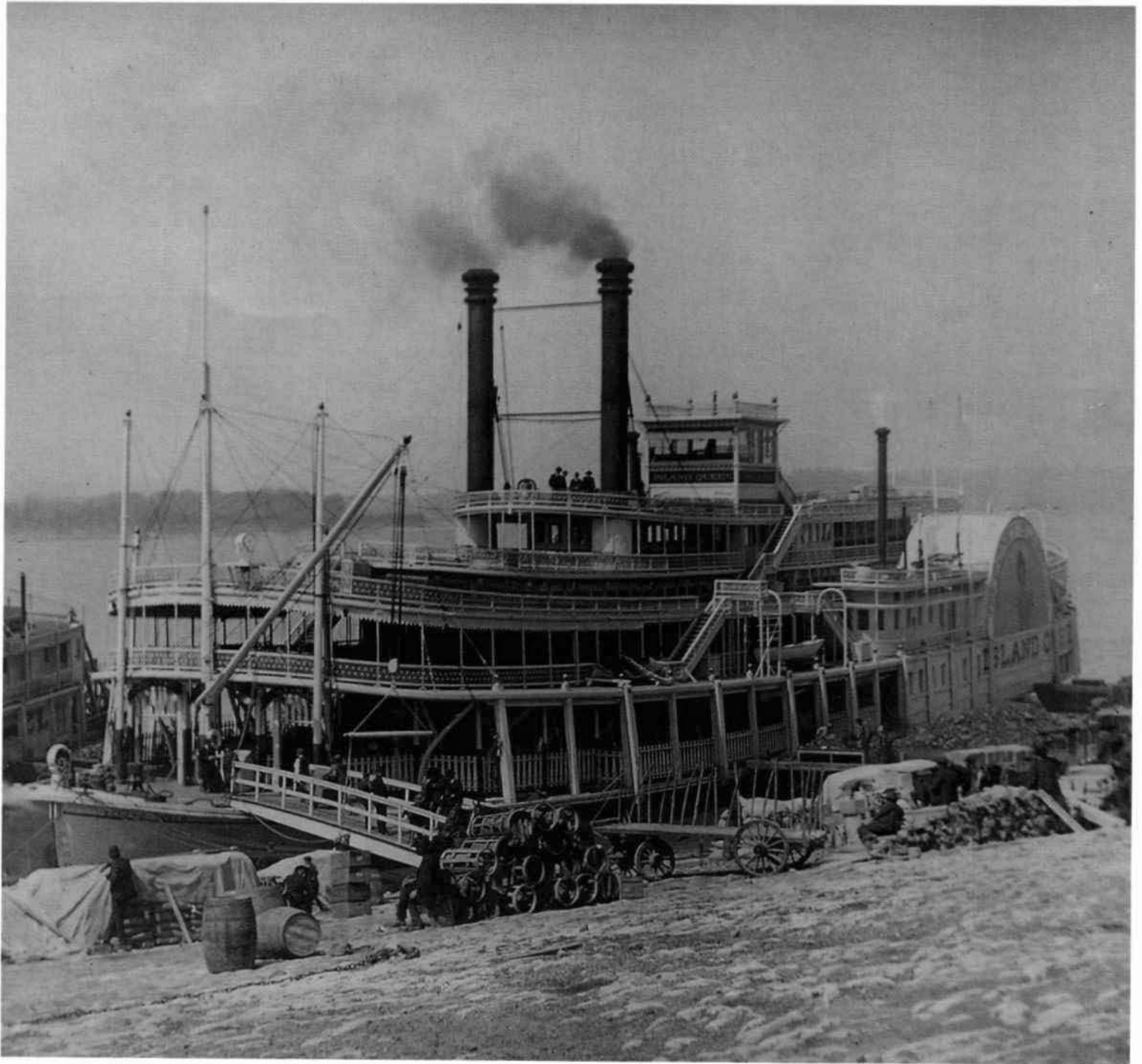
Published by Sons and Daughters
of Pioneer Rivermen



Vol. 31, No. 3

Marietta, Ohio

September 1994



THE FRONT COVER

Somewhat by coincidence we have the ISLAND QUEEN (2799) for the front cover on this issue. The second Coney Island ISLAND QUEEN (2800) was the subject for the cover one year ago and both photos were taken at about the same place on the Evansville, Indiana landing.

This ISLAND QUEEN was built at the Cincinnati Marine Railway Co. in the East End of Cincinnati in 1896. She was built for the Coney Island Company to run from downtown Cincinnati to its amusement park and was 281.4x42.6x8.5. Engines were compound, 20's, 35's-9 ft. She was the first boat built expressly for the excursion trade rather than being a conversion from a packet.

Spring and fall, before and after the Coney Island amusement park season, the ISLAND QUEEN tramped the Ohio and Mississippi. She usually went as far south as Memphis on her tramping trips but on occasion went to New Orleans; she was up the Ohio as far as Pomeroy.

The year of this photo is prior to 1910 as indicated by the presence of the JEWEL (3014) with stern showing just above the ISLAND QUEEN. The JEWEL burned on February 2, 1910 at Evansville. Note the decorative stepiece on the forecastle, similar to the QUEEN CITY and VIRGINIA built at the Marine Railway Co. in the same era.

It is interesting to compare the activity on the Evansville landing to the sterile appearance in the September, 1993 issue's view. The JEWEL was the local packet in the Evansville-Henderson trade. The head of another packet shows just below the ISLAND QUEEN. Freight on the levee waiting shipment is piled everywhere. The ISLAND QUEEN is being coaled from a flat and number of rousters are lounging about waiting for jobs. The cylindrical objects in the center foreground are strange; fish traps perhaps?

From a glass negative in the Bert Fenn estate sale. Photographer unknown.

S & D ANNUAL MEETING

September 16-17, 1994

Marietta, Ohio

The first scheduled event of the 1994 Annual Meeting of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen is the Friday evening mixer. This is an informal gathering beginning at 8:00 pm, September 16 in the ballroom of Hotel Lafayette, an opportunity to register, meet old friends and greet some new attendees. The historic Hotel Lafayette, Front Street at the river, is the center for all events of the S&D weekend.

A schedule of events will be available at the hotel front desk; be sure and pick up a copy, whether you are staying at the Lafayette or not. The latest details for the meeting will be in the schedule.

Board of Governors meeting is called for 9:30 am. Saturday at the hotel and all members are welcome. A luncheon cruise aboard the VALLEY GEM is planned for Saturday, details and destination to be announced.

The annual business meeting and banquet will be held in the hotel ballroom on Saturday evening. Our speaker this year will be Peter Voll, Palo Alto, California who organized the Stanford Alumni trip on the DELTA QUEEN for her first transit of the Tenn-Tom Waterway.

- CONTENTS -

Bert Fenn Sale	Pg. 14	On The Ohio	Pg. 20
Book Reviews	Pg. 29	Obituary, Jack Loomis	Pg. 19
Cincinnati, 1880	Pg. 16	S&D Chapters	Pg. 18
Texas Packets	Pg. 7	Thermite Welding	Pg. 13



David Miars with Kathryn "Kathy" Lake at the Midwest River Buffs meet, November 19, 1991. Judy Patsch photo

The death of David Miars on March 25, 1994 was reported in our June issue. David's river books came to S&D for disposition.

Plans are afoot to hold a book sale in connection with the Annual Meeting, proceeds to go to the maintenance fund for the W. P. SNYDER JR

LETTERS

Sirs: Leafing through the June issue, I ran onto Alan Bates' letter about his forthcoming article for Compton's Encyclopedia. I enjoyed Alan's skilful shooting down of the oft-heard "romance" of steamboats. But then I gasped when I saw an omission in his listing of the areas where the steamboats served: "the Pacific Northwest, Alaska and half of Canada; the Mississippi system was only part of it."

Alan, let's not forget California, birthplace of the DELTA KING and DELTA QUEEN. Nearly 300 boats, including those two noble craft, churned the state's waters over one hundred years from the Gold Rush to the middle of this century. My book, "King and Queen of the River" (due this fall) should serve to remind us all of California's contributions to steamboat history.

Stan Garvey
660 Vine Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

= And we shouldn't overlook the steamboats on Buffalo Bayou, found elsewhere in this issue. Ed
* * *

Sirs: I enjoyed so much reading about the showboats in the June Reflector.

As a child, the showboat was the BIG event in my hometown of Warsaw, Kentucky and sometimes the event was bigger than the show. My family took me as an infant to a showboat performance when a windstorm came up and set the showboat loose. Thanks to some hometown river people, we were finally towed back to the landing and the show went on (so I've been told).

Added interest in the article was mention of the gasboat FLORENCE which towed the showboat PRINCESS. My great grandfather, Oliver Tyson, built boats at Ghent, Kentucky and I have a hull model he made. His grandson saw the model and said that

he thought it was a boat named FLORENCE. Are these FLORENCEs the same?

Edna Florence Donsback
2216 Eastern Ave.
Covington, KY 41014

= The FLORENCE which pushed the showboat PRINCESS was built by Sam Bryant at Brownsville, Pennsylvania prior to 1906, named for his daughter. There is also a FLORENCE built at Henderson, West Virginia in 1912, 41x10x2.2, 15 h.p., which is probably a rebuild of the original boat. A listing of Kentucky-built gasboats as of 1925 in the September, 1966 Reflector shows no FLORENCE. Ed.

* * *

Sirs: One of my favorite magazines is the S&D Reflector. My father was the late Horton R. Austin, Port Engineer for The Ohio River Co. at Huntington. His father was, Arthur Austin who was chief engineer on several towboats before becoming landing master at Henderson, West Virginia for the Campbell's Creek Coal Co. My mother was a Walker whose father and brothers were also on the river.

June Austin Jordan
#2 Clinton Place
Huntington, WV 25703

= Good to know that S&D continues to have a strong representation of true sons and daughters of rivermen. Arthur Austin was mate in the first crew for the towboat E. R. ANDREWS (TO659) when she came out new August 15, 1894. Ed.

* * *

Sirs: Due to circumstances, I must dispose of my copies of the S&D Reflector and Way's Packet Directory.

I have a set of Reflectors complete for the years 1980 through 1993. All in mint condition and, with the Directory, available for \$100 plus shipping.

Carl W. Beckett
116 Tawn Drive
Flatrock, NC 28726

Sirs: I thought that the Fenn auction was great and I'm thankful that we made the effort to attend.

I am always on the lookout for any freight bills or invoices. I have used Way's Packet Directory to enhance my collection by putting the bio of each boat with the freight bills as they are acquired. Actually, the paper is about all that is left of most of the boats.

Tom Cottrell
17 Mattapoisett Avenue
Swansea, MA 02777

= Tom Cottrell drove from Massachusetts just for the Bert Fenn sale and was happy to bid in several lots of freight bills. We welcome Tom aboard as a new S&D member. Ed.

* * *

Sirs: In the otherwise fine obituary for friend John Knox in the June issue there is a misquote that cannot go unchallenged.

The advice given by John Knox, Sr. was: "If you are going to live along the river, always have a boat large enough to move the ice box." It takes a very big johnboat to move a piano.

Bee Rutter, Secretary
126 Seneca Dr.
Marietta, OH 45750

= And it takes a big dog to weigh a ton. We stand corrected. Ed.

* * *

Sirs: The book review in the March issue about Vernon K. Brynside got me thinking about my own career on the river in those same years.

At age 15 I was hired on the SAM P. SUIT as cabin boy. After two summers, I was given the job of wheeling coal and worked up to mate.

After two years I went to the LA BELLE of Wheeling Steel Co. and sat for my pilot and master's license after six months.

I retired from the Ohio River Co. in 1980 after 48 years of steamboating. Loved every minute of it.

Jack W. Hamlin
3135 Sumner Ave.
Huntington, WV 25705

S&D REFLECTOR

Published by Sons and Daughters
of Pioneer Rivermen



Vol. 31, No. 3

Marietta, Ohio

September 1994

Established in 1964 as the official publication of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen, edited and published by Capt. Frederick Way, Jr. through 1992. The S&D Reflector takes its name from a newspaper published in 1869 by the management of the sidewheel packet FLEETWOOD, Parkersburg-Cincinnati trade.

Membership in S&D is not restricted to descendants of river pioneers. Your interest in river affairs makes you eligible and welcome. Full membership entitles the holder to the S&D Reflector and admission to the Ohio River Museum including the W. P. SNYDER JR., Marietta, Ohio.

Membership dues are currently \$15 per year for a full membership; \$1 per year for associated memberships for spouses and children under 18. Please list full names of children so that each may receive a membership card.

Applications for membership in S&D together with your check should be sent to:

Mrs. J. W. Rutter, Secretary
126 Seneca Drive
Marietta, OH 45750

Memberships are for a calendar year including four issues of S&D Reflector. Renewal notices are mailed out near the end of the year. Respond with a check promptly as this notice will be the only one sent to you. Delay in remitting may require removal of your name from the mailing list. Postal regulations prohibit the mailing and billing of material without the addressee's consent.

Additional copies of the current issue are available from Mrs. Rutter at \$5 each. Back issues through 1979 (Vol. 16) are available at \$5 each; for older years, check with Mrs. Rutter.

THE INDEX FOR THE S&D REFLECTOR IS ISSUED EVERY FIVE YEARS. Currently available are: 1964-68; 1969-73; 1974-78; 1979-83; 1984-88; 1989-93. The indexes are the same page size as the magazine and may be ordered at \$5 each, postpaid, from Mrs. J. W. Rutter, address above.

* * * * *

The S&D Reflector is entered in the post office at Marietta, OH as Third Class matter, Permit No. 73. It is printed and mailed by the Richardson Printing Corp., Marietta, OH. Please send address changes to the S&D Secretary, Mrs. J. W. Rutter, 126 Seneca Dr., Marietta, OH 45750.

Correspondance is invited by the editor. Please do not send unsolicited photographs on a loan basis.

Joseph W. Rutter, editor,
126 Seneca Drive
Marietta, OH 45750
(614) 373-7829

* * * * *

SONS & DAUGHTERS OF PIONEER RIVERMEN

Officers:

J. W. Rutter, President
126 Seneca Drive
Marietta, OH 45750

G. W. Sutphin, Senior V.P.
204 Chestnut Street
Huntington, WV 25705

Capt. Clare Carpenter, V. President
816 George Street
Belpre, OH 45714

Mrs. J. W. Rutter, Secretary
126 Seneca Drive
Marietta, OH 45750

Guy C. Anderson, Treasurer
2838 Colonial Ridge Ct.
Cincinnati, OH 45212

Board of Governors:

Term Ending 1994 -
William Judd
J. W. Rutter
Frederick Way III

Term Ending 1995 -
Gerald W. Sutphin
William Barr
Anne Mallinson

Term Ending 1996 -
Jack E. Custer
Catherine Remley
Capt. C. W. Stoll

Trustees J. Mack Gamble Fund:

Yeatman Anderson, III
J. W. Rutter
G. W. Sutphin

Affiliated Chapters:

Ohio-Kanawha Chapter
Capt. Bert Shearer, President

Middle Ohio River Chapter
Rick Kesterman, President

Mississippi River Chapter
J. Thomas Dunn, President

Inland Rivers Library, Cincinnati:

Alfred Kleine-Kreutzmann, Curator
(513) 369-6957

Ohio River Museum, Marietta:

John D. Briley, Manager
(614) 373-3750

THIS AND THAT

WINDMILLS ON WHARFBOATS

Sometime back we received a copy of an attractive twelve page quarterly newsletter called "Windmillers' Gazette" from Dr. T. Lindsay Baker of Baylor University. The purpose of the publication is the preservation of America's wind power history and heritage.

Dr. Baker was intrigued by a photo that appeared in S&D Reflector a year or so ago showing the GREENLAND landed at the Manchester, Ohio wharfboat. The Manchester wharfboat had a windmill on the shoreward side which was used for pumping out the hull. We don't know how reliable the winds are down below the hills at Manchester but such windmills were not uncommon before the days of small one-lung engines or electrical power in the small rural towns.

Down the river at Maysville there was also a wind driven pump on Capt. Pfister's wharfboat and there were others, too. Dr. Baker points out that windmill driven pumps were common on sailing ships at the turn of the century, the units being designed for the specific purpose. Photos of windmills on wharfboats (or on other river equipment) and ads for windmills designed for bilge pumping would be of interest to Ye Editor.

Windmillers' Gazette, \$10 per year,
P. O. Box 507, Rio Vista, TX 76093.

* * *

A NEW BOOK BY LITTLE HOCKING AUTHOR

Herbert L. Roush, Sr., historian, author and retired minister of Little Hocking, Ohio announces his latest book, the life and times of Nathaniel Sawyer. Sawyer was the builder of the old (1798) house facing the Ohio River at Little Hocking where author Roush now lives. He was a veteran of the Revolutionary War and early member of the Ohio Company which founded the first settlement in the Northwest Territory at Marietta.

Curiously, although he was one of the early arrivals in Marietta and his 1798 house bespeaks of success as a farmer and tavern keeper, little was known about Sawyer until Herb Roush began his research. A blank still exists in the Sawyer story after he somehow became a part of the Aaron Burr-Blennerhassett troubles. This blank led Roush to look more deeply into the Burr-Blennerhassett affair.

Mr. Roush has produced a number of interesting books about the history of his area. Of particular interest to river historians is his "T. C. Collins - Boatman, 1849-1873" which was published in 1985. The Collins story tells of the trading boats which took farmers' produce

and local manufactured goods to the markets of the South.

The Nathaniel Sawyer biography is titled, "The Adventurer", 222 pages, hardbound, \$19.95 plus \$1.50 postage may be ordered from: Herbert L. Roush, Sr., Route 2, Box 209, Little Hocking, OH 45742. Herb's books are carried by book stores and the Campus Martius Museum, Marietta.

* * *

STEAMBOATS ON THE WESTERN RIVERS

Louis C. Hunter

The long awaited reprint of Professor Hunter's 1949 study of the economic and technological history of the steamboat on the Mississippi River system has been available since about the first of the year. Recently, we got our hands on a copy and find that Dover Publications has accomplished a superb job of reproducing the book needed by all students of river history. The original edition of "Hunter" has been scarce for some time and even an earlier reprint has been hard to find.

The 1994 Dover edition is unabridged with an introduction by John H. White, late of the Smithsonian Institution and frequent S&D Reflector contributor. A part of John's introduction:

"This book is the best general reference volume available on the subject of American riverboats. Few survey histories in any subject area are as deep and broad as Professor Hunter's book for it delves into just about every aspect of river boating, from engineering to finances, to the eating habits of the passengers."

And the best part is that Hunter had a readable, interesting style of writing. Pick any page (except those dry statistical tables in the appendix) and you can be entertained and led on to discover more about true packetboating. We still look a little doubtful, however, at the report of passengers sometimes sharing a community toothbrush; wonder where Professor Hunter found that fact?

John White tells us that Louis C. Hunter was born in 1898 in Wellsburg, West Virginia, mile 74 on the Ohio River, and graduated from high school at Moline, Illinois on the Upper Mississippi. He was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Knox College and received his Masters in history from Harvard. Louis Hunter died in Boston March 22, 1984, age 85. Dr. Hunter made several trips to Marietta during his research and used the S&D files, then in the Campus Martius Museum. He gives credit to Col. Harry D. Knox of the Knox boatbuilding family for his assistance.

Astonishing for a book of this quality and size (684 pages) is the price of \$14.95. See your local bookseller.

* * *

PADUCAH RIVER HERITAGE CENTER

The Falls City Engineer, newsletter of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District, has an intriguing report on developments toward a new river museum at Paducah. Chuck Parrish, District Historian, outlines the results of a detailed study by W. R. Cole and Associates of Nashville and E. Verner Johnson, Boston. The Johnson organization has been involved in several maritime museum projects including the Virginia Marine Science Museum at Virginia Beach and the Cincinnati Museum Center.

The original proposal to remodel and expand the old city Water Works Building above the paved wharf was viewed as not desirable by the museum experts. Any old building, and particularly one designed as a steam pumping station, has structural limitations when considering museum use. Space and access were also factors against reuse of the old Water

Works although its location seems ideal.

The consultants have proposed a new building and outside features for the Paducah River heritage Center to be located downriver from the wharf, just above the Executive Inn hotel.

The 69,500 sq. ft. site would be adjacent to a city park and the museum building will be cantilevered out over the floodwall with an observation tower rising above. Next to the Center will be a landscaped scale representation of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, similar we assume to the River Walk at the Mud Island Museum in Memphis. The planners see a facility that will be, ". . . unique not only to the region but to the country."

The goal is to have the River Heritage Center open in 1997 and the city is now developing a fund raising program to cover the anticipated \$23 million cost. Paducah has a lot of interesting river history to showcase and we hope the project goes forward on schedule.



The R. DUNBAR seems to be getting a big play lately with a Capt. Jim Howard portrait of her when new on page 26 of the June issue and here another. This view is not the real thing, however, but a model recently completed by John Fryant, Alexandria, Virginia.

The model is built to a scale of 1/8"=1' and measures 26½ inches overall. It represents how the boat looked in her latter days under this name and close inspection will disclose some improvements added after the boat left the Howard Shipyard in 1895. Note that a railing was installed on the hurricane

deck and around the texas roof and a stairway leads up to the pilothouse. In the photo of the original boat new at Howard's there is no stairway in sight and we surmise that there was an inside stair, later removed for additional cabin space in the texas.

The R. DUNBAR model was commissioned by Gaylord Entertainment Co., Nashville for display in the refurbished Ryman Auditorium, built by Capt. Tom Ryman.

Mr. Fryant has recently been honored by Steamship Historical Society of America with its SAMUEL WARD STANTON AWARD for his production of plans and models.

The Galveston-Houston Packets

BY

ANDREW W. HALL

Building the Trade

The following is the first of a two-part article on the packets which operated on the Buffalo Bayou, deep in the heart of Texas. Mr. Hall has performed a wonderful job of research on this short-trade route, some fifty miles or so, between Galveston on the Gulf of Mexico and Houston at the original head of navigation.

Of interest is the fact that most of the boats operating in the Galveston-Houston trade came originally from the Ohio River: LAURA built 1835 at Louisville; LEONIDAS built 1834 at Cincinnati; CORREO built 1836 at New Albany, Indiana; RUFUS PUTNAM built 1835 at Marietta, etc. The life of these Texas packets, both those before and after the Civil War, down on Buffalo Bayou fills out the previously undocumented history of a number of boats from the northern rivers that "went south".

The Texas Revolution had ended by the fall of 1836. With the defeat of Santa Anna's army on the edge of Galveston Bay, thousands of Americans now poured into the new territory. Some were debtors, setting out to make a new life beyond the reach of American law. Others were adventurers, ready to take on the challenges of the frontier. Still others were speculators, determined to make their fortunes in a land where laws were few and opportunities plenty. A pair of particularly enterprising and ambitious brothers, John K. and Augustus C. Allen, set out to make their fortunes in the months after the war. Anticipating the needs of new settlers flocking to the new republic from the United States, they purchased half a

league of land (approx. 2,200 acres) at the head of the tide on Buffalo Bayou. They platted out a town and, in a shrewd move, named the new city in honor of Texas' military hero, Sam Houston. The Allens took out ads in area newspapers describing the new city as being destined to "command the trade of the largest and richest portion of Texas. . . . When the rich lands of this country shall be settled, a trade shall flow into it, making it, beyond all doubt, the great interior commercial emporium of Texas."

It would have taken a most optimistic person to see such possibilities in the new settlement. In the winter of 1836-37, Houston was little more than a collection of tents, lean-tos and an occasional rough, log cabin. Even worse, although the Allens had advertised that their new town was at the head of navigation on the bayou, in fact not a single steam vessel had ventured above Harrisburg, eight miles downstream. In an effort to firmly establish both the city's viability as a "commercial emporium" and their own reputations, in January 1837 the Allens chartered the little 65-ton

steamer LAURA, Thomas Wigg Grayson, master, to push its way up from Harrisburg. The eight-mile trip took three days, with all aboard, including the passengers, taking turns at improvised windlasses to clear snags in the stream. LAURA arrived on or about January 22; those aboard, who had never seen the new town site, recognized it by the surveyors' stakes and a muddy path cut into the brush.

Galveston was hardly more impressive. Located on a flat, low barrier island, the community had grown up as a result of the good natural harbor on the landward side of the island. The island served as a staging area for colonists and adventurers coming into Texas, and quickly developed those institutions banks, warehouses, hotels and chandlers required by the growing port. The city was chartered in 1839, and would remain the leading port in Texas throughout the 19th century.

The two communities' beginnings may have been inauspicious, but the both towns blossomed rapidly. Both new cities stood at a "break" in transportation, a point where people, goods and commodities transferred from

FOR THE CITY OF HOUSTON.

THE REGULAR

PACKET  **STEAMER**

LAURA,
T. W. GRAYSON, MASTER.

WILL leave Marion, on Tuesday, the 21st February, at 4 o'clock, P. M. for the above city, and all intermediate ports. For freight or passage apply on board; or to Aldridge and Davis, Marion, or to Thomas H. Borden, Columbia.

N. B.—The Laura, this trip, will touch at Anahuac. Columbia, Feb. 20, 1837. 59-1

A few weeks after becoming the first steamboat to land at the new settlement of Houston, LAURA's owners advertised her as a "regular packet steamer." In fact, very little about travel on Buffalo Bayou in those days was "regular" and Houston was hardly a city.

From Houston Public Library, Metro. Research Center.

one form of transportation to another. In Galveston, on the coast, the transfer was from ocean-going vessel to a coastal schooner, river steamer or (later) railroad. In Houston, the transition would be from steamer or flat car to wagons drawn by draft animals. In both cases, the cities served as centers of exchange, and the institutions that support that activity - warehouses, banks, insurance companies and commodity exchanges - led a rapid expansion of wealth and power. The business link between Houston and Galveston, symbolized by the riverboats that ran between the two cities, was one of complementing wealth that stretched far beyond the banks of the muddy bayou.

In the early years, navigation along the upper reaches of the bayou was a tenuous and frustrating business. Masters tried, with only limited success, to establish regular schedules. LAURA was a regular in the trade, along with LEONIDAS, Capt. Hanna, and BRANCH T. ARCHER, John E. Ross, master. ARCHER's owners advertised her to make two round trips between Houston and Galveston each week; the fare for a passage aboard LEONIDAS was \$7. Later these were joined by SAM HOUSTON, CORREO, and FRIEND.

All of these early boats were sidewheelers. Taking an example, eight Buffalo Bayou boats built between 1831 and 1840 for which complete data is available, the average life span was about 5.75 years. Western Rivers boats everywhere had a hard life, but this was particularly true for boats plying between Houston and Galveston. Safely navigating Buffalo Bayou itself was the biggest challenge. Along much of its length, trees grew right to the water's edge and cast their limbs in a green canopy over the narrow waterway. The trip made a vivid impression on new arrivals to Texas, and they usually described their journey in less than glowing terms:



"The bayou became so narrow at last that I thought it would be no difficult matter to jump ashore from either side of the boat. And, indeed, I feared several times we should get aground. Once we were in an ugly situation, a snag having got tangled in some of the wheels - it caused some alarm and might have proved a dangerous accident. After seeing the number of floating logs, etc. in the Bayou I ceased to wonder at the one-wheeled boats I had seen - my only wonder is how any escaped."

In addition, every boat on the run had to cross the length of Galveston Bay, a stretch of water that offered a series of hazards that no Western Rivers boat was designed to endure. While it is sheltered from the worst conditions of the Gulf of

Mexico, Galveston Bay often exhibits choppy waves and whitecaps, particularly in the winter and early spring. Any vessel crossing the bay is exposed to both wind and waves, and in a stiff breeze a shallow-draft Western Rivers boat would skittle off to leeward very quickly. It was very common for boats throughout the era of the packets to get outside the channel at Clopper's Bar or Red Fish Bar; the one advantage there was that usually the boat would float free on the next tide.

Fares for passage and freight varied greatly, depending on the value of the currency in circulation. In August 1837, the going fare seems to have been about \$7. But this was at a time when U.S. notes were the only currency in circulation. As

new Republic of Texas currency began appearing, fares ballooned to \$10 by January 1838, and to \$15 by the end of 1838.

Competition for passengers was fierce from the beginning, and a common method for attracting customers was to tout a boat's speed. One of the earliest masters to make such a claim was Captain A. J. Davis, who advertised in 1838 that his new steamer, SAN JACINTO, would make three round trips between Galveston and Houston each week - one more than was standard - and that SAN JACINTO had made a record passage between the two cities in just six hours. Whether this claim for speed is true or not is questionable.

At the beginning of December 1838 a master appeared who would from then on play a vital role in steam navigation on Buffalo Bayou. John Hog Sterrett, master of the new steamer RUFUS PUTNAM, had been born about 1805 in Pittsburgh. Details of his early career are unknown, but he may have come to Texas as early as 1837. Captain Sterrett worked hard to make himself and his boat known. When he learned that a competing boat, EMBLEM, Capt. Bryan, had made the trip up the bayou in eight hours, Sterrett pushed the PUTNAM through a gale to Houston in under seven.

By the early 1840s, the standard method of operation was for most boats to leave either the Galveston or Houston terminals around five or six o'clock in the evening. In the early years of traffic on the bayou, the boats had run during the day. This was the preferred method and undoubtedly the safer, given the number of snags and sandbars in the stream. In November 1841, though, one of the newer boats in the trade, VICTORIA, inaugurated a nighttime run. Undoubtedly VICTORIA's master, John Delesdernier recognized the value of making the trip at night and thus allowing his passengers a full day's business at each end of the

trip. Certainly Delesdernier's competitors soon followed suit, and until the end of the era most boats on the run made their trips at night.

Seeing the possibilities for continued growth of the packet trade between Galveston and Houston, a group of Houston businessmen moved in 1851 to consolidate their resources into a single company to dominate the market. Led by merchant William Marsh Rice, the

limited partnership organized itself as the Houston and Galveston Navigation Company. Rice's share in the venture was \$5,000; 25 other merchants, businessmen and pilots contributed between \$250 and \$2,000 for places as special partners. John Sterrett, who would soon rise to be superintendent of the growing fleet, went in for \$1,000.

It's difficult to estimate the amount of racing that took place on the



COMING UP THE BAYOU

First published in 1883, this drawing gives a fair impression of the conditions travelers faced journeying to the interior of the country a half-century earlier.

From Houston Public Library, Metro. Research Center.



REGULAR MAIL PACKETS.
EVERY OTHER DAY AT TEN O'CLOCK.
THE Fine Steamers **ALBERT GALLATIN**,
 John H. Sterrett, Master, and **DAYTON**,
 S. B. Eves, Master. The above boats will ply or
 run as regular Packets between Houston and Gal-
 veston the ensuing season, and as it is the intention
 of the proprietors to make the above boats permanent
 in the trade, they hope by constant attention to the
 comfort of passengers and interest of shippers, to
 merit a share of public patronage, For freight or
 passage, apply to the Captains on board.
 ap 4 1-1f

One of the first boats commanded by John Sterrett on the Bayou was the ALBERT GALLATIN. She, like her contemporaries, was a sidewheeler, built in Pittsburgh in 1839 and rated 94 tons. She exploded her boilers on December 21, 1841 on Trinity Bay, an arm of Galveston Bay, with a loss of four lives.

From "The Galvestonian", March 31, 1831.

Houston-Galveston route. It was rare that pilots or crews publicly acknowledged that races occurred, and given the common view of racing as "criminally reckless" pastime, their reticence is perhaps understandable. But the reputation of a boat or master could be made in such an encounter, and the inevitable temptation to pit one boat against another must have been the cause of many a contest. Newspaper editors issued frequent warnings against the folly of racing - a sure sign that the boats were doing just that - and, as one chronicler of Buffalo Bayou's early years observed, "in every instance when a boiler blew up, another boat was very near."

The most notorious incident in the history of the packets began in just such a fashion. In the winter of 1852-53, John Sterrett, now master of the Pennsylvania-built sternwheeler NEPTUNE (Way 4142), developed an intense rivalry with Captain Webb of the sidewheeler FARMER (Way 2014). Sterrett himself had been master of FARMER two

years before. Both vessels were considered "crack" boats. The men pitted their boats against one another, and on one run to Galveston in January the two boats actually came in contact with one another. No one was hurt, but that race set the stage for another one two months later. Early on the morning of March 26, 1853, the boats were again racing to Galveston when, a few miles from the finish, FARMER's boiler burst. The explosion demolished the boiler and hurricane decks above, and blasted dozens of passengers and crew into the water around. Captain Sterrett turned NEPTUNE around to render assistance, but for many of those in the water it was too late. Of about 72 persons on board FARMER, at least 36 were killed. Captain Webb was among the dead. The steamer's mate, Curtis Blakeman, and pilot, Michael McCormick, were injured; both would later rise to become two of the best-known and popular pilots on the route.

The papers lauded Capt. Sterrett's efforts to save

the passengers and crew of FARMER, but the also criticized both him and Capt. Webb for behaving with criminal recklessness in racing their boats in the first place. It was reported that, even at the moment of the explosion, one of the passengers had been arguing with Captain Webb against the competition, and that this same gentleman had circulated a written protest among the passengers to present to the captain. The surviving officers were never charged, but the incident lingered in the minds of fare-paying passengers and brought about changes in the way the boats were run. After the accident, the boats under Sterrett's direction were said to have established a reputation for safety and comfort.

The detailed casualty lists published after the accident give a valuable insight as to how at least some of the boats' crews were organized. According to press accounts, FARMER carried a crew of 27. Of those, eight are identified by name and task (pilot, clerk, carpenter, etc.). Of the remaining 19 crewmen listed - most of whom must have been firemen, stewards and deckhands - 11 were African American slaves belonging to people not directly connected to the FARMER or her owners. This suggests that the practice of slaveowners hiring out their laborers to steamboats, so prevalent on the Lower Mississippi in the antebellum years, was carried over into Texas. Two other crewmen are listed as "German," and were probably recent immigrants from Europe.

The Houston Navigation Company maintained two offices. The Galveston office was located on Central Wharf, a long pier built out into the bay from the head of 21st Street. Central Wharf, also known as Morgan's Wharf, also housed the local agents for Charles Morgan's line of steamships. The Morgan Line, with its growing web of steamship routes, inland

rivers packets and land transport, was already the dominating force in transportation on the Gulf of Mexico. The complementary operations of the Morgan Line and the Houston Navigation Company led to close relationship between the businesses, which would later culminate in the Morgan Line's purchase of the packet company.

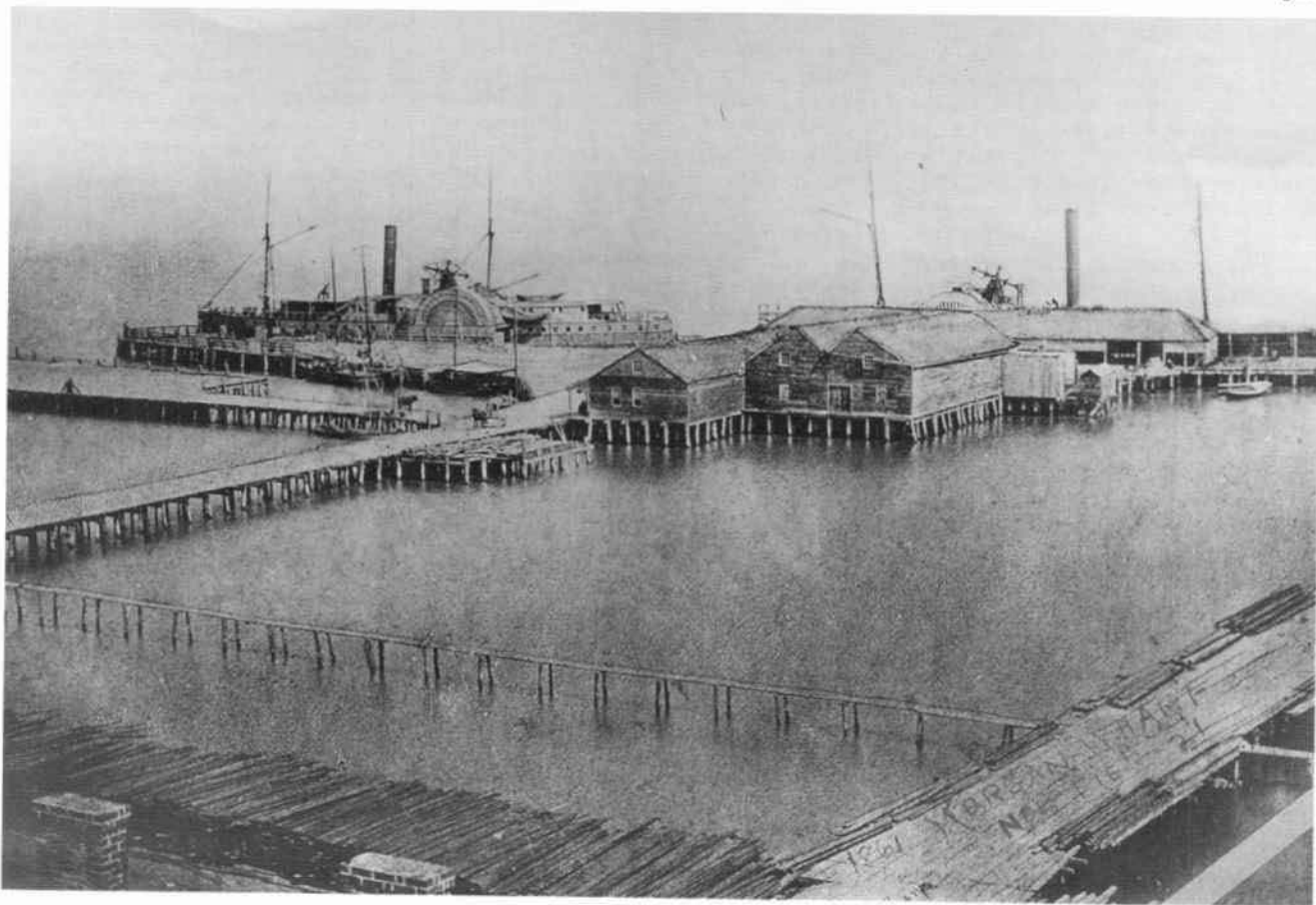
The Houston office was located near the landing, on Commerce Street between Main and Fannin. Sterrett built for himself a house on the corner of San Jacinto and McKinney Streets, in what is now the heart of downtown. A contemporary newspaper account described his new residence as "quite an addition to the appearance of that neighborhood."

Federal mail contracts - essentially government subsidies for steamboat

operators - dramatically expanded in the 1850s. Though the stringent requirements of postal contracts were difficult to meet, the cash payments that came with such contracts often made the difference between a steamboat line's profit and loss. John Sterrett and Frederick Smith won a \$20,000 mail contract in 1858 that required them to provide mail service between Galveston and Houston six times per week. By this time, the original partnership which had created the Houston and Galveston Navigation Company was dissolved, and the new mail contract was probably a key factor in establishing the new Houston Navigation Company, which ran three boats between the cities. Promising "comfort, economy and speed," the Houston Navigation Company offered

daily service between the two cities. A typical schedule from about 1858 lists the new sidewheeler DIANA (Way 1540), under Sterrett's command, leaving Galveston for Houston on Sunday and Thursday mornings; ISLAND CITY (Way 2794), Capt. Blakeman, ran the same route on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. The old sternwheeler NEPTUNE, soon to be replaced by a new sidewheeler of the same name, was kept in reserve. When the evening boats arrived in Houston after midnight, cabin passengers could disembark or remain on board "at pleasure until the leaving of the morning trains" for points inland. Cabin passage cost the traveler \$3.

The company operated at a near-monopoly, but kept its fares for both freight and passengers reasonable. On occasion a new boat might be



Galveston, Texas in 1861. Central or Morgan's Wharf where the Houston Direct Navigation Company kept its offices and shared the wharf with the "little red steamers" of the Morgan Line.

Here, a pair of Commodore Morgan's gulf steamers wait to take on passengers and freight headed for New Orleans and points east. Photo courtesy of Galveston and Texas History Center, Rosenberg Library.

placed in competition against the Houston Navigation Company, and a quick, dramatic rate fight would follow. Houston Navigation Co., with its fleet of packets and its mail contract, invariably undercut the opponent's fares and forced the competitor out of business. During these brief periods, though, careful passengers could wrangle bargains out of the clerks on competing boats. The fares occasionally dropped as low as \$1 for cabin passage. One passenger in 1857 wrote:

"Reaching Galveston we took a steamboat for Houston. Before the rate fight the fare had been \$5. The dining tables were strung along the center of the cabin and every few feet there was a bucket of champagne on ice. If a man had the capacity, he could drink \$4 worth of champagne on his dollar ticket. The dining service was solid silver and there was a black man to hand you a match then you wanted to light a cigar. It was about as hospitable on the boat as in a southern (sic) planter's home."

Passengers often turned to gambling to pass the time. Jim Parcell, who traveled the Buffalo Bayou route not long before the Civil War, recalled that one evening, after dinner, he and a friend met a cotton merchant from New Orleans who'd come to Texas on a buying trip. The merchant was bored, and suggested a "little game." It would turn out to be an expensive proposition. Parcell noted that after a few hands:

"I had \$400 of the New Orleans man's root of all evil and was just getting interested when he suddenly stopped and fingered through his pockets. Then his face turned very red. 'My friend', he said apologetically, 'I thought I had some money but it seems I misjudged my finances. It was very uncivil of me and I must beg your pardon.'

He was actually very sorry because he had induced me to

go into the game with him without having enough money to make it interesting. Suddenly, the purser went by and a happy smile spread over the face of my genteel antagonist. 'Billy', he said, 'I'm a little - ah - shy of cash. Could you - ah.' 'Let you have a few hundred?' replied the purser genially. 'How much do you want Colonel?'

'Could you make it, say \$500?'

'To be sure - a thousand if you want it.'

The purser went to the safe and returned with a bundle of new bills which he slipped into the hands of the new Orleans man without ostentation. We resumed the game and before we reached the landing the genial Colonel's \$500 was lying alongside his \$400 in my pocketbook and we were the best of friends."

It's difficult to know the number of professional gamblers who plied their craft on the Galveston-Houston route, in part because the victims would be reluctant to discuss their losses. But in one case, at least, the gamblers operated as an organized team to relieve unsuspecting passengers of their cash. One foggy evening in February 1856, the Galveston-bound packet NEPTUNE (Way 4142) got out of the channel at Red Fish Bar and went aground. The packet would float free within a few hours on the next high tide, but in the meantime the bored passengers gathered to amuse themselves with card games.

Attention soon fell upon two or three well-dressed men, one of whom was proposing to take bets on a trick at cards, which looked very much, in principle, like THIMBLE RIG, while the others made occasional bets to decoy the green ones. One victim I noticed, went into the trap to the extent of a hundred dollars, and another paid twenty for his experience. The game is called three-card monte, and the players are frequent passengers between Galveston and Houston.

During the passage is the best time to get up a game, which, in the vernacular peculiarly applied, is a "dead thing."

- - -

The second half of the story about the Houston and Galveston packet trade on Buffalo Bayou will appear in the December issue.

SPIRIT OF AMERICA

RELUCTANTLY LEAVES COVINGTON

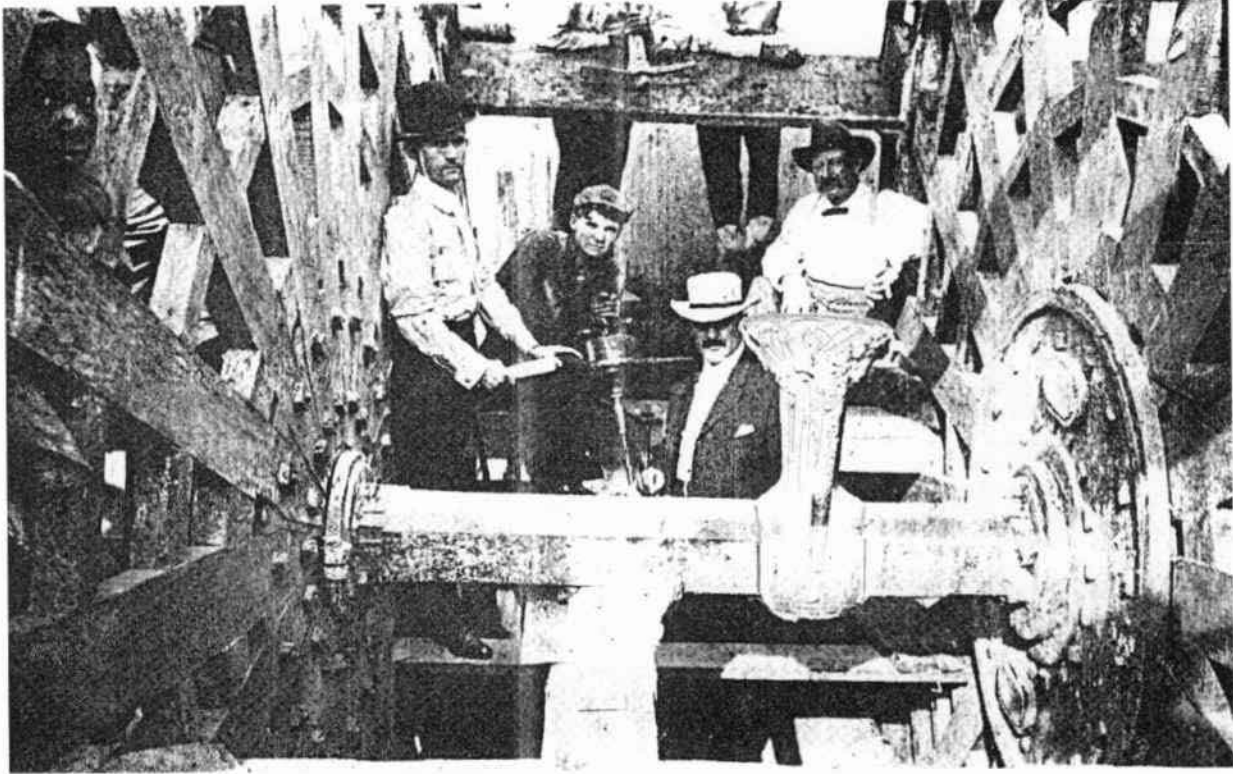
The entertainment center barge SPIRIT OF AMERICA was reported as soon to depart from the Covington, Kentucky riverfront in our March issue (page 7). Sahara Gaming Corp., Las Vegas was the new owner and all seemed set to move the sidewheeler replica to Parkville, Missouri for gambling purposes. With her 300 foot length and fancy packetboat appearance the SPIRIT OF AMERICA would have caused a huge sucking sound (per Ross Perot) as nearby Kansas City citizens were cleaned of their loose change.

But then the Missouri supreme court spoiled all plans by saying slot machines are not permitted and local citizens must vote to permit gaming. Slot machines are a sure thing when it comes to knowing the odds and owners love them. Without slots gambling income is much reduced and gaming promoters lose interest. Parkville voters were deciding on August 2 the question of allowing games of chance on excursions or just floating facilities.

Sahara had to get the SPIRIT away from the Covington landing to avoid a \$3,500 per month docking bill. She was towed downriver 12 miles on June 17, 1994 and tied up. The new owners will entertain offers of around \$9 million; you can't bet on what those Parkville folks will do.

The SPIRIT OF AMERICA had opened to great fanfare in 1990 but was bankrupt in less than three years.

Our thanks to Virginia Bennett for keeping us posted on SPIRIT OF AMERICA.



The large protrusion from the wheel shaft in the photocopy above has been cause for some speculation as to the purpose. Great providence brought the explanation in almost the same mail.

This is a repair to a cracked paddlewheel shaft by the Thermit Welding Process. How common this method of repair might have been on steamboats is unknown to us but we seem to recall similar photos of lumps and bumps repair jobs on other boats. The use of thermit welding might not have been too unusual.

Without attempting to explain the fine details of the thermit process of welding we'll just say that the area of a break or crack is fitted with a suitable mold, in the case of a shaft something like a split collar with a section at the top in which to pour the molten thermit mixture. The shaft is heated to red hot using a torch through an access hole in the mold and before doing the welding.

The thermit mixture contains powdered aluminum, magnetite, iron and slag and is held in a small crucible above the pour hole of the mold. The aluminum in the mixture is ignited and burns rapidly for about half a minute to a temperature about twice the melting point of steel. After a short pause to allow the slag to rise to the top of this porridge the valve in the bottom of the crucible is tapped and the operator jumps out of the way of the resultant fireworks.

The advantage of the thermit method is that a repair can be made with the piece in-place. The molten thermit raises the temperature of the piece being repaired to assure a good weld. The mushroom shape remaining in the photo is the pour gate and riser following removal of the mold and will be cut off. The thermit process was perfected about 1905 and soon was used for small jobs such as butt welding 1½ inch pipe and also to repair locomotive frames and steamboat shafts.

The boat in the photo is the BETSY ANN (0604) and the welding was done at Natchez sometime before 1910. The shaft was 8 3/5 inches on the inscribed circle and 23 feet long. A small crack appeared as a streak of rust showing through the paint and was about four inches long over two of the hex faces. The boat continued operating but the crack was soon 3/4 inch longer so quick repair was required.

The steel was chipped away to the bottom of the crack and the paint cleaned away on each side. A wax pattern the shape of the desired weld collar was formed around the shaft and packed with foundry sand to form a lost-wax mold. The job required 416 pounds of thermit mixture and 35 pounds of mild steel punchings. After allowing five hours for a slow cool-down of the metal, the BETSY ANN proceeded on schedule.

Thanks to Dick Rutter for the picture and to Don Naish for the technical info.

BERT FENN COLLECTION SOLD

UNIQUE RIVER ITEMS
ON THE BLOCK

A Field Day for Collectors

When Bert Fenn died, too soon, on August 23, 1993 he left an important and diverse collection of river material. We suspect that Bert started saving anything connected with steamboats that came his way while still in high school; he early-on had an interest in history in general and particularly the river which went by his hometown, Tell City. Certainly Bert was seeking out river related books, steamboat artifacts and "paper" shortly after WW-II when he returned to his job at the Tell City Chair Co.

For years Bert had a running ad in antique journals expressing his interest in buying river-related items. But Bert was always exploring some facet of river history and he rooted around in towns and more remote spots up and down the Mississippi and Ohio. On these research trips he often found the opportunity to acquire some obscure item: a sign, a chair, some crockery or silverware, the remains of an old wreck, photographs and carted it home. With his relaxed personality and obvious sincerity, Bert was able to acquire items that were not particularly for sale and relished the stories that went with the finding of these treasures.

Some collectors specialize in one field and look somewhat askance at their fellows who have an interest in anything else. Bert was interested in everything and anything which had been within gunshot of a steamboat. His collection had something for everyone and he could wax equally enthusiastic over a piece of silverware from the J. M. WHITE or a mussel hook or raft dog.

Bert's office at the Tell City Chair Co. was noted for having boat artifacts strewn around to the exclusion of

seating space for visitors. Chairs were provided but they held important new acquisitions pending removal (sometimes) to Bert's private storage room out in the factory someplace. After his retirement, Bert set about organizing and displaying his photographs and bric-a-brac in a two-room office in one of the old chair company buildings.

Although Bert enjoyed his "steamboating" expeditions and successes in acquiring pieces rare and unique he was also generous in passing out important items to historical societies and libraries. He had a view, however, that museums often hid "good stuff" in storage rooms while collectors were more inclined to display what they had, available for others with like interests to enjoy. The Ohio River Museum and the Inland Rivers Library have very much benefited from the gifts of Bert Fenn but he noticed when some of his favorite pieces seemed to be hidden away from view.

So, Bert wanted his collection to be distributed among others who just might enjoy an item and its history as he had. The first sale of mostly artifacts was held on Saturday, June 25, 1994 and that would have been Bert Fenn's 76th birthday. Books and manuscripts will be sold separately at a later date.

The location was Garth's Auction Barn at Stratford, Ohio, near Delaware. If Stratford is remote from the Ohio River it is to be noted that Garth has a reputation for high quality sales and attracting dealers and collectors from a wide area. By 9:30 am. some 100 were gathered in the auction room. The sale had attracted dealers and collectors from as far away as Massachusetts and Branson, Missouri and perhaps farther. A number of S&D regulars were on hand, some just looking for an item in remembrance of friend Bert but others loaded for bear.

The Garth organization had asked Jeff Spear of Riverview Antiques, across

from the Lafayette Hotel, Marietta to prepare the thirty-three page catalogue. Items were very correctly identified, sometimes with a note of historical interest and photographs of the more interesting pieces. There were 478 lots to be sold and the expert auctioneers kept the show moving; all were gone by 3:30 pm., on schedule.

One of Bert's prizes was a 43 inch long model of a side wheel boat bearing the name "John F. Tobin". The model does not seem to be of a particular boat but is in good proportions and in the unrestored condition as found. The model had reputedly had been made by the Howard Shipyard for the son of Capt. John W. Tobin, perhaps at the time that the J. M. WHITE was under contract in 1878. A photo of the model is on the cover of the catalogue and there was general speculation about the price it might bring. Bidding quickly rose to \$4,200 before the gavel fell but we know not whether a toy collector or a river buff was the buyer.

And so it went. A chair from the cabin of the J. M. WHITE and some of her silverplated table pieces attracted spirited bidding. Items from the racer ROBT. E. LEE, of course, were favorites and Bert's collection included one of the cabin carlins. Amazing to us was the bidding frenzy for some plates featuring the steamers DEXTER and RUTH, two notable boats but with crockery no better than other floating palaces of the time. It appears that these were presentation plates and the attraction was "R. T. Lux, Painter and Decorator on China, 112 Bienville St., New Orleans". Collectors recognized their worth while we wonder if they are dishwasher safe?

It was an interesting day. We know that Bert would be pleased that so many of his friends will continue to cherish the river prizes he had so much fun in the finding.

* * *



The late Bert Benn in his president's office cum museum at the Tell City Chair Co., August, 1988.

The framed document in the center is a fancy manifest for cargo shipped on the DOCTOR FRANKLIN, dated February 25, 1844. A wharfboat sign for "Lee Line Steamers" is in lower right. Behind Bert's head is the lid of a domed-top trunk framed under glass. The trunk lid has been lined with a broadside for the KENTUCKIAN, H. M. Gray, master, April 9, 1829. Bert bought the trunk at a sale and, not being a trunk collector, removed the lid. Photo by Keith Norrington.

RAGS DANCED ON ISLAND QUEEN

Several articles by Don Naish and others have referred to the Greene Line dog "Rags", famed up and down the Ohio for detesting gasboats. Rags was king of the freighter TOM GREENE and woe be to any dog who dared to set paw aboard or even approach nearby real estate.

Rags was a rounder with a girl friend in Cincinnati, Louisville and any other ports which Greene Line boats reached. Mr. Naish has detailed many of Rags' escapades as observed during his days as engineer on the TOM GREENE in the early 1940s and has now recalled one more Rags anecdote.

Many dogs delight in chasing a ball and some are obsessed with the sport. As long as someone will throw the ball the dog will go to any lengths to retrieve it for another throw and chase. Living on a boat for most of the time and by his wits on shore when romancing some attractive pooch, Rags didn't own a ball. Lump's of river coal, rounded by the action of water and sand, served the purpose of a ball

for Rags and he wore his teeth down short pursuing coal tossed by his friends.

Don Naish relates: "When the TOM GREENE was laying over in Cincinnati and the ISLAND QUEEN was laid up in the wintertime I would often walk up to the Coney Island landing and visit with Fred Dickow, the QUEEN'S engineer. Fred was a particular friend of mine and the only employee kept aboard during layup. Rags always went along on these visits and I always had a pocket full of lump coal. You see, Rags would have risen from his coffin to chase a piece of coal. We would get up on that empty dance floor and I would skate a lump of coal down the deck and then the fun began.

Rags was part greyhound and had long legs so, when he tried to get going, legs were flying in every direction. By the time he got up to speed the coal would have stopped and then Rags would try to get turned around and pick up the coal at the same time. It was a sight to see as Rags went sliding by, leaning into the

turn and with all fours going full head."

(Wonder what those sixteen clawing toenails did to the finish on that solid maple dance floor? Ed.)

Looking at the photo of the ISLAND QUEEN on the September, 1993 issue Don Naish muses that the ISLAND QUEEN was all windows. "A multitude of windows on two decks, every one different because of the sheer and camber and each opened and closed by dropping into a pocket. What a job was involved in building all of those windows so they would operate smoothly, more or less."

* * *

HARRIS-GIGLIO NUPTIALS TOLD

The afternoon of July 2 saw the exchange of marriage vows by Sharon Harris and Michael Giglio on the lawn of the bride's home in Loveland, Ohio. The backdrop for the ceremony was a newly constructed pilothouse designed by Mike and christened BELLE OF LOVELAND.

Some 100 guests were on hand when Sharon and Mike stood before Rev. Ed. Armitage for the double ring ceremony. The wedding party was made up of Vivian Berty, Matron of Honor, Zola Rendell, Bridesmaid, Alan Scheuermann, Best Man and Terry Martin, Groomsman.

The music accompanying the service was contemporary. Vivian Berty and Zola Rendell, sisters of the bride, rendered a ceremonial song, The Rose. In keeping with Mike's occupation of long-distance truck driver, the recessional piece was, Eighteen Wheels and a Dozen Roses.

The wedding reception was held on the lawn under the shade of a canvas canopy. Examination of the nearly completed pilothouse of the BELLE OF LOVELAND revealed that what appeared to be the lazy bench was really a hot tub.

It was a happy afternoon at the Harris residence and a number of S&Ders were on hand to wish all the best for Sharon and Mike.

* * *

CINCINNATI BOARD OF TRADE
Annual Report
Year Ending January 1, 1881

John H. "Jack" White, Falls Church, Virginia has passed along an interesting report on transportation at Cincinnati during the year 1880. We reproduce the report since it points out that, far from fading away as railroad lines were being extended, the passenger and package freight business on the Ohio river was thriving.

Mark Twain took a nostalgic trip down the Mississippi in April, 1882 and pronounced the packet business dead but such was not the case on the Upper Ohio in the 1880s. Packet service from the "Queen City" was very lively at the and the Board of Trade report goes to some length to point out that service by river was even better than in some early years.

- - -

"It has been stated that trade and travel by river is declining and that in both these particulars there is less business than in former years. At no previous time in our history has there been as many and as large steamboats plying between Cincinnati and New Orleans as during the present season. At no previous time have the New Orleans boats run with as much regularity and at no previous time have they carried as much freight and as many passengers at as uniform and remunerative rates.

The line to Memphis has not only maintained but increased its business by the regularity of its movements and the reliability of its management.

The local packets on the Ohio, below the Falls, have steadily increased in capacity and accommodations to meet the demands and while there has been a decline in the through passenger traffic between Louisville and Cincinnati because of the two lines of railroad between the two cities, the local freight and passenger traffic, the true indication of the

prosperity of the country bordering upon the river, has steadily increased and continues to do so.

There is a daily line of boats to Wheeling and Pittsburg, a boat every week day to Pomeroy, a daily line to Huntington, a weekly line to Kanawha River, a tri-weekly each to Portsmouth and to Maysville and a daily boat to New Richmond. In addition to those, on the river between this city and Pittsburg there is a regular boat between Portsmouth and Pittsburg, one between Ironton and Pittsburg. There are local packets between the towns all along the river as for example between Gallipolis and Parkersburg, a distance of 85 miles. In addition to these through packets, there is a packet line from Gallipolis to Syracuse, two packets between Pomeroy and Ravenswood, another from Ravenswood to Parkersburg and one from Reedsville to Parkersburg.

There is also a regular daily line between Parkersburg and Wheeling, a distance of 93 miles and local packets in between. The 90 miles between Wheeling and Pittsburg is well supplied with daily through and intermediate boats. In addition to all

of these facilities on the Upper Ohio River, there are seven steamboats plying regularly, not including transient boats, between Pittsburg and St. Louis and each of them with the barges they tow have a carrying capacity of from 1,500 to 2,500 tons each way. As a rule, these boats are so fully laden upon arrival at Cincinnati that they can not take any of the freight there offered to them.

On the Ohio River below Cincinnati there are three boats a week to New Orleans, three to Memphis, a daily line to Louisville and another to Madison (except on Sunday), a local packet to Pittsburg and a boat each week to the Tennessee River.

From Louisville there is a daily line to Henderson and there is also a daily line between Evansville and Cairo, a line between Evansville and Nashville and a line between Cairo and Paducah. All this capacity for transportation is fully and profitably employed and at rates in accordance with the well-known ability of water transportation to afford cheap conveyance.

From these facts, some idea may be formed of the immense amount of transportation by regular lines of steamboats."

STEAM VESSELS AND BARGES BUILT IN CINCINNATI DISTRICT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING JANUARY 1, 1881.

NAME.	CLASS.	Length, Feet.	Breadth, Feet.	Tonnage.	Value.
Bostona	Model Barge	260	40	449.13	\$2,000
R. T. Graham.....	Ferry Steamer	58.6	18.2	27.86	2,000
A. T. Jenks.....	Passenger Steamer..	111.3	22.4	111.76	10,000
Moline	Towing Steamer	126.2	26.2	192.13	14,000
Transfer	Ferry Steamer	90	26.5	65.63	4,000
Rubicon	Model Barge	190	29.4	593.56	6,000
Evansville.....	Passenger Steamer..	121	30.2	194.24	15,000
Caddo Belle	Passenger Steamer..	125	25	175.27	14,000
Fleetwood	Passenger Steamer..	302.2	43.4	1,036.60	50,000
Little Samson....	Towing Steamer	119.8	20.6	118.84	12,000
White Water	Passenger Steamer..	133.4	24	168.86	15,000
Belle of the Coast.	Passenger Steamer..	186.8	37	555.50	35,000
Silas P. Coe.....	Towing Steamer	159.4	28.5	301.56	16,000
Sallie Freese	Passenger Steamer..	110	21	80.14	8,000
Jno. D. Lewis.....	Towing Steamer	148.2	28.2	266.41	15,000
Maxie S.....	Freight Steamer	121	20.2	168.44	10,000
Hanna Blanks....	Passenger Steamer..	155.4	34.5	352.75	18,000
Totals	4,858.68	\$246,000

GAMBLING BENEFITS:

BOATBUILDING!

The politicians are easily mesmerized by visions of new tax dollars and revitalized downtown areas when wined and dined by the promoters of gambling casinos. State after state has viewed the first rush of developers into pioneer Iowa and wants some of all that beautiful money. Local communities welcome either "riverboat" or casino gamblers or both with the idea that there will be only good things to follow. Then the "action" moves to the next location with less restrictions and the dollars go too.

But one beneficiary from all this gambling enthusiasm is the boatbuilding industry and that continues.

An Associated Press piece by Hugh A. Mulligan appeared in the Red Bluff (California) Daily News last spring and a copy was sent to us by Stan Garvey, Menlo Park, CA. Mr. Mulligan did his homework down in the Bayou Country of Louisiana where many of these gambling barges are being hatched.

"In Louisiana alone, 31 riverboats are either under construction or have been delivered in the past year as a result of legalized riverboat gambling along the Mississippi and its tributaries. Gaming experts predict 90 or more will be afloat before the century is out.

'This is the biggest boom in riverboat building since right after the Civil War,' said Larry Hairston, senior vice president of Service Marine, watching a huge crane lift the twin somkestacks onto the purple and gold trimmed SHREVEPORT ROSE at the sprawling boatyard along the Atchafalaya River in Morgan City. 'We've got six (boats) under way here now. Boats we built or converted are in Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Iowa and Illinois. Indiana will be next.'

Just a mile or so up the river at McDermott's yard, known worldwide for its offshore oil platforms, shipwrights are adding deck upon deck to the all steel hull of the AMERICAN QUEEN, the largest overnight passenger vessel to be built in an American yard since the liner UNITED STATES in 1951.

'Now there's a boat,' concedes Hairston in almost reverential awe. 'She carries a price tag of upwards of \$60 million, while ours go for between \$12 and \$16 million.' Inspired by the J. M. WHITE, but almost a third again as long, the 412-foot AMERICAN QUEEN is a genuine steamboat. Steam engines taken from the dredge KENNEDY, c. 1930, turn her 60-ton paddlewheel.

Tom Norton, project manager for the AMERICAN QUEEN, admits that, 'Horace Bixby, who taught Mark Twain the art of piloting, would be horrified to find a No Smoking sign in the dining saloon.' He confides that some on the design team are pushing for spittoons in the Boiler Room bar overlooking the paddlewheel, the last hurrah for the traditional men's bar where ladies now will be invited to light up a cheroot.

(We trust there will be no mention of Men's Bar, cheroots or smokeless tobacco. U.S. money is involved in this project and congressional hearings would follow. Ed.)

In Louisiana shipyards alone, Hairston figures, 'There are now roughly 5,000 people working directly on riverboats. That's not counting the steel, furnishings and gambling equipment made elsewhere. All of that fancy fretwork and gingerbread trim is fabricated in fireproof metals at the mill by computer controlled cutting heads. We develop our designs from pictures of famous boats like the ECLIPSE, ROBT. E. LEE and the MARY HOUSTON and feed them onto computer tapes.'

Capt. Lawrence Keeton, the leathery faced master of the MISSISSIPPI QUEEN, growls that the garishly lighted gambling boats have destroyed the charm and quiet of the river at night. 'Below Memphis, you used to cruise past dark stretches of woods and clumps of tall trees along the banks. Now, along that peaceful stretch, the sky is stabbed with arc lights like a Hollywood premiere and the banks glow like a little city with those neon lights.' Furthermore, 'We lost our landing at Natchez and had to move to the Louisiana side of the river to make way for the gambling boats. At Vicksburg we were pushed farther up river.'

The gambling operators sent steamboat traditionalists farther 'round the bend by dispatching free buses to pick up passengers who otherwise might have browsed through the antebellum mansions.

In the peak steamboat era just after the Civil War, when 3,000 riverboats annually called at St. Louis, the faster, more maneuverable sidewheelers far outnumbered the sternwheelers. Now the opposite is true. 'Paddle wheels on each side take away space from gaming positions,' Hairston says. 'Even those starboard side windows you see on the SHREVEPORT ROSE aren't real. They're assembled from a fiberglass kit. The owners don't want patrons distracted from the slot machines or blackjack tables by the scenery.'

So, my children, stay away from riverboat gambling and those ersatz boats. Even the windows you see aren't real, there is no view and the boats don't move.

JESSE P. HUGHES MISSING!

Sorry, no installment of the Jesse Hughes diary for this issue. Year 1922 diary has not been located; look for 1923 in December issue.

O-K CHAPTER MEETING

The quarterly meeting of the Ohio and Kanawha River Chapter of S&D convened at the Mason County Library, Pt. Pleasant, West Virginia on the afternoon of June 12, 1994. About twenty-five members and guests were on hand.

The program was provided by Capt. Clare Carpenter, Belpre and consisted of a video in several parts. First, was a 1968 film titled, "Love of the River" which was produced by The Dravo Corp. using the then new 5,200 hp. motor vessel PEACE. This was the third Dravo boat to be named PEACE, the earlier ones being the steam propeller boat of 1917 and the 750 hp. diesel boat built in 1934. Views included locking and landing operations with engineer Rudolph Demotta and the boat's captain being interviewed.

The second segment was of the meeting of Union Barge Line veterans held in Marietta in 1990. This group meets annually, usually in September, and includes a number of S&D members.

Last, was a video made up of photos of towboats on the Monongahela River in the days of steam. A number of the boats in the Carnegie Steel Co. Fleet in the 1930s appeared and were identified by the grey heads in the audience. This interesting collage of pictures had been put together by Jim Braddock, a former Union Barge Line striker engineer, Ft. Myers, Florida.

The election of officers brought no surprises. Bert Shearer was reelected Captain, Charles H. Stone, Engineer and June Bupp, Clerk.

Refreshments were provided by Jean Stone.

The next meeting at the Mason County Library, following the S&D annual meeting in Marietta, will be held November 13, 1994. Any S&D members in the vicinity of Pt. Pleasant are invited to attend these informative and friendly gatherings.

* * *

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

AND

MIDDLE OHIO RIVER CHAPTERS

by Fred Rutter

The first joint meeting of the M.O.R. and Mississippi River Chapters of S&D was held aboard Capt. Dennis Trone's TWILIGHT on July 17-18, 1994. The preliminary gathering on the evening prior to the boat trip was at the Hampton Inn, Davenport, Iowa where more than two dozen S&Ders gathered over assorted desserts and a cake decorated with a steamboat likeness.

Capt. John Vize, who operates Jetboat Tours, East Moline, Illinois, was on hand to promote his three different trips on the Des Moines, Galena and Rock Rivers. Capt. Vize had available prints of a watercolor painting of Capt. Fred Kahlke standing in front of his ferryboat W. J. QUINLAN, long a fixture in the Quad Cities area.

We boarded the TWILIGHT in LeClaire, Iowa on a typical river morning with a foggy overcast. The boat was moored beside the JULIA BELLE SWAIN which is not operating this summer. (The JULIA BELLE was still on the market for sale as of this writing while officials in Huntington, West Virginia scratch their heads over the pros and cons of ownership.)

There was a goodly number of passengers on this trip and with the S&D group we judge upwards of 100. Shortly after boarding and helping ourselves to a continental breakfast the TWILIGHT started on her 68 mile trip up the Mississippi to Galena, Illinois and the fog lifted.

Some interesting sights encountered during the day included a flock of freshwater pelicans, a bald eagle, several standard 15 barge tows of grain and all on a very pretty stretch of river. Capt. Trone kept the passengers informed of passing highlights such as the old Diamond Jo Line

freight building at Bellevue, Iowa and the history of the interesting river towns as we passed.

Lunch and dinner are served on the TWILIGHT's cruise. The meals were excellent and the crew performed a great job of service on the two upper decks.

After some eight hours on the river we reached the mooring behind an island above Lock and Dam No. 12 at the foot of Chestnut Mt. The TWILIGHT cruise price includes accommodations at Chestnut Mountain Resort,, a ski lodge overlooking the river with either a bus or the ski lift to carry passengers to the top of the hill; most of us chose the ski lift. After settling into our rooms, where luggage had already been delivered, we viewed a brilliant sunset over the river valley below.

The following morning was spent in Galena, Illinois. This old town has several claims to fame: the home before and after the Civil War of Ulysses S. Grant, the largest lead mines during the first half of the 1800s and old brick buildings in the business district which appear largely unchanged since steamboats tied up at the wharf on the Galena (Fever) River. Tours were conducted through the U. S. Grant home and several explored the local museum with a detailed history of the lead mining and commercial past of Galena.

The return down the river to LeClaire was just as pleasant as the trip up. The M.O.R. group expressed the hope that either the JULIA BELLE SWAIN or the TWILIGHT or both would eventually move to the Ohio where the competing casino boats are still resisted in Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia. Nobody missed the absence of slot machines on the TWILIGHT with so much entertaining scenery and river history to contemplate during the two days.

* * *

-OBITUARY-

ELMER A. LOOMIS

Elmer A. "Jack" Loomis, 73, died at his home in Gallipolis Ferry, West Virginia on July 2, 1994 after a long illness.

"Jack", as he was known by most people, was a riverman all of his adult life and retired as a captain for Union Barge Line Co. after 26 years of service. For many years Jack was the master of the Union Barge Line PEACE of 1934. After leaving Union Barge Line Jack became the Landing Superintendent for G. & C, Towing Co., Inc. at Point Pleasant, West Virginia. Jack followed in the footsteps of his father Joe Loomis who also was on the river.

Surviving are wife Marie, daughter Anna Mae Simpkins and sons Joey and Roy Loomis, all of the Gallipolis Ferry area. Also survived by brothers Roy, Charleston, West Virginia, and Carl, Syracuse, Ohio, sisters Mary Edwards, Helen Redman and Reba Jacobs of Charleston and six grandchildren.

Burial was in Kirkland Memorial Gardens, Point Pleasant.

Capt. Charlie Stone has our thanks for providing the information.

* * *

OHIO UNIVERSITY PRESS

The recently released Fall 1994 Catalog of O. U. Press has a full page announcement for the revised edition of Way's Packet Directory. The new edition, following a sellout of the original hardback, is a paperback of the same size. Some corrections have been made in the original text and 47 listings have been added including the new AMERICAN QUEEN. Price, \$34.95.

The 1994 Summer Book Sale circular from O. U. Press offers Way's Steam Towboat Directory at the reduced price of \$20.00 (\$34.95). The discount price is good through September 30, 1994.

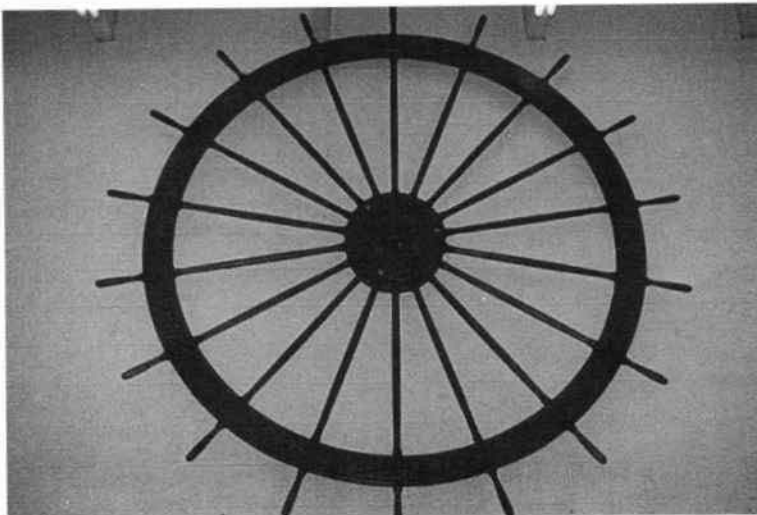
Ohio University Press,
Scott Quad, Athens OH 45701.



A foggy morning at the LeClaire, Iowa landing, July 18, 1994. The JULIA BELLE SWAIN is next to the wharfboat CITY OF BATON ROUGE with TWILIGHT on outside.



The main cabin of the TWILIGHT is a miniature of something from the era of the GRAND REPUBLIC.



Pilotwheel from the Davenport-Rock Island ferryboat W. J. QUINLAN was restored by John Vize and hangs in Ted's Boatarama, Rock Island, IL. Mike Giglio photo.

ON THE OHIO

by

H. BENNETT ABDY

Recently we reread the book, "On the Ohio" which was published in 1919 by Dodd, Mead & Company. It has been more than fifty years since we first picked up H. Bennett Abdy's book and we remembered it as something of a frustration and disappointment. Rather than a true revelation of packetboating, we recalled some cutesy names and attempts at humor which went over our then youthful head.

The aging process (of the Editor, not the book) seems to have brought about a greater appreciation for On the Ohio. Harry Bennett Abdy knew nothing about the midwest and certainly little about packets when he laid out a trip in 1915 from San Francisco to New York with a large segment of travel in the middle to be on the rivers. Abdy wanted to see mid-America and to sample the flavor of the towns, big and small, along the rivers. For young and starry-eyed readers, the Abdy approach to steamboats lacked the technical details of boating and river life; On the Ohio is neither Life on the Mississippi nor Log of the Betsy Ann.

A reason for reading On the Ohio now has been the presence of a partial set of the photographs which Abdy took on his 1915 look at life along the river. In his later years, Abdy became a friend of J. Mack Gamble, visited Mack at his homestead near Clarington, Ohio and turned over his river negatives to him. Abdy looked back on the 1915 trip with a great deal of nostalgia, the life in the small, isolated river towns he had visited with his wife and a good friend was an experience which could never be duplicated. After seeing the Ohio again about 1950, Abdy requested that, when the time came, his ashes be cast upon the bosom of the

Ohio from the Marietta landing with Mack Gamble officiating.

Harry Bennett Abdy was born in England and by the time of the Spanish-American War in 1898 was a newspaper editor in Florida, youngest in the state so he reported. His wife was Rowena Meeks, an artist, and in 1912 they lived in France and traveled elsewhere in Europe. In 1915 the Abdys were living in San Francisco while in 1918 they were in San Juan Bautista, California which was something of an artist colony; the old section of the town is now preserved as a state park. Rowena Meeks Abdy worked with watercolors and sketched in charcoal; sixteen of her sketches illustrate On the Ohio.

The true name of the third member of the 1915 party is unidentified but he seems to also have been living in San Francisco and an artist. Abdy calls his companions Painter Lady and Painter Man, refers to himself as The Pathfinder or Chronicler, some of the cuteness which I found annoying fifty years ago. Abdy often uses made-up names for some of the boats which will confuse the reader no end, viz. Bobbie Dunne is the R. DUNBAR but Bustling Billy and Tired Susie are rather more difficult to connect. In some places the locations are a little mixed up as if he transposed his notes but, all in all, Oh the Ohio is a most readable book.

The three travelers were enroute to New York for an art exhibition being held in November, 1915. Abdy doesn't mention that he was working as an editor at that time but evidently felt that river travel would be the way to experience the heartland of the U.S. and planned to travel by packet from Kansas City to Pittsburgh. Because of the Pacific Exposition held that year in San Francisco, Abdy was unable to get rail reservations early enough to connect with the CHESTER which was running Kansas City-St. Louis, the last year for that trade on the Missouri.

The river trip for the Abdy party started at St. Louis where they boarded the STACKER LEE for Cairo. They were to connect with the OHIO, then in the Cincinnati-Memphis trade, but she was several days behind schedule. After seeing the sights about Cairo including a streecar tour Abdy concluded to heed local advice and take the RAPIDS to Paducah.

Paducah proved of some interest to the artists but a friendly Kentucky Colonel suggested that they might find scenes of interest in his town of Smithland, Kentucky. To see more of the smaller river towns, Abdy decided to let the OHIO go by and take local packets up the river to Louisville. The party rode the JOHN L. LOWRY to Smithland.

After most of a week in and around Smithland including an excursion up the Cumberland, the trip east continued to Evansville on the JOHN L. LOWRY. The TARASCON was behind schedule and the date for the art exhibition in New York was getting closer so the railroad took the party to Louisville.

Some sketches were made around Louisville and then they boarded the CITY OF CINCINNATI to Cincinnati where several days were spent exploring the city. Because of the author's penchant for nicknames it is not clear how he planned to continue up the Ohio but we suspect that it was aboard the COURIER to Maysville, a town with many buildings to delight the artists. Abdy refers to the "Tired Susie", perhaps a takeoff on the COURIER's nickname of "The Midnight Rambler" acquired during her twenty-two years in the Cincinnati-Maysville trade. Fog and then a grounding put the Tired Susie two days late so the party took the "Bustling Billy" for Pt. Pleasant.

Jesse Hughes' diary for 1915 says that the GREENLAND was running in the L&C trade that fall because of low water and the TACOMA was the Charleston boat. How Abdy

decided on Bustling Billy as a name for the TACOMA is unclear but he mentions that the pilot had attended the Cincinnati Art Institute for a time and that would fit Jesse Hughes. Pt. Pleasant to Pittsburgh was aboard the R. DUNBAR or "Bobbie Dunne" and it proved to be a long five days with fog each night.

With his journalist's eye for local color, Abdy often comments on aspects of travel not mentioned by authors more familiar with steamboats and the midwest. Aboard the STACKER LEE bound for Cairo the author describes a bank landing in the willows to load sacked potatoes and concludes with a description of the life of the rousters:

"All ready, sir. Let's go."

The men were now served with a generous breakfast. This they ate as they sat on flat-topped freight or squatted on deck with their tired backs resting against the piles of sacked potatoes.

By now the sun was out, warming and comforting. One by one the food-filled stomachs of the weary darkies lured them into delicious dozings. Some, however, slept quite soundly as do most of the Negroes, with utter abandon in their sprawling bodies - a dreamless, log-like sleep. Nor were the roustabouts alone in their resting after breakfast; for it seemed as if all the ship's company that was not 'on watch' took their ease as the STACKER LEE sped swiftly on downstream."

On the luxurious amenities aboard the steel hull JOHN L. LOWRY, built only two years before, the Painter Man had this tale:

"The Vendome (Evansville) was an excellent house, and though quite a large hotel and swamped with a big convention, it was wonderful how it found time and talent to make us river wanderers feel comfortably at home.

During breakfast the Painter Man told us how he had gone into the men's wash-room on the boat that morning when he found there

was no water in his stateroom. Three or four men, with characteristic American good humor, were either laughing or whimsically swearing at the conditions found in that place of ablutions. Our friend saw red-brown streaks and smears on the roller towels and said to himself in shocked decency, 'The slovenly washers!' Just then a man opened the faucet over his washbowl, and lo, a muddy stream gushed forth, all too willingly, it would seem. The Californian watched with a fascinated interest (not unmixed with admiration for this man's courage) as the washer splashed what had been a clean-skinned face and made himself a ruddy streaked Indian. It was that awful river water pumped direct to the washbowls. When a trusting victim wiped his face, the towel recorded the indignity that had been offered - or rather applied. When the drain plugs were pulled the water would leave behind it a thick reddish sediment. 'Not for me!' declared the Painter Man and went forth and braved the world, - unwashed."

On the Bustling Billy the captain had recommended that the party buy a demijohn of filtered water before leaving Cincinnati. Abdy mentions getting another jug of filtered water at Ashland and we suspect that it might have been a common practice although new to us. The pressure filters used on even a new packet like the JOHN L. LOWRY were not intended to make the water potable and would plug up if not back-washed frequently, then untreated river water went directly to the wash basins.

The trip aboard the R. DUNBAR from Pt. Pleasant to Pittsburgh was not much improvement. The R. DUNBAR was running five hours late when she picked up the Abdy party at 10:30 on the evening of October 20, 1915. The fog delays each night put the boat later and later.

At Dam 20, Belleville, West Virginia a number of wickets were down but the

lock was still in use and three boats were waiting. To save time, the captain of the R. DUNBAR (probably Fred Hornbrook) elected to try going over the narrow pass. Abdy has a good description of the boat's attempt to stem the current and her eventual success was hard won, evidently a near thing.

Abdy speculated that Pomeroy was probably settled by a Frenchman who named it Pomme de Roi, apple of the king, a new twist for us. At Pomeroy the steward ran out of clean linens for the tables, the laundry having been put off at Wheeling on the trip down. When the Painter Lady asked if she might not have a napkin, not even a soiled one being in evidence, the waiter deftly handed her the cloth covering the bread tray, replacing it after use.

But, the Californians took packetboat travel in good humor. They particularly enjoyed the small towns. Frequent mention is made of the two artists spending a day or more sketching old buildings and street scenes. A painting of a street in an old section of Paducah by Painter Man later hung in the San Francisco Museum of Fine Arts. But what became of his sketches and who was the Painter Man?

During a wait for freight at Hannibal, Ohio the Painter Lady made a watercolor of the landing and boats. Sixteen of her sketches illustrate the book and we'd like mightily to see more of the river scenes by Rowena Meeks Abdy.

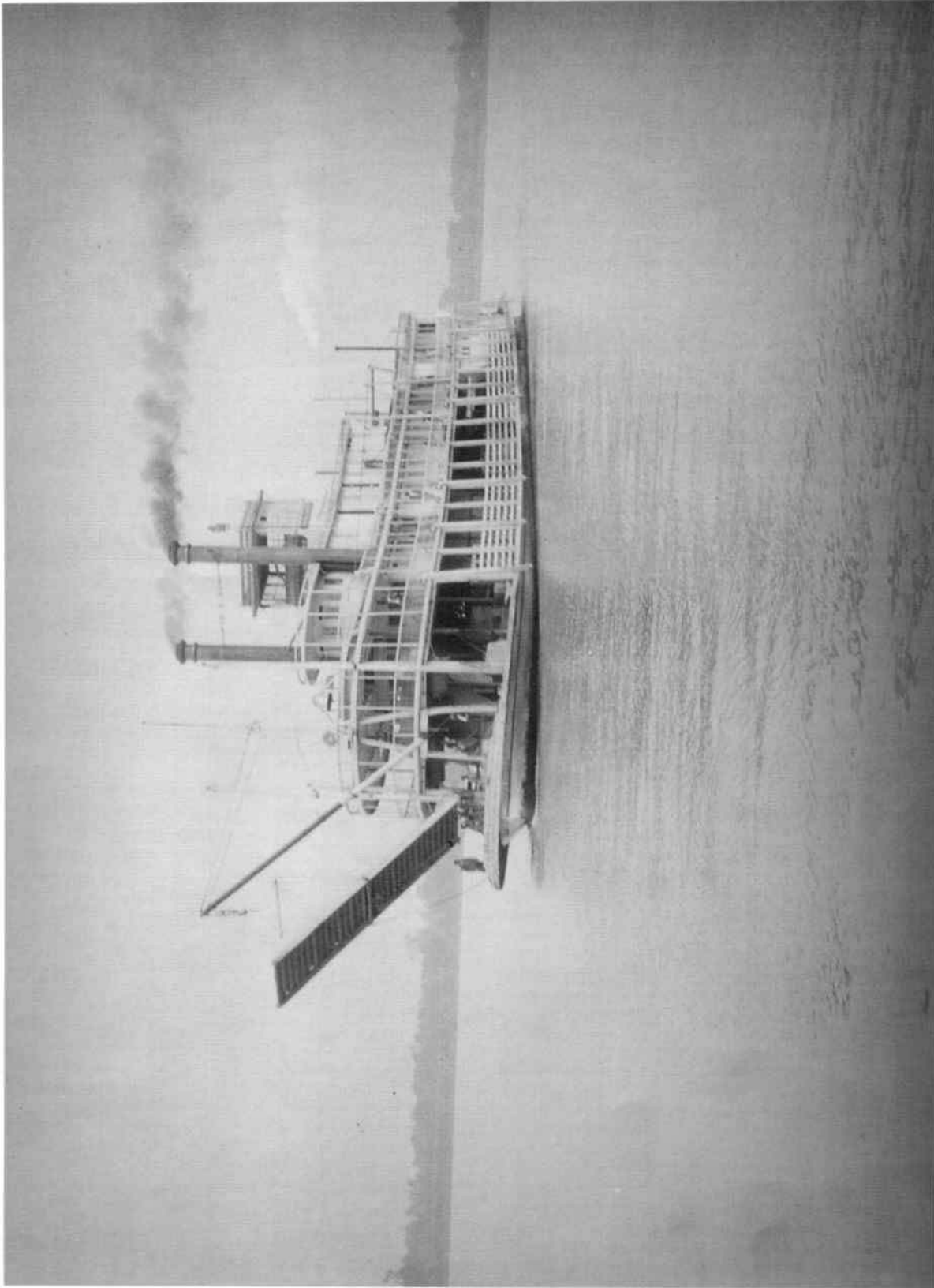
It is our recollection that Harry Bennett Abdy died in New York City sometime before 1960. Abdy's final wish was ignored and his friend Mack Gamble was spared the dilemma of how to spread the ashes reverently upon the waters of the Ohio.

A selection of photographs taken by H. Bennett Abdy during the On the Ohio expedition of 1915 appeared in the S&D Reflector for September, 1979. The views which follow include some of the small towns scenes which the three travellers found so interesting and commented upon in an interesting book.



H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 The Paducah Fair posters attracted this billy goat; he's nibbling on a watermelon and working up to farmer's daughter. The Abdy group was standing beside a lunch wagon waiting for sandwiches when a whistle blew. "What boat is that?" we asked the lunch man. "What boat is

'It's the Evansville packet, I reckon - she's due. If it's her, oughter have a call from ole Butt 'cause he done gimme the go-by las' trip. Butt's a goat, lady,' he finally explained, smiling in a paternal way as he handed her a sandwich, all befrilled with crisp leaves of lettuce." Butt came up from the wharf on cue



H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 The JOHN L. LOWRY (Way 3085) was a well proportioned steel hulled packet, 160x31x5 owned by Capt. John L. Lowry. She was operating in the Paducah-Evansville trade and the Abdy party rode her from Paducah to Smithland, Kentucky where they spent several days. After a Sunday excursion up the

Cumberland River, they took the LOWRY on the overnight trip to Evansville and experienced the raw river water coming out of the faucets. The LOWRY made a trip to Pittsburgh in 1920 when she towed a barge of new automobiles to St. Louis then returned to the Paducah-Evansville trade. She burned October 4, 1920.



H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 After a few days in Paducah, the Abdy party moved 13 miles upriver to Smithland. "We fell in love with Smithland at first sight, an Arcadia," enthused Abdy and the LOWRY landed the Californians on the bank.

The town is situated at the mouth of the Cumberland with a population then of 550 and some less today.

Above: Looking toward the river past the offices of the local weekly, The Livingston Banner. A scene for artists.

Below: Loafers waiting for some excitement, on the street or on the river. Cumberland Island in background.

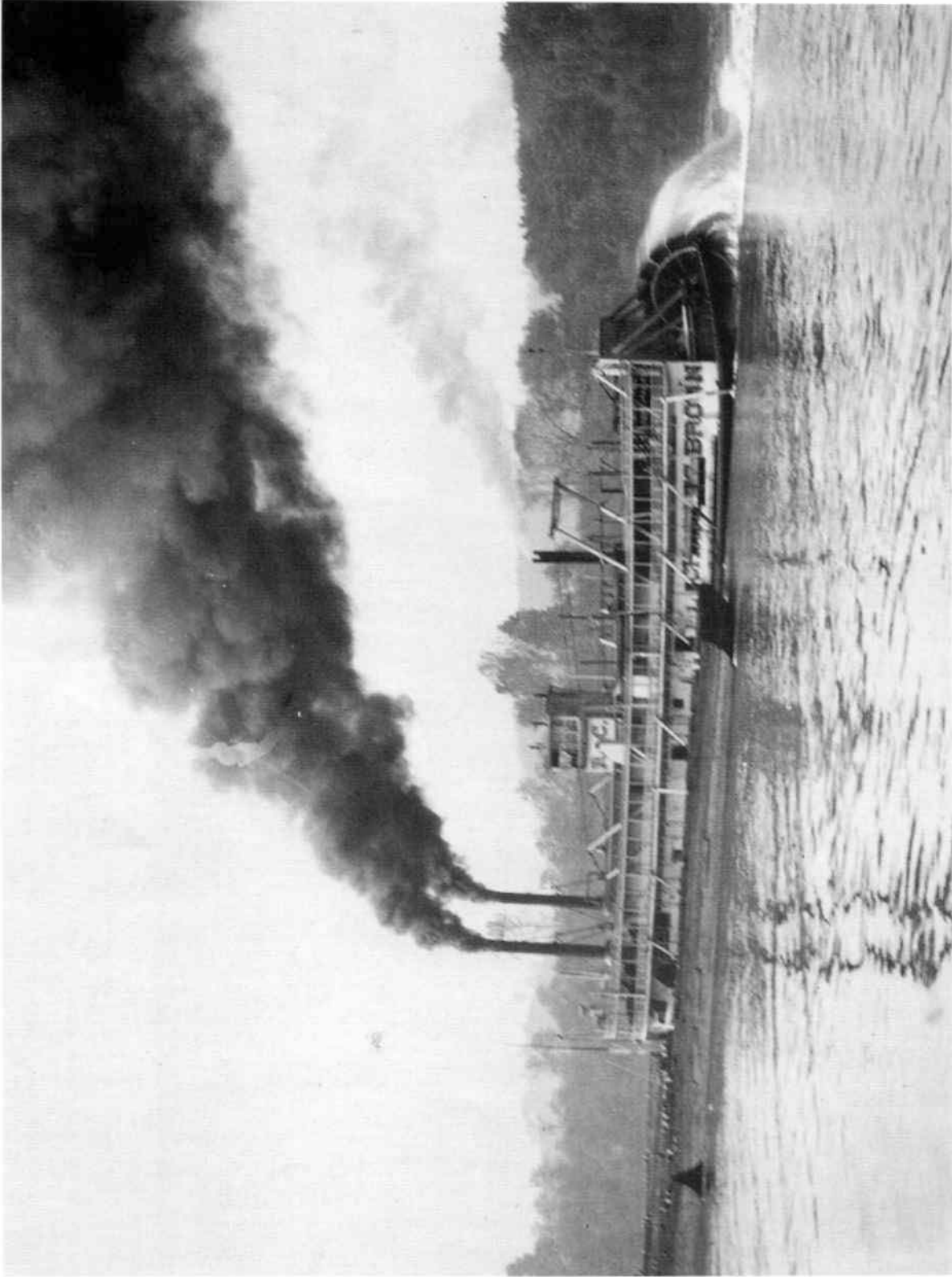
Accommodations were found in a local boarding house. The Painter Lady had to "wash up" with a tin basin on the porch.





H BENNETT ABDY - 1915 The JOHN L. LOWRY was in the Paducah-Evansville trade, two round-trips a week, and offered a Sunday excursion up the Cumberland. The frequent landings made soon caused the Californians to conclude, "Lo, this is a freight-delivering trip in the main, an excursion on the side!" Here, loading cattle.

The mate and rousters seem to have these cattle safely enclosed in the stock racks but the lead steer is looking dubiously at the end of the stage. Abdy: "Roaring, plunging and horning with lowered head it forced its way over the bodies of its followers and out into liberty, with wild bellowings and out of sight."



H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 The JOHN L. LOWRY passed the CHARLES BROWN (T0377) a short distance above Golconda, Illinois. The CHARLES BROWN was nicknamed "Long Charlie" and was 200x33x6, one of the largest class of towboats. She was built in 1872 for W. H. Brown & Sons and had one of the first steam steering gears.

Abdy comments on the coalboat traffic, both loads coming down and empties upbound, on the trip from Smithland to Evansville. The CHARLES BROWN continued in the Combine until chartered by Island Creek Coal Co. in 1917. She was caught in the ice gorge at Cincinnati in January, 1918 and lost.



H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 This scene on the Evansville levee caused the artists to forget their sketchbooks. ". . . a couple of aviators had just descended from the sky and dropped skimmingly to the surface of the river in a wide-winged hydroplane! An excited group of loafers had just pulled the machine ashore with a rope paddlewheel shows to advantage; she would burn in 1917. The JOHN S. HOPKINS beyond the hydroplane and onlookers was operating as an excursion boat in 1915. She had been built in 1880, 200x35.3x6, and retired from the Evansville-Paducah trade in 1912. The staggered paddlewheel shows to advantage; she would burn in 1917.



H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 From Louisville to Cincinnati the Abdy party decided to take the Sunday meet-the-boat trip on the CITY OF CINCINNATI (Way 1066) but departure was delayed until after noon. "Dinner and early darkness prevented seeing Carrollton, 'meet-the-boat' landing for the Sunday excursionists."

Fog overtook the CITY OF CINCINNATI at the Miami River and she tied up. In the early morning mist at the Cincinnati landing Abdy stood at the foot of the stairs from the roof to the boiler deck and caught the GREENLAND (2447) loading and, at the Coney Island wharfboat, the ISLAND QUEEN (2799) and PRINCESS (4596).

BOOK REVIEW

The Collected Writings
of
Miss Ruth Ferris

Widely known among those interested in the rivers and their steamboats is the name of Ruth Ferris, teacher, writer, lecturer and indefatigable researcher into the subject she loved. Although concentrating much of her research in the St. Louis area and along the nearby Missouri and Upper Mississippi Rivers, Ruth Ferris worked so long and so diligently at her research that her writings tell of varied aspects of steamboat life and her findings are of interest to river buffs everywhere.

Beginning her career as a teacher in the Community School in St. Louis in 1922, Ruth Ferris put in more than sixty years of concentrated interest in the rivers, their steamboats and their people. As a recognized river historian, Ruth was a member of the Board of Governors of the Herman T. Pott National Inland Waterways Library and had been the first curator of the River Room of the Missouri Historical Society. She was also honorary president of that widespread organization, the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen and had frequently contributed to the pages of this humble journal.

At the time of her death on July 7, 1993, age 95, the results of Ruth's lifetime of study and writing had been sorted, labeled and cataloged by the St. Louis Mercantile Library. Her collections are now available to researchers and those in that large number who just like to read about life on the rivers during the past century.

Ruth's writings over a lifetime are now collected into a book titled, "St. Louis and the Mighty Mississippi in the Steamboat Age" published by The Mercantile Library. The book of about 200 pages is divided into various sections under general headings.

GRACE AND CHARM

Though a number of varied river subjects are covered in this book it is evident that Ruth Ferris' interest was particularly captured by the romance, the elegance and the charm of traveling on those big, fine steamboats so often referred to as floating palaces. And in Ruth's descriptions we can easily see those old packets as palaces of glamour and grace.

Her interest in steamboats began at the age of only eleven when she heard her grandmother's account of a brief trip with a class of school girls aboard the steamer DAVID TATUM (1470). Ruth's grandmother remembered that, "All the equipment seemed splendid to me," and ". . . the large dining room with lavish supply of delicious food and great pyramids of fruit enclosed in nets of spun candy. Also, immense bowls of jelly that were always dancing and trembling under the lights of the chandeliers."

But later in life, Ruth's research brought forth scenes of long, white cabins with those sparkling chandeliers, carpeting imported from Brussels, tableware imported from England and France and even farther. To quote Ruth, "Frescoes in rich colors adorned the ceiling of the R. R. SPRINGER (4658), the large rosette designs on the spaces marked off by the arches on the ceiling of the GRAND REPUBLIC (2426) while the JOHN W. CANNON's (3126) ceiling was set off with soft green and gold. Then there was the ceiling of the cabin on the ECLIPSE (1688) which was divided into diamonds and half-diamonds by the crossing of the Gothic arches; at the point of intersection hung pendant acorns entwined with oak leaves and gilt."

In further description of the furnishings and equipment in the long, white cabin of a big steamboat: "From the mammoth water pitcher down to the dessert coffee cups, the cabin of the M. S. MEPHAM (3665) was decorated in buff and gold

by the English decorator, William Brough. The pantryware of the ECLIPSE was unsurpassed, having been made in one of the notable potteries in France; the pearl-handled cutlery was manufactured in Sheffield, England and all the glassware for the tables and bar was made in Switzerland."

EXCURSION BOATS

St. Louis had more big excursion boats than any other river port and all of them seem to have been well patronized. Trips went out to a number of recreation spots and nearby towns.

Charitable organizations and churches frequently sponsored excursions and for such organizations as these, the steamboat owners were generous in letting their craft be used, often without any charge. For the benefit of orphanages and children of the downtown tenement districts, Capt. William H. Thorwegan provided the use of his GREAT REPUBLIC (2438) and other boats he owned from time to time for more than thirty such trips.

Members of the Mephram family, who owned the M. S. MEPHAM, provided the use of the large sidewheeler free of charge for a trip to Sulphur Springs on Sunday, March 20, 1866 for the benefit of the Southern Relief Fund for Children of the South. Tickets went for \$5 each. Apparently, the people of St. Louis and the river captains who lived there were most generous toward charities.

In addition to the many regulars that had St. Louis as their home port, a number of the big, southern cotton carriers such as the long, sternwheeler CHARLES P. CHOUTEAU (0962) spent the off-season at St. Louis running excursions until it was time for the cotton crop to begin moving again.

St. Louis saw its greatest river spectacle on September 9, 1866 when a great fleet of steamboats went upriver to Alton, Illinois, the terminus of the railroad, to bring President Andrew

Johnson to the city for a visit. In the lead of the parade were the three sidewheelers RUTH (4878), OLIVE BRANCH (4290) and the ANDY JOHNSON (0264) followed by 34 steamers representing the states of the Union and the District of Columbia. The three lead steamers were lashed together to return the welcoming committee and the presidential party to St. Louis. Aboard many of the crowded boats there were bands and generous servings of collations and other edibles. Spirits were high! On the return trip the fleet passed between banks lined with cheering throngs while other boats passed along the way sounded their whistles and tolled their bells.

(One of the few typos we discovered was in the date of the President Johnson grand reception; it was 1866 not 1886. J. Wallen.)

WAR ON THE RIVERS

There are other interesting chapters in which the reader is told of the colorful and venturesome activities on the rivers during the Civil War. One of the best is taken from the written reminiscences of Capt. Sobieski "Beck" Jolly, who was born at Levanna, Ohio on the Ohio River above Cincinnati. His given name of Sobieski was in honor of the Polish patriot who became king and his nick name of "Beck" was conferred on him by Mark Twain, with who he piloted on the steamer JOHN J. ROE (3076).

Capt. Jolly had master's and pilot's licenses on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. In his reminiscences, written later in life, he shows a remarkable memory for names and places, a talent possessed by many pilots. Jolly left school at the age of 14 to go on the river and the last entry was made in his reminiscences on September 2, 1900.

Although Jolly's writing is done in a plain, matter-of-fact style it conveys vividly the dangers through which he and his boat passed during the Civil War years. He was frequently called

upon to pilot steamboats carrying supplies and soldiers to Union forces along the rivers and sometimes the returning passengers were the wounded being moved north. He was so often at the wheel of boats being fired on by Confederate artillery and snipers emplaced along the river banks that such barrages became almost commonplace.

Although the vulnerable parts of the boats, including the pilothouse, were protected by sheet iron, Capt. Jolly saw many of his crewmen lost to enemy fire.

SAVED BY BACON

This is the title of one of Capt. Jolly's better stories: because of his keen olfactory sense, Beck Jolly was able, one dark night, to save his boat.

Capt. Jolly was standing at the wheel, on watch in the pilothouse, downbound on the Mississippi near the bend of Island 35 when he remarked to his partner that he smelled bacon cooking and that it must be coming from a Confederate encampment nearby. Sure enough, around that bend some campfires could be seen and Capt. Jolly was able to drift the steamer MARBLE CITY (3738) past the Confederates undetected. So, Beck's keen sense of smell saved one Union transport or maybe the Johnny Rebs were just more interested in their midnight lunch of bacon.

These collected writings of Ruth Ferris constitute a book of almost 200 pages, paperback with slick front cover bearing a stylized picture of a steamboat with a bridge in the background, done by artist Joe Jones as a gift to the author. The book is edited by David E. Cassens, late curator of the Herman T. Pott National Inland Waterways Library, and has a foreword by John Neal Hoover, associate director of the Mercantile Library. The only criticism we have of the otherwise excellent production of this book is the glue used in the

soft binding; several pages in our copy have become separated.

In 1991 the Ruth Ferris Endowment for River Life and Lore was established in the Herman T. Pott National Inland Waterways Library. The income from sales of the book will go into the endowment.

St. Louis and the Mighty Mississippi in the Steamboat Age is published in St. Louis by the **Mercantile Library Association**, 510 Locust Street, Sixth Floor, St. Louis, MO 63101. Price including postage is \$13.95.

Reviewed by James A. Wallen, Huntington, WV.

* * *

BOOK REVIEW

Here Comes the Showboat!

The author of this newly published book has a real advantage in that she actually lived the story. She didn't need to interview a lot of people or go to libraries and courthouses to look for references for she knew the whole story - had since infancy.

Betty Bryant, daughter of the irrepressible Capt. Billy Bryant and his very capable wife Josie, was carried aboard the Bryant family showboat at the age of ten days and immediately became a part of the troupe. Her happy father, Capt. Billy, gazing at his new daughter, exclaimed, "She's beautiful, Josie! We'll open the season with Uncle Tom's Cabin and Eliza can carry her across the ice." From that moment on, Betty was a member the family stage company and her home was that floating theatre, the Bryant showboat.

In time, Betty became a member of many casts playing in melodramas, doing vaudeville acts, selling candy between acts and sitting in the pilothouse watching Capt. Billy steer his boat skilfully through bends, around sandbars and away from menacing rocks. Billy was a licensed pilot on the Monongahela, Allegheny, Kanawha, Ohio and the Lower Mississippi.

At this point, Betty Bryant makes it plain that the showboat is a floating theatre, a single entity that is pushed by a sternwheel steamboat and unlike latterday myths and Hollywood, does not carry any passengers or freight. The lettering on the side was simply BRYANTS.

After setting the stage, the author launches into her life story, a story that takes place largely within the showboat and, sometimes its environs. It's an autobiography but it is a lot more than that. It is the story of a showboat on the inland rivers of America and something unique to the American theatre. The story is told with a light touch; a sense of humor is often present.

The place where Betty was born in Februaury of 1922 was West Elizabeth, Pennsylvania on the Mongahela River, not far from Pittsburgh. The Bryant showboat had been in the habit of laying up there for the winter but the Bryants later changed the homeplace to Henderson, West Virginia, across the river from Point Pleasant. Point Pleasant became the nearest place to any spot the Bryants could call home. The Bryants and the whole troupe had many friends in every river town and landing along the Ohio, a friendship they reciprocated. But Betty says she has, "always loved Point Pleasant," because she found it to be, "a lovely, friendly old river town."

Capt. Billy bought a home in Point Pleasant in 1942 when the showboat was laid up permanently, to which his parents, Violet and Sam retired. They, with other members of the Bryant family, are buried in Point Pleasant. It was at Henderson, too, where the Bryant showboat rode out the historic flood of 1937 and it was where Betty went to junior high and high school.

Early in Betty's career, while the boat was still wintering at West Elizabeth on the Monongahela, she found the first audiences of the season to be most

interesting, quite different in some ways from those who came aboard at the small towns and rural landings farther down on the Ohio. That part of the Monongahela was lined with coal mines and steel mills and it was the men who worked in them, with their families, who enjoyed such Bryant presentations as Ten Nights in a Barroom, Uncle Tom's Cabin, East Lynne, Over the Hill to the Poorhouse, The End of the Road and Agnes, the Switchman's Daughter.

Most of these people who came to the Bryant shows were immigrants from a variety of European countries but they enjoyed such plays with enthusiasm and seemed to sense the meaning of words from the script, even though their English was sketchy.

"Occasionally," writes Betty, "a wave of low murmurs would roll over the crowds as friends or family members translated, in half a dozen languages, what the actors were saying. They never lost interest and instinctively responded to the various moods of the play, crying, smiling and laughing at all the appropriate times. Between the acts when we sold prize candy they bought it by the trayful and when the villain sang, the leading lady danced or the character man did magic they were delirious with joy."

Betty was only a little more than 14 months old when she began her rise as an actress in the showboat world. She was able to present a hula dance in a worse-for-wear grass skirt that her pet rabbit had found irresistible. It was at about four years of age that she was dressed for a George M. Cohan dance number, wearing a pink satin dress having flower-trimmed inserts with a ribbon running from each side to a bow tied to her wrists. She carried a big, stuffed, pink rabbit and a ruffled umbrella. Then, after dancing a waltz clog, she would stroll from the stage singing an Easter song. Showboat people had to be versatile.

As she progressed in years and stage experience, Betty frequently played the part of Mary Morgan, daughter of the Drunkard, who died tragically and thus solved a lot of the problems in the play. She had similar roles in other old melodramas and by the time she was eight, ". . . had died on practically every inland waterway." At the same time she was working with props, painting scenery, tying cotton on bushes for the slaves to pick, rattling the "thunder sheet" and cranking the wind machine. Selling tickets was often a part of Betty's job, too.

One of the happiest times on the Bryant showboat came in the early spring when preparations were being made to start on the first trip of the season. The crew already had steam up on the steamboat and the showboat was the scene of excited reunions as actresses and actors arrived after having been away all winter. There were stories about what they had been doing and happy meetings of old friends for most of the actresses and actors had been aboard the previous season, some of them had been with the Bryants for many seasons.

But this was only the start of the reunions. As the showboat progressed down the Ohio, stopping at small river towns or farm landings, the Bryants and their troupe were always met by old friends who had enjoyed their shows the previous year and had been looking forward to another visit. After the show was over, the showboat people would be waiting at the end of the stage plank to greet and talk with old friends of previous years. Quite often the local residents would come down during the day, bringing presents of produce or perhaps something that was fixed in the kitchen.

And the youngsters of these local families remembered Betty and were glad to spend time with her during the boat's stay. For Betty, this was a very happy part of the trip and these young people of her own age were her perennial friends.

The local residents were often notified of the approach of the Bryant's Showboat only by the raucous call of the calliope. When leaving the boat at night they would linger on the bank to be dazzled by the display of thousands of decorative lights strung along the decks for which electricity was supplied by a generator on the steamboat. These were the days before the Rural Electric Administration had provided the means for extending the lines to light up the farms and smaller river towns.

It was not unusual for some of the local people to follow the showboat to the next landing so they could see another show. The showboat had brought an interest and color into their lives which they enjoyed. They liked the cast, the shows and the moral lessons that were often a part of the typical showboat play.

For the actresses and actors, a berth on such a showboat was quite desirable. They had comfortable (if small) living quarters, good meals and pay checks that were always on time. It was an easier life than packing and unpacking and catching a train every day, a summer vacation with pay. The audiences at the small river towns were enthusiastic and appreciative to gladden the heart of any Thespian.

So, every year the Bryant Showboat and its towboat VALLEY BELLE or, later, the NEW LOTUS, would pass right on by such places as Cincinnati and Louisville to play the smaller villages. The thought was that the typical showboat fare was not sufficiently sophisticated for the populace of such a large city. But finally, in the late summer of 1929, Capt. Billy decided to try a three-night stand at Cincinnati.

The first night at the Queen City was a complete flop and Capt. Billy had decided to move on the following day until a chance acquaintance changed

everything. In the sparse audience that first night was Moses Strauss, managing editor of the Cincinnati Times-Star, with a party who were charmed by the impromptu presentation put on that night just for their benefit. The resultant publicity made Capt. Billy and his family and troupe the darlings of Cincinnati theatre-goers. The Bryant showboat was at Cincinnati the next summer and ten summers thereafter.

"During the first five years in Cincinnati," Betty relates, "besides my impersonations of George M. Cohan, Ted Lewis and George S. Primrose, my novelty songs and dances, my toughie numbers, were my biggest hits. Mother would dress me in a long-sleeved sweater, a short, tight skirt with a slit on the side, a long pair of beads and a hat with a flower sticking up in front. I would sing either, 'When Francis Dances with Me', 'Every Night He Brings me Wylets', 'I'm Gonna Dance wid de Guy What Brung Me' or, my favorite, 'Down by the Winiger Woiks'."

The success at Cincinnati led to a long succession of personal appearances at major theatres in Pittsburgh, Chicago and New York. So, in 1945 Capt. Billy sold the showboat to a company that used it temporarily for a wharfboat at Huntington, West Virginia, marking a memorable era in the history of the rivers of the Mississippi system and also of the American theatre.

Here Comes the Showboat! is liberally illustrated with informal photographs of scenes and persons aboard the showboat.

Readers will long remember this fascinating story and we predict that its popularity will continue for a long time, too.

Hard cover, 202 pages with index, **Here Comes the Showboat!** is priced at \$22.95 and published by The University Press of Kentucky, 663 South Limestone Street, Lexington, KY 40508-4008.

Reviewed by Jim Wallen.

CLUES ON THE GERTRUDE

The center of our March issue holds two views of the packet GERTRUDE, a boat built in 1865 at Mobile. She spent her life on the Alabama River we speculated and so did not appear in Way's Packet Directory (aims to cover the Mississippi River system only). Little else was known about the GERTRUDE and the Lytle List of Merchant Vessels shows her as lost at a date and place unknown.

Now one of S&D's newest members, Tom Cottrell (see Letters), provides clues in the form of a freight invoice and a waybill. The invoice is from Hurxthal, Bruce & Co., Mobile, Alabama and is directed to Mrs. D. Hall, Bonnells Landing who was shipped one keg of nails and one cross-cut saw aboard the GERTRUDE, dated December 5, 1868. The GERTRUDE waybill is for freight on three barrels of flour and one cask of bacon, "Thru from New Orleans" to M. D. P. & Co., Elm Bluff and is dated February 4, 1870. So, the GERTRUDE was operating in 1870.

There is an interesting note by the apparent receiver of the freight on Mrs. D. Hall's invoice:

"Mrs. Hall - You have various articles of freight here - I send your papers. We got the nails for this place, also the cloth for Bolt, Gran & Riley & a cask of meat. Riley directly refuses to do anything.

Henry is done his chimneys & we now at work on the fence & shed. Can you let me have two hundred dollars - Henry is going up & I send him by Newport for a cash letter as Judge Brass directs. Resp. Jno. E. Wallace"

Was John Wallace a supervisor at Mrs. Hall's plantation or some other business at Bonnells Landing? Our modern highway map of Alabama shows no Elm Bluff, Newport nor Bonnells Landing so your help is invited. And Tom Cottrell, we'll be interested in any GERTRUDE waybills later than 1870 that you might find.

* * *



This is steamboating on Caddo Lake, Texas in 1994. The steamer GRACEFUL GHOST was the brainchild of Lexie Palmore who says the design is based on outline plans in a 1902 publication of the Marine Iron Works of Chicago.

The GRACEFUL GHOST is 50x9 in hull size and 12 feet over the main deck. The construction is plywood and fiberglass with eight watertight compartments. Engines are 4"xl6" stroke, high pressure with steam supplied by a horizontal fire-tube boiler, wood fired machinery was built by the Scripps Machine Shop, Fredericksburg, Texas.

Construction started in 1990 in Plantersville, Texas with Joe Babcock and Matt Ayres in charge. Launched in 1991, shakedown trials were made on nearby Lake Canoe. Later, the completed boat was trucked to Jefferson, Texas and launched into Caddo Lake.

Lexie describes the interior decor as, "Etched glass windows, oriental rugs, lace curtains, kerosene lanterns and running lights and brass spittoons." Beginning in 1993, GRACEFUL GHOST has offered excursions over and around Caddo Lake which, until about 1905, had regular steamboat service.

Homeport for Lexie and her steamboat is Rt. 2, Box 63A, Uncertain, TX 75661, just off of Bois D'Arc Lane on the upper end of Caddo Lake. Assisting in the excursion enterprise is Jim McMillen who has a 100 ton license and provides boat tours from the old steamboat port of Jefferson, Texas.

The Marine Iron Works reprint referred to above is a 45 page, slick stock booklet available from:

Clinton M. Miller & Asso.
P.O. Box 20524
Seattle, WA 98102

* * *

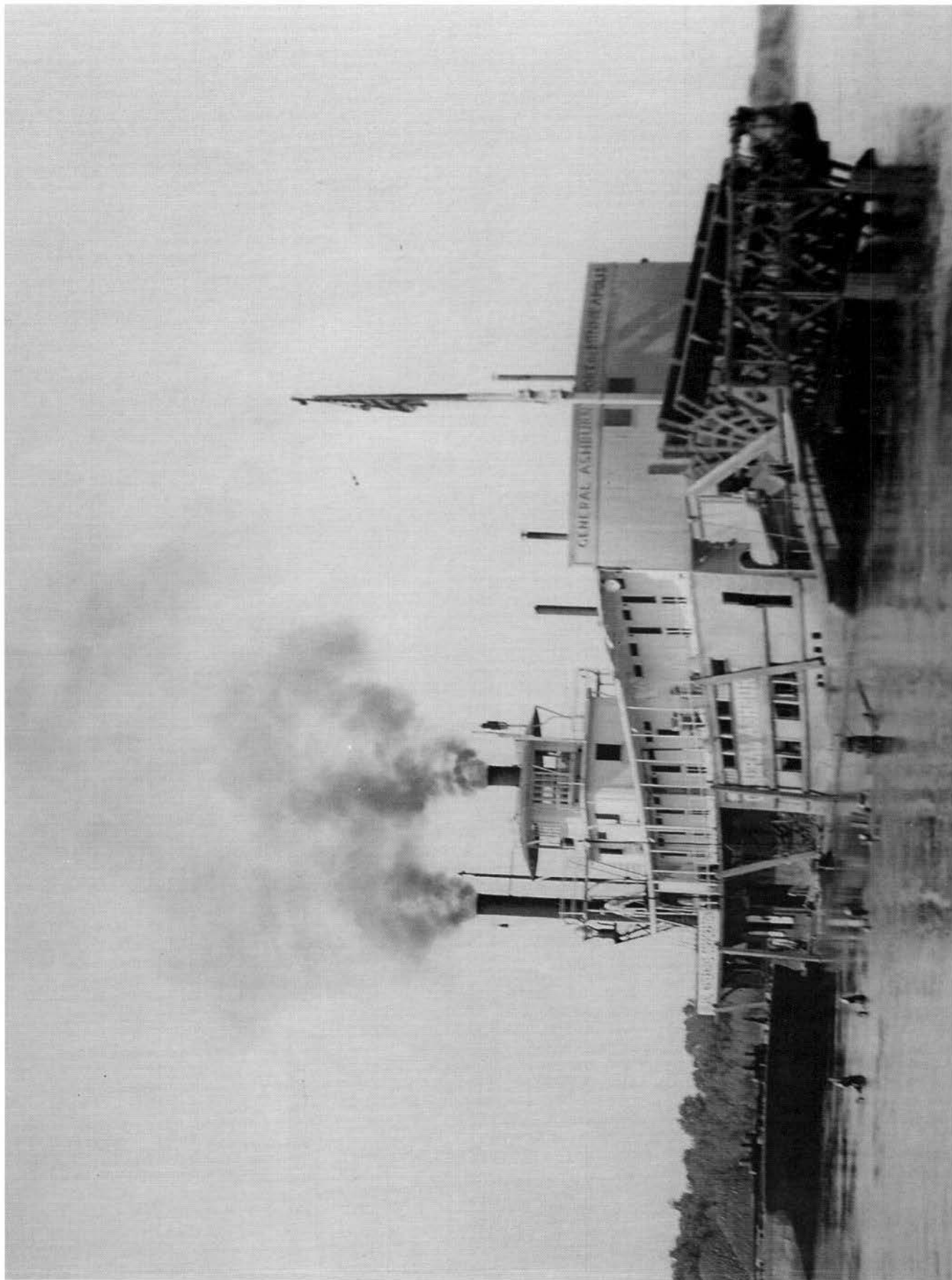
BELLE OF LOUISVILLE CRUISE October 2, 1994

The Howard Steamboat Museum is the sponsor of a Centennial Cruise on the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE on Sunday, October 2; the Howard Mansion was built in 1894 and CITY OF LOUISVILLE made her record run in '94.

Contact Howard Museum,
(812) 283-3728.

POETRY AND THE RIVER

TV Image, producers of the S&D video, "Fire on the Water" announces a 28 minute video of 14 river scenes and appropriate poetry readings. The Ohio Arts Council and the Ohio and West Virginia Humanities Councils are the sponsors. Copies available from TV IMAGE, 187 Greendale Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45220.



GENERAL ASHBURN IN TROUBLE!

On the opposite page is the Inland Waterways Corp. (Federal Barge Line) towboat GENERAL ASHBURN aground somewhere on the Upper Mississippi. The tilt of the sternwheel confirms a broken shaft.

The hapless steamer and her tow have drifted into shallow water where stumps protrude in the foreground. We can only imagine that there were loud bumps, squeals and damage in the engineroom when the shaft let go and the pitman and piston were free to roam. She still has steam up and there's nobody in sight so maybe it's dinner time; first things first.

Elsewhere in this issue is an item about the repair by Thermite welding of a crack in the shaft of the BETSY ANN. Too late for such a repair on the GENERAL ASHBURN and she'll be laid up until a new shaft with a rebuilt wheel is installed and other damage repaired. Perhaps some reader can supply the date and other details of ASHBURN's mishap.

The GENERAL ASHBURN (TO886) was built in 1927 by the Dubuque Boat and Boiler Co., Dubuque, Iowa. She was 130.1x35x5.1 with condensing engines 15's, 30's-6½ ft. stroke. She was a sister boat to the S. S. THORPE (T2219) which exists today as the GEORGE M. VERITY on display at Keokuk, Iowa. Both were designed by T. Rees Tarn for the Upper Mississippi towing trade pioneered by Federal Barge Line.

In 1941 the GENERAL ASHBURN was sold to the Hatfield-Campbells Creek Coal Co. of Cincinnati, operating in the coal trade from the Kanawha River to Cincinnati. Her name was changed to J. T. HATFIELD (T1307) in the summer of 1945 and in 1957 she was again renamed CHARLES R. HOOK (TO387), then owned by Armco Steel Co. The ex-GENERAL ASHBURN was dismantled in 1959.

Photograph by John Long.

* * *

AMERICAN QUEEN,

PROGRESS REPORT

The hull for the new AMERICAN QUEEN is about complete after the 59 ton bow section was lifted into place and joined to the main structure. A July press release also reports that the compound engines removed from the U.S. Corps of Engineers dredge KENNEDY have been installed. The new 420 passenger tourist boat is under construction at the McDermott Shipyard, Amelia Louisiana.

When completed in the spring of 1995, the AMERICAN QUEEN at 4,700 tons will be the largest passenger vessel built in the United States since the Atlantic liner UNITED STATES in 1953. Perhaps that statistic says a great deal about the ability of U.S. shipyards to compete for the numerous new hulls being built for the cruise trade elsewhere in the world.

Some appreciation for the size of the AMERICAN QUEEN may be gained from the measurement to the tops of the stacks: 109 feet above the waterline. Only six feet more and they would equal those on the J. M. WHITE. But, as with the MISSISSIPPI QUEEN, the stacks (and pilothouse) on the new boat may be retracted to reduce the overall clearance to 55 feet.

The Nordberg engines from the KENNEDY, 15's, 30's-6½ ft. stroke, have been rebuilt by Newcastle Engineering Co., Newcastle, Indiana which is the successor to the Nordberg company. Dana Grant, construction engineer for the Delta Queen Steamboat Co., estimates that the refurbished engines will produce 750 hp. each side or 1,500 hp. to drive the 50 ton paddlewheel. The advertising states that passengers will be able to view the engineroom; if true, an improvement over the arrangement on the MISSISSIPPI QUEEN.

BACK COVER

This view of the R. DUNBAR on a hazy afternoon was taken by Frederick Way, Jr. about 1916-17. Fred caught her with his folding 3-A Kodak, downbound toward Deadman's Island at the foot of Quaker Run, Edgeworth, Pennsylvania.

After coming to the Upper Ohio in 1914 to enter the Pittsburgh-Charleston trade, the R. DUNBAR always looked as if she needed a caring parent. In photos she appears a bit seedy, in need of a few bull rails, new smokestacks, a front porch on the texas and some fresh paint. This transformation would come later when, as the GENERAL CROWDER, she was rebuilt and painted under the artistic eye of Jesse Hughes. (See Hughes diary for 1921, June issue.) According to H. Bennett Abdy's commentary elsewhere in this issue, the DUNBAR's general appearance was an indicator of the passenger's experience in 1915 too.

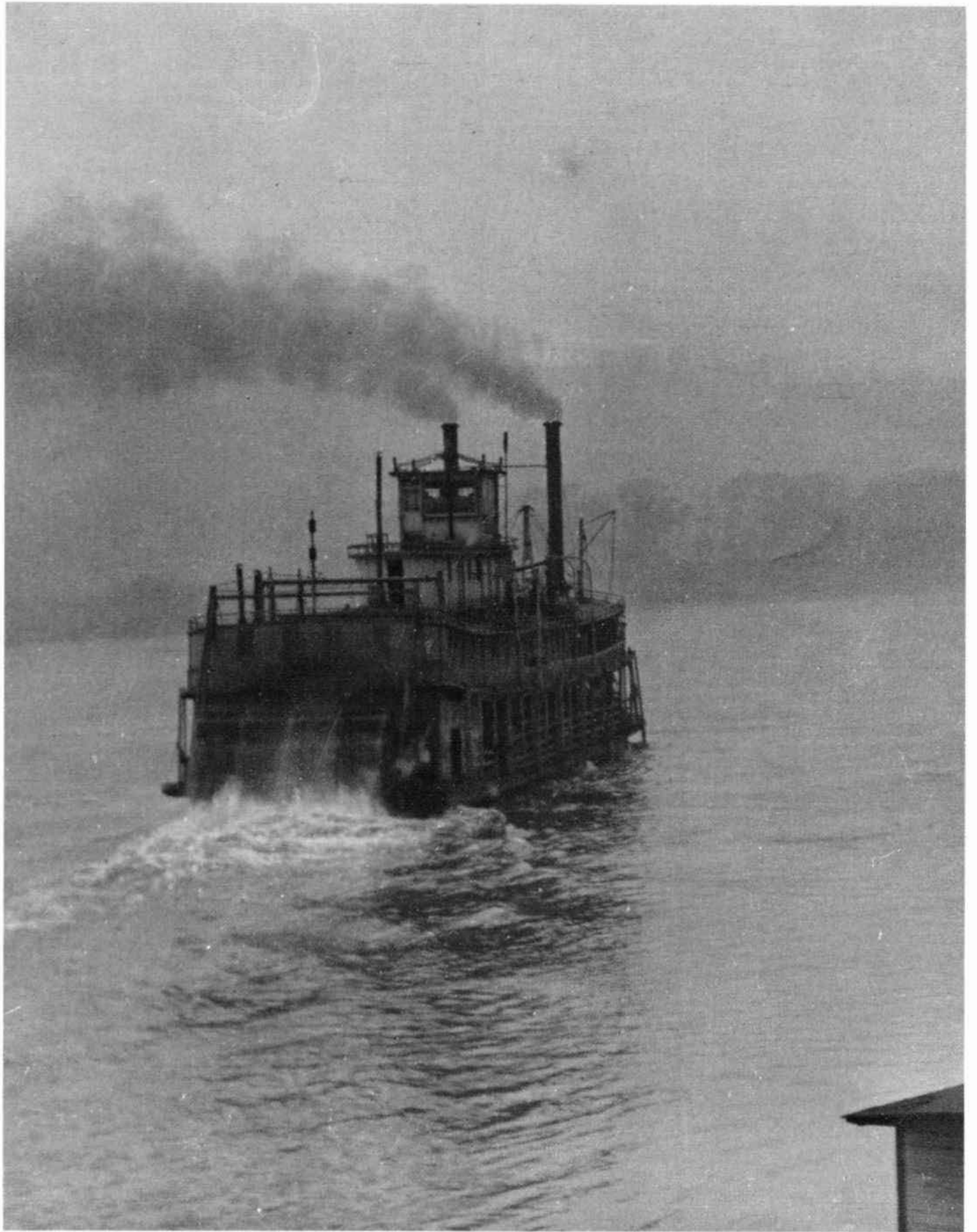
A colony of shantyboats was located just below Quaker Run and a corner of one of them shows. Later, Dashields Dam was built at Deadman's Island raising the pool in this area but the shantyboats were still there into the 1930s.

* * *

There has been much curiosity about the "Z-drives" which will be mounted on each side of the hull at the stern. Says Grant, "Think of these as large outboard motors, one on each side, to help the AMERICAN QUEEN steer better. They've been added because of her sheer size." These will be supplemented by twin bow thrusters.

When completed, the AMERICAN QUEEN will have cost about \$60 million and should really be something to see. Scheduled service begins in June, 1995.

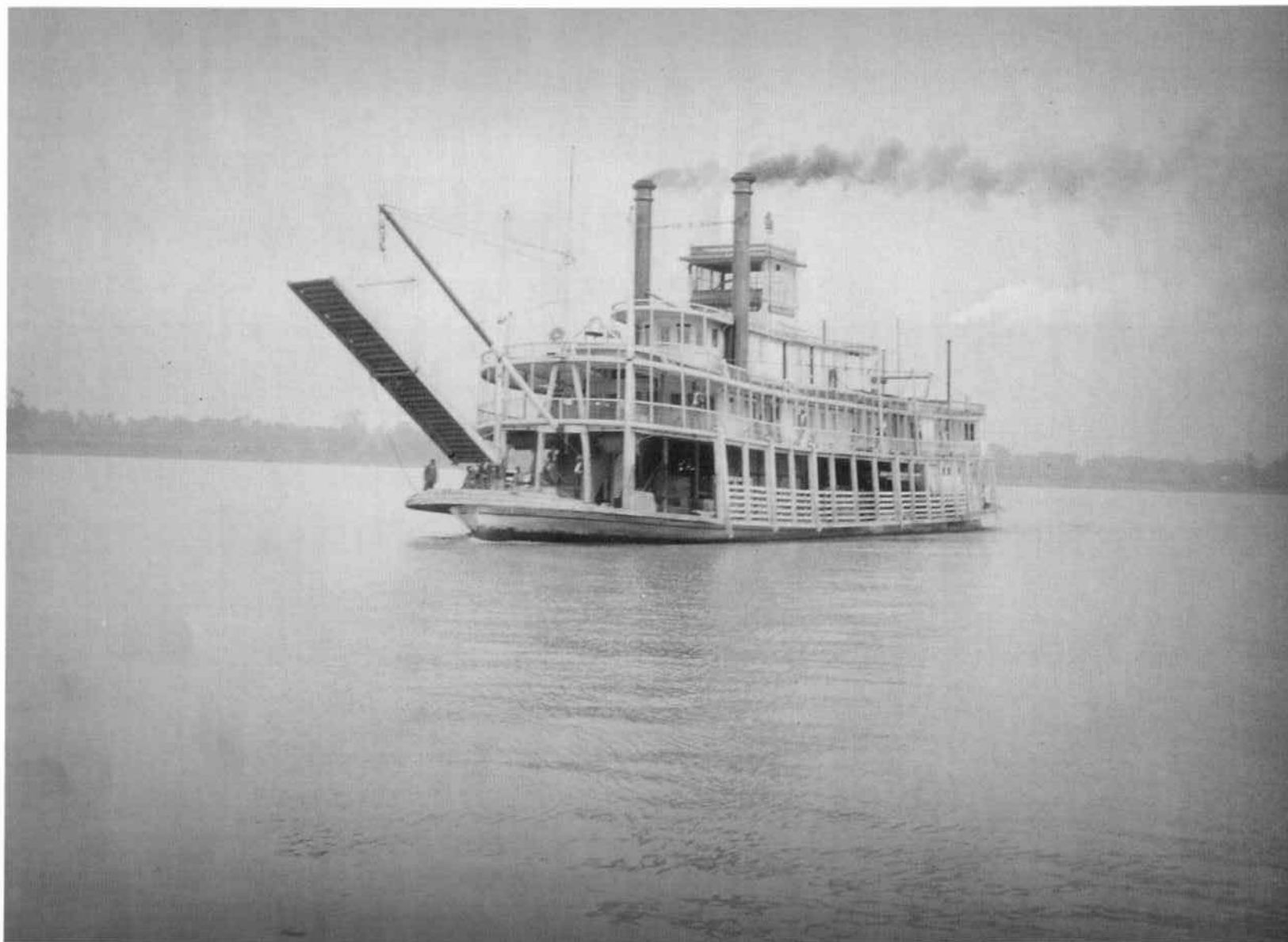
* * *





H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 The Paducah Fair posters attracted this billy goat; he's nibbling on a watermelon and working up to farmer's daughter. The Abdy group was standing beside a lunch wagon waiting for sandwiches when a whistle blew. "What boat is that?' we asked the lunch man.

'It's the Evansville packet, I reckon - she's due. If it's her, oughter have a call from ole Butt 'cause he done gimme the go-by las' trip. Butt's a goat, lady,' he finally explained, smiling in a paternal way as he handed her a sandwich, all befrilled with crisp leaves of lettuce." Butt came up from the wharf on cue



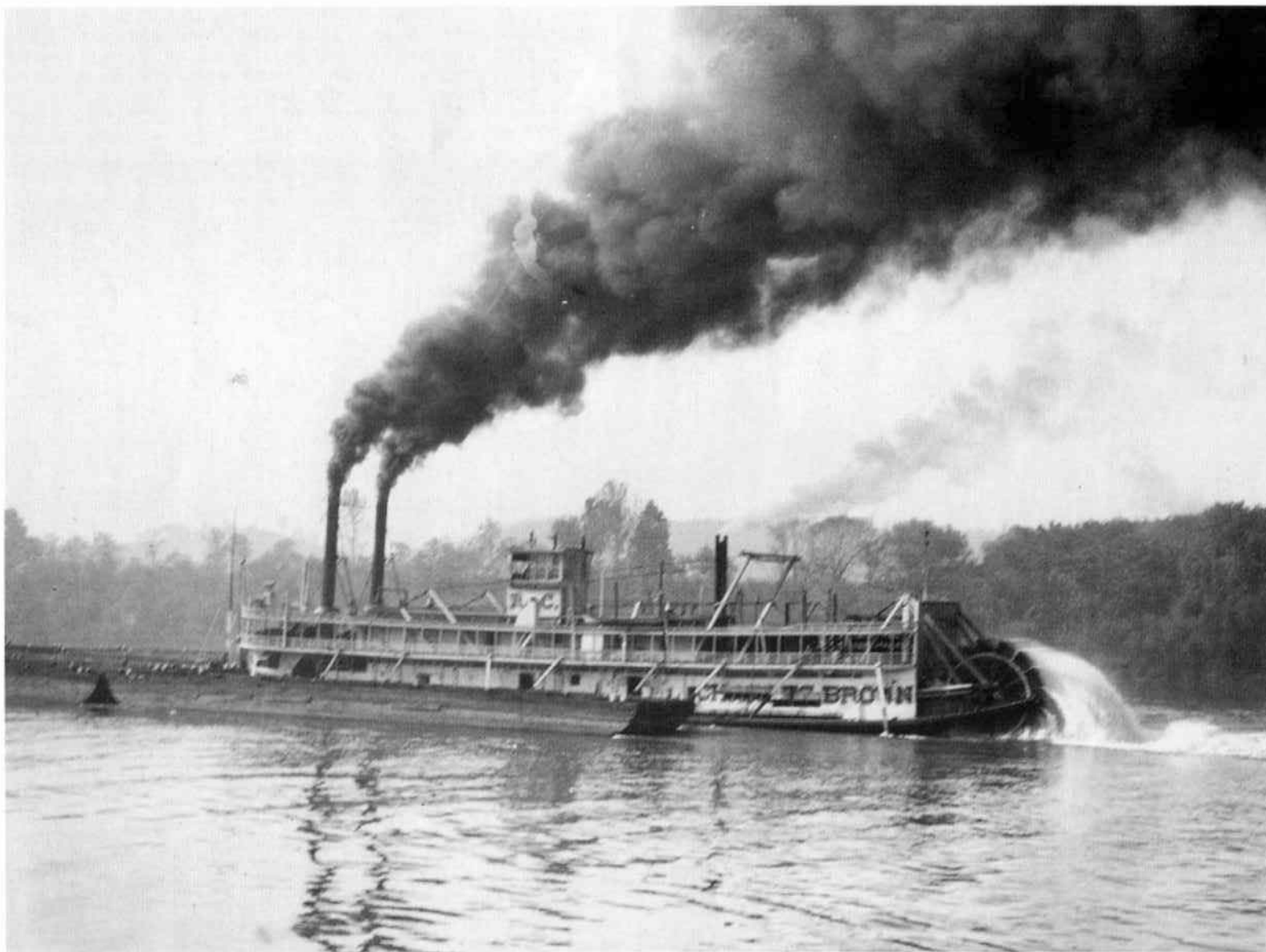
H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 The JOHN L. LOWRY (Way 3085) was a well proportioned steel hulled packet, 160x31x5 owned by Capt. John L. Lowry. She was operating in the Paducah-Evansville trade and the Abdy party rode her from Paducah to Smithland, Kentucky where they spent several days. After a Sunday excursion up the

Cumberland River, they took the LOWRY on the overnight trip to Evansville and experienced the raw river water coming out of the faucets. The LOWRY made a trip to Pittsburgh in 1920 when she towed a barge of new automobiles to St. Louis then returned to the Paducah-Evansville trade. She burned October 4, 1920.



H BENNETT ABDY - 1915 The JOHN L. LOWRY was in the Paducah-Evansville trade, two round-trips a week, and offered a Sunday excursion up the Cumberland. The frequent landings made soon caused the Californians to conclude, "Lo, this is a freight-delivering trip in the main, an excursion on the side!" Here, loading cattle.

The mate and rousters seem to have these cattle safely enclosed in the stock racks but the lead steer is looking dubiously at the end of the stage. Abdy: "Roaring, plunging and horning with lowered head it forced its way over the bodies of its followers and out into liberty, with wild bellowings and out of sight."



H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 The JOHN L. LOWRY passed the CHARLES BROWN (T0377) a short distance above Golconda, Illinois. The CHARLES BROWN was nicknamed "Long Charlie" and was 200x33x6, one of the largest class of towboats. She was built in 1872 for W. H. Brown & Sons and had one of the first steam steering gears.

Abdy comments on the coalboat traffic, both loads coming down and empties upbound, on the trip from Smithland to Evansville. The CHARLES BROWN continued in the Combine until chartered by Island Creek Coal Co. in 1917. She was caught in the ice gorge at Cincinnati in January, 1918 and lost.



H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 This scene on the Evansville levee caused the artists to forget their sketchbooks. ". . . a couple of aviators had just descended from the sky and dropped skimmingly to the surface of the river in a wide-winged hydroplane! An excited group of loafers had just pulled the machine ashore with a rope

thrown to them by one of the aviators." The JOHN S. HOPKINS beyond the hydroplane and onlookers was operating as an excursion boat in 1915. She had been built in 1880, 200x35.3x6, and retired from the Evansville-Paducah trade in 1912. The staggered paddlewheel shows to advantage; she would burn in 1917.



H. BENNETT ABDY - 1915 From Louisville to Cincinnati the Abdy party decided to take the Sunday meet-the-boat trip on the CITY OF CINCINNATI (Way 1066) but departure was delayed until after noon. "Dinner and early darkness prevented seeing Carrollton, 'meet-the-boat' landing for the Sunday excursionists."

Fog overtook the CITY OF CINCINNATI at the Miami River and she tied up. In the early morning mist at the Cincinnati landing Abdy stood at the foot of the stairs from the roof to the boiler deck and caught the GREENLAND (2447) loading and, at the Coney Island wharfboat, the ISLAND QUEEN (2799) and PRINCESS (4596).

