



Freight Transportation on the Mississippi River from St Louis to New Orleans

1812-1900ish



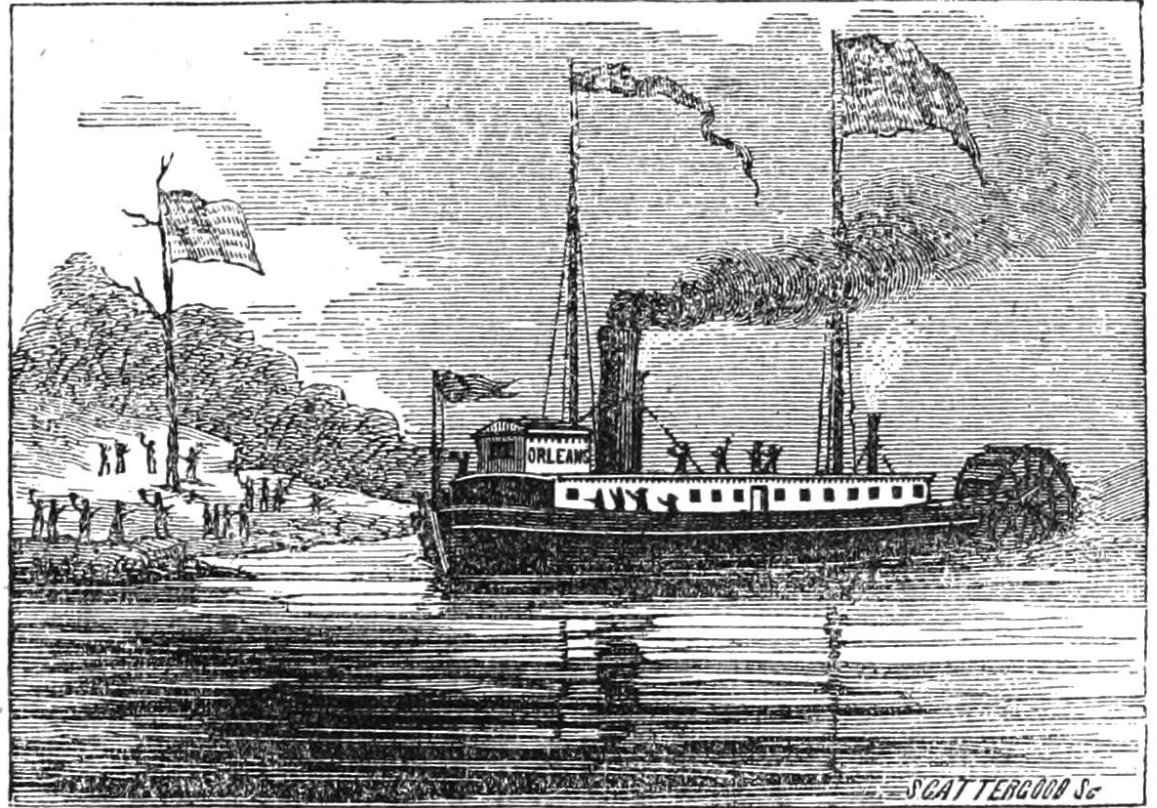
Kirklynn Patterson

First steamboat descended the river
in 1812

In “1817 1500 flatboats and 500
barges went downstream to New
Orleans”

Humidity made it hard to trade grain
and corn

It was more expensive to operate
trade routes on the lower
Mississippi river than the upper
lakes and river channels



FIRST BOAT BUILT ON THE WESTERN WATERS, 1812.



Annual receipts in 1816 exceeded 8 million, and then by 1840 over 500,000 tons of freight arrived at the port (in St Louis) worth over 100,000,000 dollars.

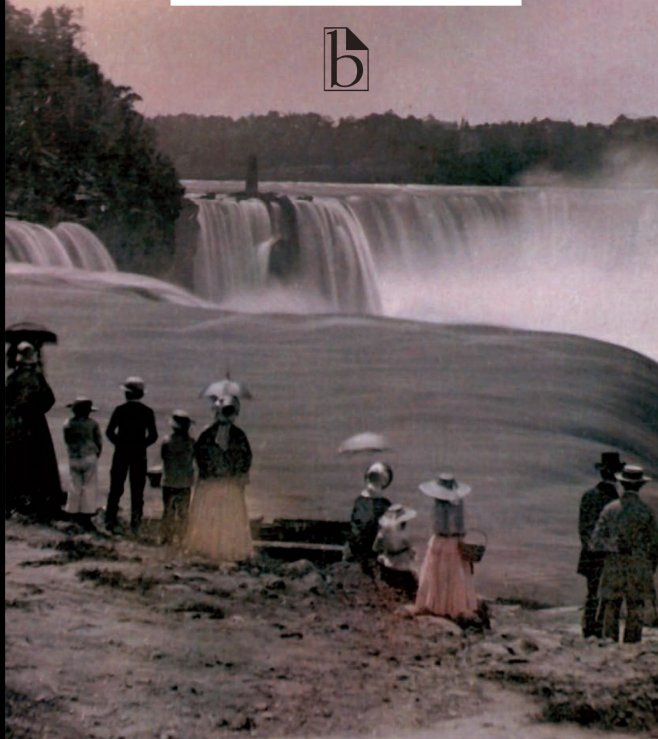
Flatboat from St Louis to New Orleans 4 months

Steamboat from New Orleans to St Louis 3 days

Domestic Manners
of the Americans

Frances Trollope

edited by
Sara R. Danger



If anyone is bored, this is a fun read

(1832)

She talks about:

The journey starting in New Orleans, the people,
the boat, the culture...

The part relevant to what I wanna know is the
scenery and how they traveled:

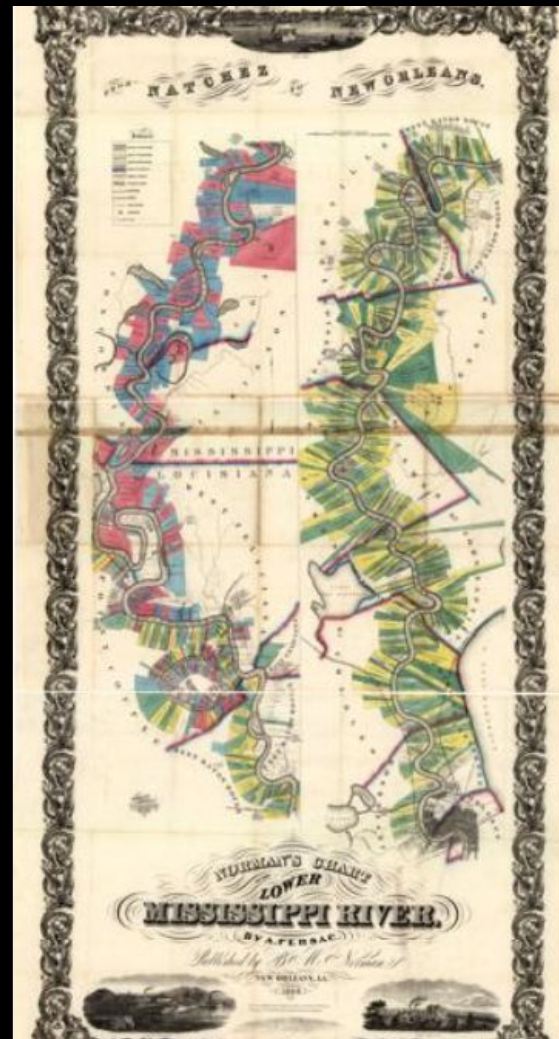
Had to stop many times along the way to get wood
to fuel the boat

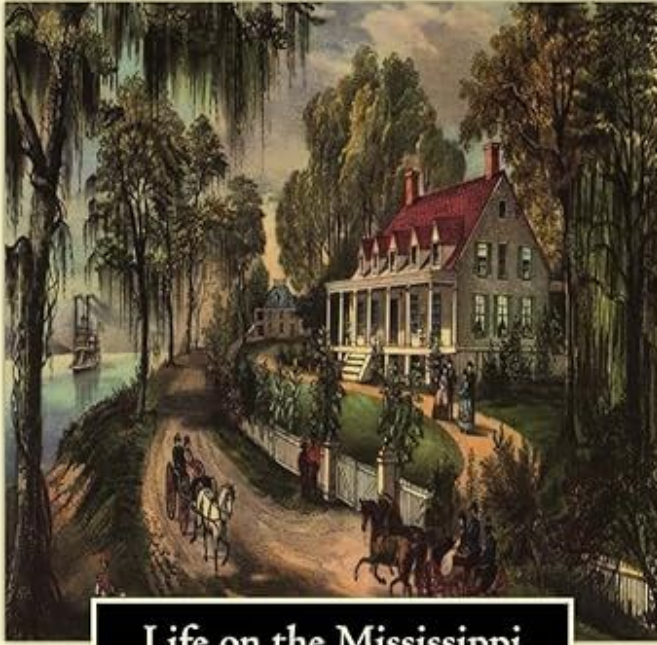
While stopped along the way, they visited
plantations for sugar, cotton, and other regional
farms

Around 1855 the thousands of stops at the St Louis port was keep St Louis happy with focusing all economic resources into river transportation for trade

Railroads threaten commerce on the mississippi river - put St Louis at a disadvantage bc they were relying on the river

The decline really began in 1870





**Life on the Mississippi
(1883), by Mark Twain
(memoir by Mark Twain)**

MISSISSIPPI RIVER --
DESCRIPTION AND TRAVEL,
MISSISSIPPI RIVER VALLEY --
SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS

MARK TWAIN

Second half of the book narrates St Louis to New Orleans
(1883)

Mark Twain shares relevant info on the competition with
railroads and then his own revelations about american
greed, tragedy, bad architecture, and other stuff that is
prevalent on his journey

St Louis Grain Association first began exploring using the river to ship grain in 1869, by 1879 18% of shipping grain was using the river

From 1890 to 1900 the use of the river went down 40% bc of the railroad but things were tried for the river

- Maintenance of a lower water channel
- Survey for a 14ft waterway
- Opening of the Panama canal affecting traffic





Map from 1944 of how the river changed its path

How I want to arrange the essay on freight transportation

Arrange geographically starting in St Louis and ending in New Orleans - focus on the journey and impacts (economically and culturally)

OR

Arrange chronologically ending in 1900 - focus on trade rise and decline