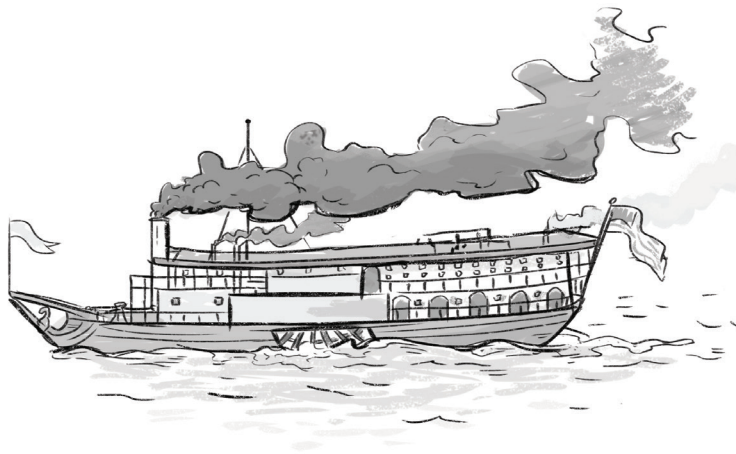


*Adventures on the American Frontier*

# Pioneers on the Early Waterways

Part Four

Mrs. Trollope's Trip to Memphis



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The city of New Orleans was already old on New Year's Day in 1828, but to the woman who made her way to the riverfront that day, it seemed new and strange. She had come from England, where the cities were old when Columbus sailed west.



Carefully, holding her long skirts close to keep them from touching the mud and the boxes and bales that were all around, the woman picked her way toward a clumsy-looking boat with a plank leading from the wharf to its lower deck. Behind her came a sixteen-year-old boy carrying some of their luggage.

“On which ship do we sail, Mother?”  
the boy asked.

“Henry, it’s not called a ship; it’s a steamboat. It’s the one directly ahead of



us.” The woman, whose name was Mrs. Frances Trollope, nodded her head in the direction of a steamboat with the name *Belvidere* painted on the wooden covers over the side paddlewheels.

Of the many steamboats docked at New Orleans that day, the *Belvidere* was not the largest, nor was it the finest. But it would become the best known because Mrs. Trollope was keeping notes of her travels for a book that would be published after she went back to England.

There were not as many boats at the riverfront that day as there often were because it was winter. A few months earlier, there had been dozens of flatboats tied up, waiting to be unloaded. Some had brought furs that had been loaded onto them at St. Louis or up the Missouri River. Others had brought barrels of pork from Ohio. From all the farmlands they had brought flour and whiskey to be loaded onto the sailing ships that would take the goods from New Orleans to the eastern cities of the United



States or even to Europe.

There were a few keelboats being loaded with goods that the sailing ships had brought to New Orleans. They would go up to the river cities along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. Later there would be loads of trading goods for the St. Louis fur trade, as well as goods for the places that were ice-bound in winter. But more and more, steamboats were taking the place of keelboats, for they could go up the river faster than the keelboats could.