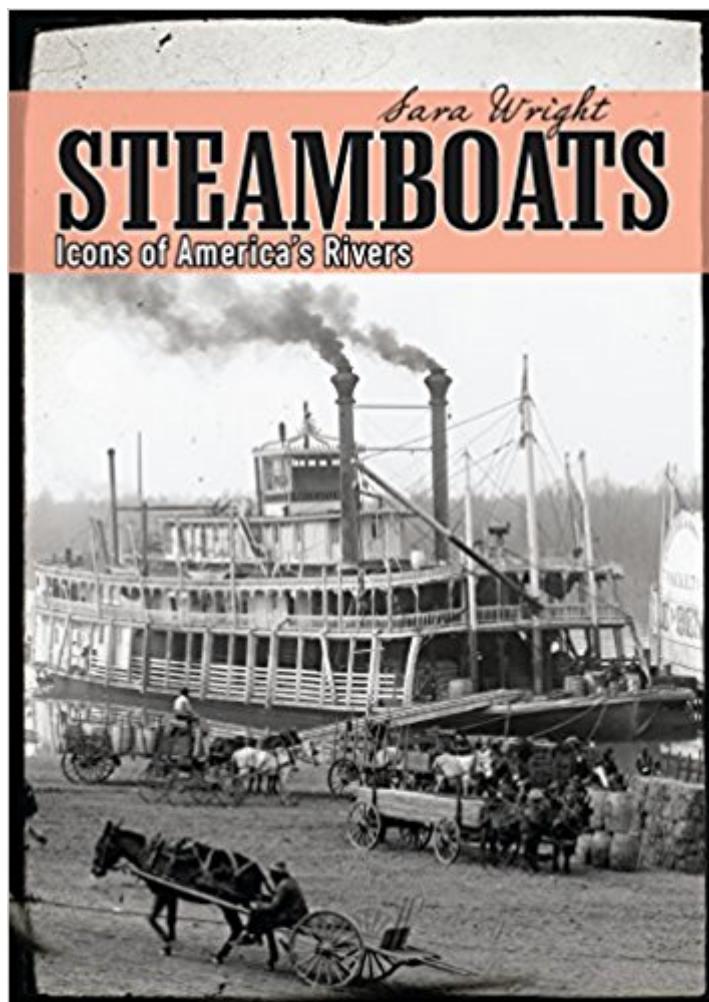


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# Steamboats: Icons Of America's Rivers (Shire USA)



## **Synopsis**

Paddlewheel riverboat, showboat, sternwheeler, steamboat: call it what you will, but the steamboat revolutionized travel in the 1800s, an era in which young boys dreamed of becoming river pilots and Mark Twain forever memorialized the "Delta Queens" that travelled up and down the Mississippi River. Steamboat enthusiast Sara Wright provides a background into the historical events that made the era perfectly ripe for the development of the steamboat industry in America in this colorful history. Steamboats will look at the people who played key roles in the development of the steam engine and paddle boats, including the important part played by the many African Americans who worked the river. Wright also examines the technology of these floating mansions, from firebaskets and cannons, to radars and whistles, to steam pressure gauges and other innovations.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Sara Wright is a member of the American Sternwheel Association ([www.americansternwheel.org](http://www.americansternwheel.org)), for which she is a regular contributor to their newsletter. A professional artist and photographer, she has also been involved with the restoration of sternwheel houseboats. She earned a bachelor of science degree in commercial design from Indiana State University.

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We live on the Ohio River and like anything about steamboats. This is a very informative book with excellent pictures. Not a big book but well written. We have really enjoyed it. Recommend!!

This is an adult rating. The book is informative. However I bought it to inform my grandchildren because we were traveling to an area where we could board one. The book is way beyond the understanding and interest of a 5 and 7 year old. But the pictures were great for discussions. They learned what these workhorses looked like, historically who worked on them, and how they were used. The book really is written to inform adults.

The image is ingrained in the American consciousness - a gleaming white 'floating palace' cruising up the river, paddlewheels churning the waters and its tall smokestack belching out a steady trail of black smoke. Whatever form it took - sternwheeler, paddlewheel riverboat or showboat - the steamboat played a decisive role in the development of vast areas of the American frontier.

Artist/photographer Sara Wright presents an affectionate, well-illustrated history of steamboats in **STEAMBOATS, ICONS OF AMERICA'S RIVERS**, a 2013 Shire Publications release. Early colonists utilized various watercraft in their efforts to settle and develop the original 13 colonies and the territories beyond. Various inventors on both sides of the Atlantic worked on steamboats in the late 1700s but Robert Fulton is credited with the first commercial steamboat in 1807. Design and construction expanded and evolved in the years after Fulton's steamboat debuted and American rivers soon witnessed flat-bottomed steamboats, sternwheelers, snagboats and similar boats plying their trade. The spread of railroads in the late 1850s spelled the beginning of the end but the steamboat lingers still in the hearts and minds of many Americans. Wright packs a lot of information in this 64-page book. Her comprehensive and informed text is complimented by dozens of vintage and contemporary b&w and color photographs, illustrations and maps. In short, **STEAMBOATS** is a delightful, appealing overview of this most American form of transportation. Recommended.

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