

STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF IOWA

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

The Annals of Iowa

Volume 69 | Number 1 (Winter 2010)

pps. 103-104

Navigating the Missouri: Steamboating on Nature's Highway, 1819–1935

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ISSN 0003-4827

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Recommended Citation

Corbin, Annalies. "Navigating the Missouri: Steamboating on Nature's Highway, 1819–1935." *The Annals of Iowa* 69 (2010), 103-104.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.1414>

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recalled after the passage of many years: "Memories fade; sequences of events become confused. . . . Such accounts evince a considerable 'rescripting' of the past" (114). It might be illuminating to examine the reminiscences of Iowans who knew John Brown to discover if such "rescripting" did in fact occur, especially after Brown's role in the massacres on Osawatomie Creek became more generally known.

John Brown's War against Slavery is thoroughly researched and well reasoned. It will be of particular interest to readers already familiar with the extensive historical and biographical literature on the subject. Others might be advised to read first Stephen Oates's *To Purge This Land with Blood* or Evan Carton's recent *Patriotic Treason: John Brown and the Soul of America* (2006).

Navigating the Missouri: Steamboating on Nature's Highway, 1819–1935, by William E. Lass. Norman, OK: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 2008. 464 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 cloth.

Reviewer Annalies Corbin is the executive director of the PAST Foundation in Columbus, Ohio. She is the author of *The Material Culture of Steamboat Passengers: Archaeological Evidence from the Missouri River* (2000).

Since the 1962 publication of *Steamboating on the Missouri*, scholars have waited for the next epic installment of Missouri River history from William Lass. The wait is over; with the publication of *Navigating the Missouri*, Lass once again provides a visual and literary cornucopia of western history.

Navigating the Missouri essentially picks up where Lass left off decades ago with his work on the upper reaches of the Missouri River. With the latest installment, Lass completes the story. In 12 detailed chapters Lass chronicles the evolution of transportation history and industrial and technological development as it literally moved *upstream*. In chapter one, "Nature's Highway," he explores the Missouri River as a natural thoroughfare into the nation's deepest interiors. This chapter is nicely partnered with chapter two, "The Lure of Technology," which applies the advancement of steam technology to a growing demand further inland as the upper Missouri fur trade developed. In chapters three, "Establishment of the Steamboat Trade, 1820–1836," and four, "The Booming Trade, 1837–1845," Lass carefully examines the development and impact of the expansion of the American fur trade into the Far West.

Chapters five, "The Expanding Frontier, 1846–1854," and six, "Railroads and New Frontiers, 1855–1860," represent Lass at his very best.

Missouri River history is essentially the story of the economic growth and development of a nation emerging as the new leader in a global economy. With the pounding of the golden spike in 1869, our nation changed forever as the transcontinental railroad all but obliterated the old notion of the American frontier. With the sudden ease of transmitting information, goods, and services across a vast continent, the American economy — and steamboating history on the Missouri River — were forever changed.

In chapters seven, “The War Years,” and eight, “Ho! For the Mountains,” Lass chronicles the disruption of the Missouri River economy during the Civil War, the discovery of gold in the mountains of what is now Montana, and the increased U.S. military presence on the High Plains. Chapter nine, “New Railheads on the Upper Missouri,” follows the resulting progression of railheads moving further upriver and the impact on the communities along the way that depended on steamboating. Chapter ten, “The Upper River Boom, 1873–1879,” brings those of us who are passionate about river history one last gasp at a revival of steamboat supremacy on the upper river. Chapters eleven, “End of Long Hauls on the Upper River, 1880–1887,” and twelve, “The Last Years,” wind down the story of steamboating on the Missouri.

Those intimately familiar with Lass’s copious body of scholarly work will recognize much of the material gathered for this volume. In the past, those dedicated to seeking out the smallest detail of Missouri River history would search often obscure local and regional history journals to find a Lass steamboating article. With *Navigating the Missouri*, much of the previously published and often hard-to-get material has been beautifully reassembled into a seamless story. The volume has good maps, although more are always welcome in this type of volume. At times the density of the detail can overwhelm the story. Those minor criticisms aside, anyone living along the Missouri River can glean much from this volume. Aimed at scholars and lay people alike, the latest installment from Lass will not disappoint.

Feast or Famine: Food and Drink in American Westward Expansion, by Reginald Horsman. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008. viii, 356 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer Lori Ann Lahlum is associate professor of history at Minnesota State University, Mankato. She has written about the relationship between food and identity in a German Lutheran community.

Feast or Famine, by Reginald Horsman, a scholar of frontier America and westward expansion, is a culinary history of America’s westward